**Bringing Children to South Korea**

**Teaching in Korea with Kids**

****Exploring Korea with your family. What a great experience! But... there are many factors, challenges and contingencies to consider here. Here are a couple considerations:

* for single parents, who takes care of the kids while you are working.
* what happens with their education.
* what about language barriers.
* what about inoculations.
* what about socialization factors.
* what if they hate it.
* what about family back home.

Schools are often not too keen to hire teachers who have non-working spouses or children accompanying them because of a number of factors but probably most important to them is the pressure and stress that acclimation and acculturation that can factor into you breaking your contract and heading home - leaving the school without a teacher and in serious chaos.

Other challenges come with the housing that the school supplies for you. Teaching contracts in Korea generally state that the school will provide housing for the teacher. This regularly comes in the form of single housing (either one bedroom or bachelor type apartments) or shared housing (two bedroom apartments shared with another teacher). It is likely that neither of these situations would be suitable for someone living with a child or a spouse who is not working at the school.

**Option For Teachers Travelling with Families**

* Be prepared to pay extra for a larger place - the school can provide the 2 bedroom to you or perhaps get a larger accommodation and you pay the difference from what it would have cost them for the smaller place.
* Ask about getting a stipend for housing and source your own housing once you arrive. This can be more expensive and it can be challenging. If this is angle you wish to pursue you may want to arrive there first to sort this out before your family or spouse join you as it could get expensive to stay in a hotel.

The second difficulty lies in schooling and the adjustment of the child to life in a different country and culture. International schools (i.e. schools that teach in English) are extraordinarily expensive and it likely wouldn’t be feasible based on the salary you will be making. If you were going over with someone else then home schooling would be an option but unfortunately as a single parent this would be a very difficult undertaking.

Aside from schooling there is the issue of childcare. Most schools will not let your son or daughter spend the day at the school with you. This is something that doesn’t only apply to the foreign teachers but to all the teachers at the school. Teachers are not usually allowed to even enroll their children in the same school that they are employed at as teachers.

There is also the issue of getting the appropriate legal documentation for your dependent(s) (i.e. Dependent visa(s) for the child/children). This is something that you would have to research and take care of on your own.

Some schools will offer a pay out instead of a provided apartment thus allowing the teacher to find their own housing. The other option would be schools that offer home stays instead of a provided apartment. It is feasible to bring your family, but can be very complicated.

These and more should be considered when thinking about bringing your kid's with you to teach in Korea.

**More on Teaching in Korea with Kids**

Exploring [Korea](http://www.footprintsrecruiting.com/teaching-jobs-in-asia/teaching-jobs-in-korea) with your family. What a great experience!  Living in a foreign country can be an exciting opportunity for a child but the realities of caring for a child in a foreign country can be quite daunting. There are many factors, challenges and contingencies to consider. Here are a couple of things to think about:

* finding appropriate housing.
* what happens with their education.
* what about innoculations.
* what about socialization factors.
* what if they hate it.
* what about family back home.
* for single parents, who takes care of the kids while you are working.
* what about language barriers.

**Housing**  
If your contract includes accommodations, it is probably based on the assumption of single occupancy. This regularly comes in the form of single housing (either one bedroom or bachelor type apartments) or shared housing (two bedroom apartments shared with another teacher). It is likely that neither of these situations would be suitable for someone living with a child or a spouse who is not working at the school. Some schools will offer a pay out instead of a provided apartment thus allowing the teacher to find their own housing. The other option would be schools that offer home stays instead of a provided apartment.

You should discuss this with your school’s Administator. The school may help you and your family find suitable accommodations, even if they may not pay for them. Depending on the school and the country they may grant you a stipend to put towards rent.

* Be prepared to pay extra for a larger place - the school can provide the 1 bedroom to you or perhaps get a larger accommodation and you pay the difference from what it would have cost them for the smaller place.
* Ask about getting a stipend for housing and source your own housing once you arrive. This can be more expensive and it can be challenging. If this is angle you wish to pursue you may want to arrive there first to sort this out before your family or spouse join you as it could get expensive to stay in a hotel.

**Education/Child Care**  
Will your child be school age during your stay? If so, have you researched public education systems?  And what documents will you need to bring back to your home country so as not to interrupt your child’s education when returning home? International schools (i.e. schools that teach in English) are extraordinarily expensive and it likely wouldn’t be feasible based on the salary you will be making.

Generally your spouse will not be able to work legally, unless they also obtain a working visa. If you are going over with someone else then home schooling would be an option but unfortunately as a single parent this would be a very difficult undertaking.  Teachers are not usually allowed to even enroll their children in the same school that they are employed at as teachers.

**Kindergarten**   
Education-centered facilities are for ages 5 through 7 and placement is based on birth date.  Most operate until 2 p.m. There are both public and private kindergartens, with public kindergartens costing around 300,000 won and private ones costing somewhere near 1,500,000 won a month.  Most kindergartens provide school meals and operate a school bus.

**Day Care Centers**  
There are Day Care and educational facilities for ages between infant and child. Most have full day programs. But they are not as readily available as they are in Western countries.  There are both government and private day care centers. The costs vary according to age and facility, but government supported facilities are usually between 200,000 won and 500,000 won a month and privately run centers range between 400,000 and 1,000,000. In a large city you may be able to enroll your child into a local, bilingual day care.

**Nannies**  
Live-in nannies can be found through referrals from other ex-pats. These referrals are most often word-of-mouth through embassy or industry circles, formal organizations or postings at places frequented by ex-pats or housekeeping agencies and in English newspapers.  In some countries such as Singapore child care and live-in help is a much more common occurrence than in other countries such as Korea where it is also more likely to find live-in caregivers with a high level of English. Korea has very little child care available, nor are there many English speaking schools. The few that exist in Korea are very expensive and may not be located near your job location.

Cost for a full-time live-in nanny will be at least $1M Won/month with a month (or two) paid as an annual bonus. Part-time cost is approximately 50,000 Won/day.   Furthermore, costs and availability will vary depending on your work schedule. If you work in a private institution, finding child care in the evenings will be more difficult.

**Documentation**  
There is also the issue of getting the appropriate legal documentation for your dependent(s) (i.e. Dependent visa(s) for the child/children). Contacting your local consulate before beginning this process is highly recommended.

**HealthCare**  
Health care for your child may not be easy to arrange. Will you be able to find consistent care from English speaking doctors, dentists, or ophthalmologists?

In the end, planning a move to another country with your family can be an exciting time, but only if all variables are considered and if you have researched your country of destination thoroughly to make sure they are able to offer the kind of services you will require.