The young women coming into Relief Society need to be **properly taught** and **welcomed**. They need to know what the expectations of Relief Society are. How are they going to contribute? Where are their gifts needed? The young women have been well prepared. Now they need to serve. The young women need a **place to serve** the minute they get into Relief Society. So, along with a great welcome, they need to be taught.

**What can we do to help with the transition of young women into Relief Society?**

- Have a special Relief Society inviting all young women and the moms of the graduating young women to join the Relief Society Sunday class. Present each young woman individually. Have her come up and sit in a chair at the front. Assign a sister before hand to gather information about the young women. Anything that would help the other sisters get to know her. Have the assigned sister wear an apron made especially for the young woman. After the sister’s comments take the apron off and tie it around the young woman’s waist saying “We love you and we are tying you into our Relief Society.”
- Bridge program (see handout A).
- “Welcome to Relief Society” gift bag. Put a picture of Christ, RS manual, an apron, and a hymn book in a cute gift back with the “Welcome to Relief Society” paper (see handout B).
- Make sure young women are invited to several Relief Society activities a year. Maybe the young women could plan one of them and invite the Relief Society.
- Adopt a Grandma! While the girls are still in the young women’s program have them adopt an older sister in the ward. Plan activities or service opportunities where they can develop a relationship before the young women enters Relief Society.
- Assign a Relief Society counselor the specific responsibility of working with young adult women until they successfully make the transition into Relief Society.
- Make the first visiting teaching experience a good one and assign a partner that they know well. Consider having the young women go visiting teaching with their mother the first month.
- Communication between the Relief Society president and the Young Women’s president is essential.
- When young women see their moms go to Relief Society and have a good attitude, it sets a good example.
- Have the Laurels attend Relief Society once a month. Young women who have done this reported that it was much easier to go into Relief Society once they’ve graduated.
• If the young woman’s mom is not in Relief Society, make sure they have someone that they would feel comfortable sitting by such as a past YW leader who could watch out for them.

• Give graduating young women a journal with the testimonies of young women leaders and relief society leaders.

• Assign a sister to each young woman coming into Relief Society to be a mentor and give her one-on-one attention by giving rides, support, and love to the young woman.

“You are now a part of Relief Society
But don’t start to run.
We’re not old “fuddy-duddies”
So come join the fun!
It’s hard to leave Young Women’s
We know, we’ve been there.
We thought we’d reach out and tell you
WE CARE!
By meeting with us you’ll learn a lot of ways
To improve your life so you’ll have better days.
We will try to help you fit right in
We can’t wait until you begin!
WELCOME!

“All women have the responsibility of helping our young adult sisters recognize that they, too, have a place in Relief Society. We need to become acquainted with each girl, learn her name, learn about her activities and interests, and make every effort to enfold her into our sisterhood before she turns 18... there's a domino effect that happens when we lose one young adult woman—we're potentially losing her entire future family. You see, if [a young woman] leaves Relief Society before she ever enters, her children are far less likely to be a part of the Church and may become a broken link in an eternal family.”

Bonnie Parkin
The Bridge Program

Our ward Relief Society Presidency celebrated the Laurels who were graduating by having a special recognition night to welcome them into Relief Society. We invited the Laurel Class, the YW leaders, and just the mothers of those senior girls, and had them bring a baby picture and a current picture of their daughter. We had the younger girls in the Laurel Class help decorate with our theme and do the dessert so they would be involved and look forward to the program when it was their turn.

The first speaker was the YW President telling them how wonderful they are and how much they are loved, and passing them on to the RS President. Then, the RS President spoke, telling them how excited everyone is to have them in Relief Society. They are only in YW for 6 years, but they are in RS for the rest of their lives! They shouldn’t be nervous; they should be excited, because there are so many wonderful women of all different ages to learn from. We talked about this being the next step in their journey to the Temple. Then, we asked the Singles Ward RS President to come and speak. She would tell them all about what to expect if they decided to go to the Singles Ward. Finally, we had the Bishop speak and tell them how proud he was of their accomplishments and how excited he was for their future.

For the special ending, we had each of those Laurels come up to the front. The YW President hugged them and sent them one by one over a little bridge (like the Cub Scouts use for their Arrow of Light). On the other side of the bridge was a big picture of the Temple on an easel and the RS President and the Bishop waiting to hug them, congratulate and welcome them to this next wonderful step in their lives. Then, we all enjoyed dessert. We displayed the girls’ pictures all around the dessert presentation.

We usually did this at someone’s home so it felt cozier. Each of the speakers took about 5 minutes. This way it wasn’t too long. Most of the time we had them go across the bridge outside and sometimes we were able to pick a home that already had a bridge as part of their landscaping. If the YW Pres. decided to give the girls a gift, it would be given right before they went over the bridge. Or likewise, if the RS Presidency were giving them a gift instead, it would be given on their side of the bridge. All of the girls and their moms really enjoyed it and the Laurels said that it made them so much more at ease going into RS.
WELCOME TO RELIEF SOCIETY

"You need Relief Society...and Relief Society needs you."

Silvia H Allred, General RS Presidency

**Picture of Christ** - You are joining His organization for His daughters. You are now part of a worldwide Circle of Sisters. When we come together for a lesson, an activity or to give service, our love for each other and our Savior increases and we are strengthened.

**RS Manual** - May this manual be a reminder that learning is a lifelong endeavor. There is so much knowledge at our fingertips today, but the Savior himself, taught us what is most important, "Learn of Me". Always attend your Sunday meetings and remember, no matter what organization your serve in, you belong to Relief Society.

**Apron** - This apron is symbolic of service. Our Relief Society motto is "Charity Never Faileth". Charity often requires action. Whether serving in our homes or outside of them, serving those we love or people we have never met, as Relief Society sisters, we often roll up our sleeves, put on our aprons and go to work.

**Hymn Book** (*Charity Never Faileth* printed on the front) - Sister Emma Smith was commanded to compile the first Book of Hymns and she served as the first Relief Society President. The Lord wants His daughters to seek and enjoy the refined uplifting things in life. As you participate in Relief Society, you will have opportunities to learn and grow and often share with others. Many times you will be asked to do things you have never done before. Remember, Emma didn't know how to be a RS Pres when she was called. Trust in the Lord and He will help you accomplish all that you are asked to do.