

A smooth move makes for a happier child

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(HealthDay)—Moving from one community to another can be difficult for everyone in the family, especially if leaving friends and relatives behind. But the problems can be magnified for kids who have to switch

middle or high schools.

Studies show that, for [high school students](#), moving just once in a 12-month period can cut in half the likelihood of their getting a [high school diploma](#) by age 25. And these findings hold true whether students move to a poorer or richer neighborhood.

When moving is inevitable, you can better help your child if you understand his or her temperament. If he or she has had difficulties with transitions in the past—such as moving from elementary to [middle school](#) or going through physical changes like puberty—know that he or she will need more help adjusting to a new school. And that it will be even harder if going through another one of those transitions at the same time.

The key is to start early, well before the first day of class, and to get [school administrators](#) to partner with you. For instance, find out if you and your child can visit the school and meet teachers a few days in advance.

Also, let your child know he or she can stay connected to friends left behind with age-appropriate social media and technology like video chats.

As anxious as parents are about getting ready for a move and possibly a change in job, remember that it will go more smoothly when mom and dad work together to make it as easy as possible for the kids—as well as themselves.

More information: The nonprofit GreatSchools.org has more tips to make [school transitions](#) easier.

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