The decision to move to a retirement community is exciting. You are taking the first step in planning for the rest of your life. While you are looking forward to a life free from the responsibilities of home maintenance, your children and loved ones may feel a sense of loss at the sale of the family home. The following guide offers tips for discussing a move to a retirement community with your loved ones, so that you can enjoy this next phase of your life feeling confident and carefree.

There are many emotions swirling around a decision to move to a retirement community. While you will continue to live completely independently, you will be in a new neighborhood surrounded by new people. After many years of caring for others, you will live in a community focused on ensuring YOU have everything you need, from fine dining to social and wellness activities. While you are adjusting to retirement living, your loved ones will be experiencing their own set of varied emotions.
The Right Time

Finding the perfect time for a move to a retirement community isn’t an exact science. As a general rule, seniors’ biggest fear is moving too early. In reality, the majority of seniors wait until it is too late for a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC), like Lakeview Village, where residents start in independent living and move to higher levels of care, if needed, years after they first arrive.

The 40/70 Rule

If your children are at least 40 years old and you are at least 70, it’s time to start talking to your loved ones about your next move. If you are anxious about broaching the topic, consider that according to the AARP, more than 75% of children with parents reaching retirement age have already considered their parents’ independent living options, even if they’ve never talked about it before.

You know your children best. Some may be ready for a direct conversation over dinner, where, together, you can discuss what a move to a retirement community would look like for the family. Others may need more time to get used to the idea. Start slowly, by bringing up the topic a little at a time. A few well-placed hints and short exploratory conversations while preparing dinner or waiting for your grandchildren after a soccer game are low-pressure opportunities to see how open your loved ones would respond to a potential move.

Be clear about why you want to move to a CCRC. Maybe maintaining your home has become overwhelming, you are having trouble navigating the stairs, or you want to ensure that you have a good plan for long-term care, should you need it.

Try saying, “I know this is difficult to talk about. I’m not making a decision today, but I have been thinking about my future, and I need to start making plans.”

Make sure you give your loved ones time to process the information and tell you their concerns. As you visit retirement communities, try to get answers to their questions so they will begin to feel more at ease about your decision.
Home is Where the Heart Is

So many wonderful memories take place in our homes. Of course, holidays spent in our homes are very meaningful, but everyday activities are just as sentimental. Gathering around the dinner table to eat and share about the day may be a treasured time. Many loved ones fear that if you move to a new place, those traditions will be lost. Lakeview Village makes it easy to continue these traditions after your move.

Many retirement communities offer community spaces that can be reserved for larger family gatherings, and Lakeview Village has an internal catering team that often caters family events. You will have room for the entire clan, without the cooking and cleaning that accompanied playing host in your family home.

Remind your loved ones that they will make memories in your new home, and that feeling at home is about the people who are gathered, not about where you are gathered.

Overall, Loved Ones Approve of Continuing Care Retirement Communities

- 93% agree that CCRCs are providing good services to residents
- 93% would recommend these communities to others as a good place to live
- 88% feel these communities have a high-quality reputation
- 76% feel that services provided reflect good value for fees paid

*Mather LifeWays, Brecht Associates and Ziegler Investment Banking, National Survey of Family Members of Residents Living in Continuing Care Retirement Communities*

Involving your Children in the Search

Your loved ones may feel more comfortable with your move if they can be part of the decision-making process. If you choose, invite your children to tour communities with you. This will give them a chance to ask questions and see everything the community has to offer. They may also find comfort in seeing the vibrancy of senior living communities. CCRCs offer so many convenient services and amenities that are focused on what seniors want and need to support their continued independence. Above all, be patient as you find the right solution for your family.

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This guide is brought to you by Lakeview Village. Lakeview Village is a nonprofit, Continuing Care Retirement Community in Lenexa, Kansas. It is the largest retirement community in Kansas, serving 700 residents on its 100-acre campus.

Learn more at lakeviewvillage.org. Contact us at 913-744-2449.