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*Listening, learning,  
and living together:  
it's the science of life.*

## Moving with Children<sup>1</sup>

*Leah Vermeer and Suzanna Smith<sup>2</sup>*

A new home, a new school, a new neighborhood, and new friends. Moving can be a difficult transition for children. The United States is a highly mobile society, with 15-20% of its population changing residences every year. Families move because of a change of employment, financial pressures, or many other reasons. Moving affects every member of the family, but it has the greatest impact on children. Research has shown that children who move often may be at greater risk for social problems and difficulties at school. Entering a new school may damage a child's test scores and grade point average. A child may also find it hard to establish important relationships with new teachers and administrators. Socially, a child may have difficulty making friends, may experience conflict with others, or become antisocial after a move.

If a family must move, there are many ways parents can make the transition smoother for their children. First, nurture a supportive family environment. Make sure to let your children know that you understand this is a difficult time for them. Second, allow plenty of time for the move. This helps children adjust more easily. Finally, try to establish new social connections soon after the move. Encourage and help your children to get to know

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their teachers and to make new friends at school and in the neighborhood. With a little attention, parents can make what may be a stressful situation more pleasant.

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