

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL RELOCATION:
ITS EFFECT ON PERSONAL
AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

by

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Abstract

The relationship between children's residential relocation and their subsequent adjustment was considered in this study. Three major questions were addressed. The first question was concerned with a comparison of the Personal, Social, and Total Adjustment Scores obtained on the California Test of Personality by a group of transient children to those obtained by a group of their non transient peers. Subjects were male and female fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students representing seven local elementary schools. While the transient group scored lower than the non transient group on all three of the adjustment measures, statistical significance was not reached for any of the differences.

The second question was concerned with which specific factors of the relocation experience as assessed during individual interviews with transient subjects were the best predictors of Personal, Social, and Total Adjustment Scores. A multiple regression approach was employed. The distance of the move was the only significant predictor of the criterion variable Personal Adjustment. The number of times moved previously, the child's perception of the father's attitude toward the move, and the sex of the child were significant

predictors of the criterion variable Social Adjustment. The child's perception of the father's attitude toward the move was a significant predictor of the criterion variable Total Adjustment.

The third question attempted to identify the concerns of transient children and their perceptions of the relocation experience as indicated by their responses to descriptive, open-ended interview questions. Thematic categories of responses were identified and discussed. The implications of the results of this study for counselling and for future research were considered.

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I am grateful to the principals at each of the schools I did my research in, to the parents who consented to their children's participation in the study, and most of all, to the children whose honesty and willingness to share made this study meaningful.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family who supported and encouraged me through our many family moves and through the completion of this project.

CHAPTER I

Statement of Problem

Residential relocation has become an increasingly common procedure for families in contemporary Western societies. The predominant reason for relocation is related to the employment of either parent (Smardo, 1981), and since younger families relocate more often during the early productive career years, more younger children than adolescents have to face the potential problems of relocation (Lehr & Hendrickson, 1968).

According to most recent Canadian census figures, approximately 1 1/2 million children in Canada (over 25 percent of all children 17 years of age and under) changed residences during 1981 - 82 (Conger, 1982). In our mobile society there is every indication that this figure will continue to rise (Allan & Bardsley, 1984).

The effects of residential relocation on children, however, remain largely unresearched (Allan & Bardsley, 1984; Blair, Marchant, & Medway, 1984). We do know from inquiry and observation that, for many of these children, adjustments to separation from one's friends and relocation into a new and unfamiliar school and neighborhood environment can be stressful and may amplify "normal problems" of personal and social development (Buchmueller, 1972; Smardo, 1981), but as Buchmueller (1972) stated, "We need to know a good deal more (from adequate social science and psychological research)

about what [moving] means to children, its effects on their psycho-social development" (p. 5).

Allan and Bardsley (1984) have echoed Buchmueller's concern over a decade later, stressing that we need to understand the problems facing transient children, both their inner world psychological issues and their outer world adaptation to a new community, school, and friends. A lack of conclusive research results and several proffered hypotheses which lack empirical testing leave this concern relevant today. With an increasing number of Canadian children relocating annually, parents, teachers, counsellors, and any others who are involved in the lives of transient children need to understand both the potential effects of relocation, and the concerns of these children, in order to facilitate their adjustment.

The purposes of the present study were to investigate empirically the relationship between children's residential relocation and their personal and social adjustment, to identify any critical factors of relocation potentially related to adjustment, and to gain an understanding of both the personal and practical concerns of transient children.

To aid in clarity, for the purpose of this study, residential relocation was defined as the change of residence for an intact family to a new community within or outside the city of existing residence. Transient children were defined as children (limited to individuals between the ages of 8 and

11 years) who had moved as part of intact families (families where both mother and father reside together with their children) to a new community and a new school within the past year. The performance of a group of transient children on the California Test of Personality (a standardized instrument measuring life adjustment as a balance between personal and social adjustment) was compared with the performance of a group of their non transient peers (children who are members of intact families and who have not changed their place of residence since beginning elementary school).

In summary, this study considered the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of transient and non transient children's Personal Adjustment Scores on the California Test of Personality?
2. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of transient and non transient children's Social Adjustment Scores on the CTP?
3. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of transient and non transient children's Total Adjustment Scores on the CTP?
4. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of transient and non transient children's scores on each of every level of the Personal Adjustment subscales?

5. Is there a significant difference between the mean scores of transient and non transient children's scores on each of every level of the Social Adjustment subscales?
6. Is there a significant difference between the performance of the transient and non transient groups on any individual question(s) on the CTP?
7. Is there a significant correlation between transient children's CTP Personal, Social, or Total Adjustment Scores and their Self Rating Scale of Adjustment Scores?
8. Which specific factors of the relocation experience as measured by the Interview Rating Scale are the best predictors of Personal Adjustment, Social Adjustment, and Total Adjustment?
9. What do transient children's responses to open ended questions in an individual interview indicate about their concerns and their perceptions of the relocation experience?

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

The portrayal of residential relocation as a stressful life event for children is predominant in the relocation literature. Stokols and Shumaker (1982) state, "The characterization of residential relocation as a stressful life event is intuitively appealing" (p. 151), for inherent in the act of relocation are the stressful experiences of separating from the familiar and adapting to the unfamiliar. The inclusion of residential relocation as a "stressor" item on recently developed children's life events check lists (Johnson, 1982) is indicative of such characterization. In his study of stressed children, Elkind (1981) stated that separation of any kind is stressful for children and yet, is a normal and healthy part of growth. He cautioned, however, that too much separation can overstress a child and lead to serious changes in health and behavior. Many of the separation experiences Elkind cited as contributing to such stress overload are inherent in the relocation experience (i.e. separation from friends, school, and extracurricular activities). Among the most common general contributors to children's stress cited by Elkind were moving to a new house, moving to another part of town, or moving to a new city.

While it is generally agreed in the literature that relocation does create stress for children, there is some variation in the extent to which that stress is perceived as

affecting the children's personal and social adjustment or "psycho-social" development. In considering this developmental issue, the research of Michael Inbar (1976) is relevant. His research influenced the choice of subject age range to be considered in this study. Inbar has documented a Vulnerable Age phenomenon suggesting that children in the 6- to 11-year old age bracket may be more vulnerable to crises in their environment than either younger or older youths.

The Vulnerable Age phenomenon was first documented in a cross cultural study of Moroccan immigrants to France and Israel (Inbar & Adler, 1976). The dependent variable in this study was school achievement (as indicated by college attendance and average years of schooling completed) and the independent variable was the age of immigration. Children in the 6- to 11-year age range exhibited a significantly lower rate of successful schooling than either younger or older youths (Table 1). There is now evidence based on replications carried out with data from the Canadian census of 1971 and data from the American Project TALENT Data Bank (Inbar, 1976) to suggest that within-country geographic mobility produces the same Vulnerable Age effect. Inbar states:

The possibility exists therefore, that a variety of crises in the environment of juveniles may have heretofore unsuspected consequences. At the very least, school transfers during grade-school years would appear

Table 1

Percentage of Children Admitted to College
At Date of Immigration

Age at time of family's immigration	0-5	6-11	12-15	16+
Percentage admitted to college	.26 (N=47)	.13 ^a (N=77)	.25 (N=65)	.29 (N=47)

^a χ^2 , 1 d.f. (6-11 age group versus others) = 5.23, $p < .05$.

Note: From "The Vulnerable Age Phenomenon" by M. Inbar,
1976, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

to be more problematic events than is generally assumed to be the case. (p. 2)

Inbar (1976) offered as a tentative theoretical explanation for the Vulnerable Age phenomenon in mobility studies, a model based on a desocialization-resocialization paradigm. This paradigm sees social adaptation to a new environment as involving a painful process of unlearning and relearning. The process, he theorized, is not applicable (at least where school environment is concerned) to very young children. With regard to older children, Inbar hypothesized that being more articulate, they are able to command more help and attention both inside and outside the family and are better equipped to deal with school problems than younger children. The problems encountered by these young grade-school children on the other hand, are likely to be given low priority by family members or go unnoticed altogether.

In addition to this environmental explanation, Inbar cited developmental factors which could account for the Vulnerable Age phenomenon and which bear relevance, in any case, to the consideration of children's residential relocation. Citing the research of Entwisle and Frasure (1973), Inbar noted that an important interaction between language and cognitive development processes occurs between the ages of 6 and 11. He hypothesized that the vulnerability of children in mid-childhood to crises and changes in their social and school environments may reflect an interference

with such development.

Another developmental explanation, according to Inbar, may be related to the research of Jean Piaget. Piaget (1965) identified a developmental stage between the ages of 7 and 11, during which acceptance of cooperation and social control through socially agreed upon rules occurred. Inbar hypothesized that disruption of the transition to this stage of cooperation could contribute to the Vulnerable Age effect. In yet another developmental explanation, Inbar referred to the work of Henry Stack Sullivan. Sullivan (1953) conceptualized a stage of development between the approximate ages of 6 to 10, called the juvenile era. The juvenile era is critical, according to Sullivan, in that it is the actual time for "becoming social". Sullivan stated:

Other things being equal, if one is getting on at all fortunately in juvenile society, it is a very good thing to stay in that group of juveniles throughout the period . . . continuous upheaval in schooling . . . is apt to leave a very considerable handicap in this and subsequent phases of development. (p. 241-242)

Sullivan's theory, in addition to offering a potential explanation for the Vulnerable Age phenomenon, is relevant in considering the relationship between children's residential relocation and their social adjustment.

Residential Relocation and Social Adjustment

The effect of relocation on the social adjustment of the

transient child, according to Hurlock (1964) is rarely favorable. The child who moves, she states, ". . . feels that he does not belong anywhere, either in the old group with which he no longer has contacts or in the new group which has not accepted him as a recognized member". (p. 425) The child is, therefore, cut off from the companionship of the peer group at the very time when other major life adjustments must be made. This experience, according to Hurlock, may result in the transient child lacking a sense of identity, and therefore experiencing a feeling of social isolation. Others have agreed with Hurlock, claiming that leaving one's friends behind can be emotionally wrenching and finding new friends can be a painful and lonely process (Calvo, 1969; Rubin, 1980).

The results of studies which sought to identify the major concerns of transient children confirm these claims. Lehr and Hendrickson (1968) interviewed one hundred and fifty-three recently relocated elementary school children in grades two through six and found that "leaving friends" was the thing these children disliked most about moving. Conversely, "meeting new friends" was what they liked best. Similar reactions were obtained by Bekins (cited in Smardo, 1982) who found that "leaving friends" was the worst part about moving (84%) for 6-year-old children and "going to a new school" (33%) and "making new friends" (33%) were the best. Lane (1972) found that the top concerns of elementary

school children who moved were fear of failure in school work, of failure to make friends, and of being different.

The transient child's experience of social isolation may have implications for the transient family. Tooley (1970) noted in her clinical observations that, prior to relocating, family members pursue their own interests and have their own friends, but moving disrupts that arrangement and the subsequent isolation can result in family members supporting one another in the adjustment to the move and consequently, strengthening family ties. On the other hand, Bossard and Boll (1966) stated that family solidarity may be difficult to maintain in the readjustment process following a family move. Switzer et al. (1961) supported this view stating that during this unsettled time children may experience feelings of lessened parental attention.

Residential Relocation and Personal Adjustment

There emerges a theme from the writings of several researchers that, for children, the experience of relocating constitutes a real and painful loss. The relocation experience has been compared to the experience of death and grief (Allan & Bardsley, 1984) and feeling abandoned by a loved one (Heller, 1982). Responses to this loss, it has been suggested, include hurt, sadness, and aloof detachment (Allan & Bardsley, 1984), as well as loneliness, irritability, and direct or displaced anger (Heller, 1982; Rubin, 1980).

Switzer et al. (1961) hypothesized that the core problem for children who move is their feelings of helplessness and isolation. The clinical findings of Stubblefield and Hirschberg (1955) lend support to this view. They stated:

The one factor which all of these children reacting to family moves seemed to share in common was an impairment (usually temporary) in their capacity to make effective contact with other human beings; in effect these children became, to a greater or lesser degree, isolated. Yet at the same time, because of the many factors in moving . . . the child is less able to communicate his distress to his family or his peers, and suffers from a greater sense of helplessness and a lessened capacity to handle his feelings on a realistic level. (p. 124)

A feeling of insecurity (both emotional and physical) has been cited as another major problem for transient children. Lehr and Hendrickson (1968) stated that transient elementary school children may feel insecure among new peers who have values and expectations that are unfamiliar to them. Others hypothesize that children lose the feeling of "place-related security" when they move (Allan & Bardsley, 1984; Bush, 1977). Bossard and Boll (1966) elaborated on this concept, theorizing that the house and street where one lives are symbols of stability in the concrete thinking of children and that a change of residence breaks the continuity of life

expressed in these tangible family possessions.

It has been hypothesized (though it lacks empirical testing) that transient children are more self critical and have lower self concepts than children who do not move (Allan & Bardsley, 1984). Wagner and Felletti (1974) support this hypothesis, stating, "Perhaps one of the lesser known hazards is that the personality development of children in these mobile families appears to lag behind that of their geographically stable peers" (p. 139). They speculate that frequent changes in home and school hinder self concept development by not providing these children with sufficient in depth interaction with any one reference group.

In contrast to the perception of a relationship between relocation and negative emotional experiences, some have considered relocation to be related to positive emotional experiences for children. They believe that family moves may teach children to be more adaptable, self reliant, flexible, and independent (Allan & Bardsley, 1984; Smardo, 1981). Others support this view, adding that transient children may develop a more cosmopolitan outlook on life (Lehr & Hendrickson, 1968), enabling them to adapt to complex and changing future environments (Heller, 1982).

Whether relocation is perceived as having negative or positive consequences in terms of adjustment, there is agreement in the literature that moving does create some stress for children and that resolution of the stress is best facilitated by providing transient children with an

opportunity to share their concerns about the move in a positive, supportive environment with understanding adults (Allan & Bardsley, 1984; Blair et al., 1984; Smardo, 1981).

Factors Related to Adjustment

Several researchers hold the premise that relocation is a complex problem and that research in this area must take into account critical and related factors of the moving experience (Smardo, 1981; Switzer et al., 1961; Whalen & Fried, 1973). Most agree that adjustment to the move will depend upon the individual personal characteristics of the child (Switzer et al., 1961; Heller, 1982), as well as the perceived situational context in which the move is embedded and experienced by the child (Stokols & Shumaker, 1982).

Parental attitude toward the move is a factor commonly cited as being related to children's adjustment in a broader contextual analysis of relocation (Allan & Bardsley, 1984; Stubblefield & Hirschberg, 1955; Switzer et al., 1961). Snyder (1969) found that the responses of mobile students to questions about the effect of frequent changes in schools indicated that their attitudes mirrored the attitudes of their parents. Lehr and Hendrickson (1968) hypothesized that parents' anxiety and concern about the move is transferred to the child and concluded that the positive attitude toward moving held by the parents in their study may have been a contributing factor to the high adjustment scores of the children.

The child's perception of the reason for the move may also be related to adjustment. Switzer et al. (1961) stated that if the child interprets the move as an indication of family dysfunction or possible disintegration, adjustment is likely to be adversely affected. Stubblefield and Hirschberg (1955) stressed that children need to explore the reasons for the move, and to become aware of its probable impact on themselves and their relationships.

Predictability and perceived control are intertwining factors which may be related to the child's adjustment. Switzer et al. (1961) stress that family discussions in advance about the move increase the child's opportunity to feel participation and decrease feelings of helplessness or loss of control. They state, "The child should know about the planned move as far in advance as possible, in order that he may work through as many of his concerns, resistances, misconceptions, and incorrect understandings as possible" (p. 535). Stokols and Shumaker (1982), in their research on elderly involuntary residential relocation, found that interventions designed to make new environments more predictable and controllable (i.e., on-site visits, information about available activities) significantly reduced the risk of mortality among the institutionalized elderly. Such findings may be relevant for children who are also often "involuntary" participants in the relocation experience.

There may be a relationship between adjustment and the

number of moves the child has made in the past. According to Rubin (1980), who studied children's friendships, social adjustment may be more difficult with repeated moves, while Allan and Bardsley (1983) found that just one move, particularly in the lower school grades, can be traumatic for a child.

Finally, some researchers have suggested that stressful reactions to a move may be temporary and decrease with time (Smardo, 1981; Switzer et al., 1961), suggesting that the length of time passed since the move may be a factor in adjustment.

CHAPTER III

Method

Subjects

The population considered in this study was the transient and nontransient fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students in seven elementary schools in the Greater Victoria School District. This district was chosen because it afforded a wide range of transient families. Transient families are typically well represented in areas near naval or military bases or in areas of poor socio-economic conditions. The Greater Victoria District includes both schools serving a naval base and schools in low income areas, as well as schools in more economically prosperous neighborhoods where corporately relocated families are better represented.

The following seven schools were chosen for participation in this study: Rockheights and View Royal Elementary schools (located near a naval base), Blanshard, James Bay, and Victoria West Elementary schools (located in or serving areas of poor socio-economic conditions), Gordon Head and Willows Elementary schools (located in or serving more economically prosperous areas).

Each of these schools conducted a "new pupil registration week" in late August, prior to the regular registration dates. The parents of all grades 4, 5 and 6

students who registered at this time and whose records indicated that the family was intact and transient as defined for the purpose of this study, were sent letters of consent (Appendix A). It was anticipated that both registration and response numbers would be high enough to allow for a random selection of participants from each school. However, both low registration and low response rates made it necessary to combine the schools according to typical "transiency type" (as bracketed above) as follows: Group 1: Rockheights and View Royal, Group 2: James Bay, Victoria West, and Blanshard, and Group 3: Gordon Head and Willows.

A random selection of eight students from each grouping comprised the original transient group sample. One member of this group relocated again prior to being interviewed, and six members revealed during their interviews that their families were not intact as their records had indicated, and they did not, therefore, meet the criteria for inclusion in this study. The remaining 17 participants included 7 males and 10 females (two of whom were a brother and a sister), ranging in age from 8-to 11-years old.

At each school during the new pupil registration week, a grade-wise matching number of non transient students' names was drawn randomly from school records by the school principals. The randomly selected student was retained in the study as a potential member of the non transient group if, in the principal's judgement, their records indicated that their families were non transient and intact as defined for

the purpose of the study. The parents of these students were also sent letters of consent (Appendix A). Again, of those who replied, a random selection of eight names from each of the three school groupings was selected for participation in the study. Since one member of the original transient group sample had been excluded from participation prior to interviewing, one name was chosen at random for exclusion from the non transient group to make the original sample groups equal in number. The remaining 23 member non transient group sample included 13 males and 10 females, also ranging in age from 8 to 11 years.

Instruments

To assess the level of personal and social adjustment of all subjects, the California Test of Personality, Elementary Level, 1953 Revision, Form AA (Clark, Thorpe & Tiegs, 1953) was employed. The California Test of Personality (CTP) is organized around the concept of total adjustment as a balance between personal and social adjustment. The CTP is divided into two parts, the Personal Adjustment Scale and the Social Adjustment Scale. The items in the Personal Adjustment Scale are designed to measure six components of personal adjustment: self reliance, sense of personal worth, sense of personal freedom, feeling of belonging, withdrawing tendencies, and nervous symptoms. The items in the Social Adjustment Scale are designed to measure six components of social adjustment: social standards, social skills, anti-

social tendencies, family relations, school relations, and community relations. A Total Adjustment Score is obtained by combining the raw scores for the six Personal Adjustment component scales and the raw scores for the six Social Adjustment component scales.

The CTP was chosen for use in this study for several reasons. First, it allowed for assessment of the students' level of adjustment on a variety of relevant variables with a single instrument. As mentioned in the literature review, in previous research, relationships have been found or hypothesized to exist between children's residential relocation and the following variables: self reliance, self concept, helplessness, feeling of belonging, insecurity, loneliness, anger and irritability. The six components of the Personal Adjustment Scale of the CTP assess children's adjustment on each of the variables cited. Relationships have also been found or hypothesized to exist between children's residential relocation and the following variables: social skills, social isolation, family adjustment, and peer relations. The six components of the Social Adjustment Scale of the CTP coincide with these variables.

The CTP was also chosen because of its reported reliability and validity in numerous studies (Buros, 1970), as well as by the test authors (Clark, Thorpe & Tiegs, 1953). As reported in the test manual, reliability coefficients

computed with the Kuder-Richardson internal consistency formula range from .59 to .83 for component items and .93 for Total Personal Adjustment, .92 for Total Social Adjustment, and .94 for Total Adjustment. The degree of correlation between each item and the Total Adjustment Score was computed with the phi coefficient. All test scores were positively correlated with the Total Adjustment Score ranging between .19 to .70. Intercorrelations among the test subsections ranged from $r = .37$ to .72.

With regard to validity, the authors provide evidence of construct validity with testimonial statements that the CTP correlated more closely with clinical findings than any other personality test (assumed to indicate convergent validity) and by a statement that a factor analysis indicated that all component items were making a net contribution to the test. Construct validity was demonstrated by the detailed process of constructing the test outlined in the test manual (Clark, Thorpe, & Tiegs, 1953).

Finally, the CTP was chosen for use in this study because of its appropriateness for the age range and grade levels considered. The test items on the elementary level of the CTP were designed to be comprehensible by children in grades 4 to 8. Although the test provided established norms for children in this age range, the norms were established in 1953, with American children. It was decided, therefore, to compare scores of transient children with those of non transient children from the same population rather than use

test norms.

Pilot Work

Since the CTP is an American test published in 1953, pilot testing was carried out to assess the clarity of meaning of the test items for the Canadian subjects considered in the present study. The test was administered to 14 children between the ages of 8 and 12 years at a local, after-school care program. The children were asked to report to the researcher any words or items which were unclear in meaning to them. The researcher then explained the meaning of the word or item and offered potential rephrasings of it. The children then voted on what was, in their opinion, the most clarifying rephrasing of the item.

As a result of the pilot testing, the CTP was modified in three ways. First, some items were restated for clarity of meaning. Examples of such modifications include:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| (original item) | Have unfair people often said that you made trouble for them? |
| (modified version) | Have unfair people often blamed you for things? |
| | |
| (original item) | Do your folks often stop you from going around with your friends? |
| (modified version) | Do your parents often stop you from hanging around with your friends? |

Secondly, a box at the bottom of each page of the original test containing the words "number right" was deleted on the modified version, as it was felt that such a phrase might encourage the children to answer only in a socially

desirable direction rather than in honesty.

Finally, the items in the modified version of the CTP were "scrambled". The original CTP is organized into 12 sections with each section containing 12 questions around one concept (i.e., feelings of belonging). As a precaution against the possibility of subjects developing a response set, the modified version also consisted of 12, 12 question sections, however, each section contained only one item from each of the original 12 sections.

Interview

In order to assess which specific factors of relocation were the best predictors of transient children's adjustment scores and to assess the children's perceptions of the relocation experience, a semi structured interview format was developed. The interview schedule (Appendix B) contained seven questions designed to elicit predictive information and four questions designed to elicit descriptive information.

The seven predictive variables assessed in the predictive questions were: length of time since move, distance of move, clarity of perception of reason for move, number of times moved previously, child's perception of parental attitudes toward the move, degree of predictability (as indicated by the amount of discussion in advance of the move, the children had with their parents or any significant adults about the areas of their lives likely to be affected (i.e., schools, friends, etc.), and degree of perceived

control (as indicated by the children's perceptions of how much their input was an influence in the decision to move). A rating procedure was developed based on a Likert-type scale (Appendix C), consisting of five points along an increasing (with optimum predicted adjustment) score valued continuum. The criteria for scoring of responses along the continuum were established by first, evaluating recordings of all subjects' responses to each question, identifying the range of all possible responses, and finally, establishing criteria for categories of responses appropriate to score values within the range. Descriptive labels were situated at the midpoint and both extremes of the scale. Where it was possible for a response to fall between the above points, additional descriptive labels were included. For example, under the question, "Where did you move here from?" a rating of "1" indicated "out of province", and a rating of "3" indicated "within province", and a rating of "5" indicated "locally". For the subjects in this study, none fell between such points. However, under the question, "How do you think your mom felt about moving?" a rating of "1" indicated "clearly negative", a rating of "3" indicated "indifferent", and a rating of "5" indicated "clearly positive". The points "2" and "4" were reserved for responses which fell between the extreme points (i.e., "somewhat negative or positive").

Since three of the questions clearly involved some degree of judgement on the part of the researcher as to the assignment of a rating score, reliability testing was carried

out by three independent judges on a random selection of half of the subjects' responses to the three questions.

Interjudge agreement between the original scoring by the researcher and that provided by the three independent judges for the first part of the question (How do you think your mom felt about moving?) was 86% and for the second part (How do you think your dad felt about moving?) was 79%. Agreement for the second question (Before you moved, did you talk to your parents or anyone else about what moving might be like for you?) was 92%. Agreement for the third question (How much say did you feel you had in your family's decision to move?) was 96%.

An additional four interview questions were designed to elicit descriptive information about the relocation experience for children. The questions were open-ended and phrased as a request for advice (i.e., "If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, what would you tell them it might be like for them?") as opposed to a direct personal solicitation of information (i.e., "What was moving like for you?") as the former approach had been more effective during informal pilot interviews with transient children.

Of the four questions, the first sought to identify the major areas of concern for the children, as well as the positive aspects of moving in their perception. Secondly, in order to gain some insight into the social readjustment process following a move, the children were asked how they

the subjects' responses could be included. For example, some response categories of "good things about moving" included "meeting new friends", "doing new things", and "seeing new places". A complete description of each category for each question is presented in Appendix D. By referring to the subjects' numerical identification codes on each content card, it was possible to determine the number of individual responses in each category, as well as the total proportion of responses in the category, including more than one contribution by any one individual.

Inter Rater Reliability

A panel of eight independent judges was enlisted for reliability testing. The judges were presented with the written criteria for assignment to each response category as defined by the researcher (Appendix D), as well as with a random selection of one third of all subjects' verbatim responses to each question. Judges were asked to indicate which (if any) of the categories they would assign each response. For each question there was also an "other" category to which the judges could assign responses which, in their opinion, did not belong in any of the categories defined by the researcher. In this manner the procedure was a test of the reliability of the assignment of responses to categories, as well as of the appropriateness of the categories themselves.

Interjudge agreement between the original categorization

would go about making friends in the new community. The third question considered the children's perception of the effect of the move on the family as a whole. Finally, in an attempt to elicit information potentially useful in developing intervention strategies, the children were asked how they felt moving could have been made easier for them.

Content Analysis of Responses

Responses to interview questions yielding descriptive data were systematically analyzed. Using the tape recordings of the interviews, each subject's interview was transcribed. The subjects' responses to each question were then recorded on individual content cards with their numerical identification codes (indicating transiency/non transiency, school attended, and individual participant number) printed on the back. It was possible (and most often the case) for one subject to have more than one response to a single question (i.e., "What were some of the good things about moving they might expect?"). Conversely, some subjects did not respond to some questions. All distinctly separate responses to a single question by a subject were recorded on individual content cards. As well, if a subject repeated a variation of a response after previously stating a distinctly different response, the variation was also recorded on a separate content card.

An examination of all content cards by the researcher revealed specific theme categories into which the majority of

and assignment of responses by the researcher and that provided by members of the independent panel of judges presented in Table 2 ranged from 87.5% to 100%

Self Rating Scale of Adjustment

The third instrument employed in this study was the Self Rating Scale of Adjustment (Appendix E). The purpose of this Likert-type scale was to provide subjects with an opportunity to express directly their feelings about the relocation experience as opposed to considering "adjustment" only in relation to performance on a written test and participation in an oral interview. Use of the Self Rating Scale of Adjustment also made it possible to check for major discrepancies between adjustment as defined by the CTP scores and the subjects' self rating scores, thereby serving as a single validation tool. The development of the scale was based on information from a study by Lehr and Hendrickson (1968). The graphic depictions on the scale were included to assure the subjects' concrete understanding of each emotion.

Procedure

The administration of the California Test of Personality to all subjects took place at each of the seven schools during the second week of October. The researcher collected the subjects at each school from their homeroom classes and assembled them as a group in a quiet area designated by school staff (i.e., library, counsellor's office). The purpose of the testing and voluntary nature of participation

Table 2

Interjudge Agreement Between Researcher's and
Judges' Categorization of Responses to Questions

Question	Number of Raters	Average % Agreement
What are the good things about moving they might expect?	4	90.6%
What are the hard things about moving they might expect?	4	88.6%
How would you tell them they might make new friends?	6	100%
Do you think moving has any effect on the family?	4	87.5%
What are some things you would suggest that they could do to make moving easier for them?	8	89.3%

were described as follows:

My name is Vanessa. I am a student at the University of Victoria. I am studying to be a counsellor like Mr./Ms. _____ at your school here. I'm interested in learning more about how people your age think and feel and act. I have a questionnaire about the way you usually think and feel about things like your school, your friends, your family, and so on. I'm interested in how people your age answer these questions and nobody will see your answers but me.

You may be wondering how you were chosen to come here today. I happened to pull your names out of the file of the names of all of the people your age at this school. Would you be willing to fill out the questionnaire? I would rather that only those people who think they would like to fill out the questionnaire do so. If you don't think you would enjoy doing this, feel free to leave. If once you get started, you find that you don't want to do it after all, you can doodle on your page until the rest of us finish.

The other thing that I'm really interested in is what moving is like for people your age. I purposely asked some of you to be here today because you are new to the school and I wondered if you would be willing to meet with me another day and talk about what moving was like for you. Those of you who have moved and would be willing to talk to me about it, could let me know when you hand in your questionnaire and we'll arrange a time to meet.

All of the subjects chose to stay and complete the test and were given instructions for its completion as outlined in the test manual (Clark, Thorpe & Tiegs, 1953). The average time for completion of the test was 30 minutes. The completed tests were placed in an envelope and were not scored until after the transient subjects had completed their interviews and Self Rating Scales of Adjustment to avoid undue influence on the interviewer.

All subjects in the transient group agreed to be

interviewed. The interviews took place at each of the seven schools the following week. The researcher collected the subjects individually from their homeroom classes and conducted each interview in a quiet designated room. Each subject was given the following introduction:

As I told you before, I am interested in what moving was like for you. I'm going to be talking to a lot of people your age at different schools abouts moving and it's hard for me to remember everything that everyone says, so I will tape record our talk today. I will erase the tape later when I have written down the information. I've got some questions I'd like to ask you about moving and if there's any you don't feel comfortable answering, just say so.

The researcher then proceeded with the interview schedule (Appendix B). At times it was necessary to clarify the meaning of the question for the subject by providing a sample response. At such times, the researcher presented all possible responses so as not to influence the direction of the subject's response. For example, "Well, some people think that their mom was really happy about moving and some think that their mom was really sad, others think it didn't really matter to her either way. How do you think your mom felt?" The average duration of the interview was 25 minutes.

At the end of the interview the subjects were asked to complete the Self Rating Scale of Adjustment (Appendix E). The following instructions were given:

When you think back on everything we've talked about today, how do you feel about moving? Do you feel (said while pointing at the graphic depiction of emotion) very happy, happy, unhappy, or very unhappy? Could you mark

an "X" under the one that best describes the way you feel about moving?

When the three measures were completed, all subjects were assigned a coded numerical identification number to protect their identity in all further data analysis.

CHAPTER IV

Results and Discussion

The first three research questions concerned comparisons of the means of transient and non transient children's Personal Adjustment Scores, Social Adjustment Scores, and Total Adjustment Scores on the CTP. These data are presented in Table 3. The transient group mean score was lower than that of the non transient group on each of the three measures of adjustment, but none of the mean differences reached statistical significance at $p < .05$. Those results are also reported in Table 3.

Research question four was concerned with a comparison of the score means of the transient and non transient groups on each of the Personal Adjustment subscales. These data are presented in Table 4. Again, the transient group's mean scores were lower than those of the non transient group. However, univariate analyses of each of the six mean subscale scores failed to reach statistical significance at $p < .05$.

Research question five was concerned with a comparison of the score means of the transient and non transient groups on each of the Social Adjustment subscales (Table 4). Although the transient group scored lower than the non transient group on the majority of the subscales, it did score higher than the non transient group on both the Social Standards and the Community Relations subscales. Again, univariate analyses of each of the six mean subscale scores

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Personal, Social,
and Total Adjustment Scores on CTP Obtained by Transient
and Non Transient Subjects and T-Test Analyses

<u>Group</u>	<u>Personal Adjustment</u>		<u>Social Adjustment</u>		<u>Total Adjustment</u>	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
Transient (N=17)	45.88	9.60	51.77	9.04	97.65	17.40
Non Transient (N=23)	51.48	11.88	53.83	9.68	105.30	20.64
t value	-1.59		-.68		-1.24	
p	.12		.50		.22	

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Personal and
Social Adjustment Subscale Scores on CTP Obtained
by Transient and Non Transient Subjects

<u>CTP Subscale</u>	<u>Transient Group (N=17)</u>		<u>Non Transient Group (N=23)</u>	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
<u>Personal Adjustment</u>				
Self Reliance	7.65	2.03	7.83	1.78
Personal Worth	7.35	2.94	8.83	2.87
Personal Freedom	8.77	2.22	9.22	1.86
Feeling of Belonging	8.71	1.80	9.26	1.71
Withdrawing Tendencies	6.41	2.24	7.61	3.16
Nervous Symptoms	7.00	2.29	8.74	2.58
<u>Social Adjustment</u>				
Social Standards	10.29	1.83	9.70	1.43
Social Skills	7.71	1.99	8.74	1.51
Antisocial Tendencies	7.18	2.58	7.48	2.66
Family Relations	9.06	2.36	9.44	2.91
School Relations	7.88	2.32	8.91	2.54
Community Relations	9.65	1.50	9.57	1.38

failed to reach statistical significance at $p < .05$; the difference between the group's performance on the Social Skills subscale (favoring the non transient group) did approach significance ($p < .07$).

Research question six concerned comparisons of the responses of members of the transient and non transient groups to individual questions on the CTP. Chi square analyses performed on the frequency counts of each question revealed significant differences ($p < .05$) between the groups on 14 of the 144 questions. While it was statistically probable that the groups would differ on at least seven of the questions by chance alone, finding a difference on twice that many items warranted an examination of the content of the items which differed. Table 5 presents each of these 14 test items. In all but one case (item 11), the difference was due to the transient group's greater tendency to answer in the incorrect direction. Note also that the majority of questions on which the groups differed were from subscales of the Personal Adjustment Scale with the highest number of questions representing the Sense of Personal Worth subscale. The common theme for 8 of the 14 questions was some element of dissatisfaction in relationships with friends and classmates.

The seventh research question concerned the magnitude of correlation between the transient children's mean Personal, Social, and Total Adjustment scores and their mean Self Rating Scale of Adjustment scores. The average Self Rating

Table 5

CTP Test Items on Which Transient and Non Transient
Groups Significantly Differed

Item	CTP Subscale	Correct Response	X ²	p
1. Do you think the boys and girls at school like you as much as they should?	School Relations	True	4.13	.04
2. Do you have a hard time because it seems like your parents hardly ever have enough money?	Family Relations	False	4.13	.04
3. Are your friends and classmates usually interested in the things you like to do?	Personal Worth	True	5.63	.02
4. Do you seem to have more headaches than most children?	Nervous Symptoms	False	4.56	.03
5. Do your schoolmates seem to think that you are nice to them?	School Relations	True	4.32	.04
6. Do your friends and classmates often want to help you?	Personal Worth	True	3.95	.05
7. Do you often find that you are not hungry at mealtimes?	Nervous Symptoms	False	10.57	.001 ³⁷

8.	Do you often think that nobody likes you?	Feeling of Belonging	True	4.82	.02
9.	Do your classmates and friends usually feel that they know more than you do?	Personal Worth	False	5.51	.01
10.	Do you feel that most of your classmates are glad that you are a member of the class?	Feeling of Belonging	True	4.82	.02
11.	Do you dislike many of the people near your home?	Community Relations	False	4.22	.03
12.	Are you often with people who have so little interest in that you feel lonesome?	Withdrawing Tendencies	False	5.74	.01
13.	Are some people so bossy that you don't like it?	Personal Worth	False	5.79	.01
14.	Do you talk to new children at school?	Social Skills	True	5.77	.01

Scale of Adjustment Score of the transient children on the four-point scale was 2.65 (S.D. = 6.06), placing them approximately midway between the "unhappy" and "happy" descriptors, with a greater tendency toward happiness. As indicated by Pearson product-moment correlations, the strongest correlation existed between the Social Adjustment Score and the Self Rating Scale of Adjustment Score ($r=.26$); however, statistical significance at $p < .05$ was not reached. Correlations between self ratings and each of Personal Adjustment and Total Adjustment were $r = .10$ and $r = .19$, respectively.

One explanation for this finding may be that there was insufficient heterogeneity in the self rating scores to allow a relationship to manifest itself. Of the 17 member group, 9 members rated themselves "3" (indicating happy) and 7 members rated themselves "2" (indicating unhappy), thus creating a restricted range of scores. The possibility also exists that the Self Rating Scale of Adjustment is indeed an independent measure of adjustment, compared to the CTP, and that children whose scores on the CTP indicate poor adjustment do not necessarily consider themselves unhappy.

The eighth research question was concerned with which specific factors of the relocation experience were the best predictors of Personal Adjustment, Social Adjustment, and Total Adjustment Scores. To answer this question, the seven predictive variables assessed in the interview and the variables of age, sex, and grade were considered as

predictors of the criterion variables. A multiple regression approach was employed whereby the best predictor for each criterion variable was identified, as well as any other variable(s) which, in combination with the best predictor, statistically increased predictability. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 6.

For the criterion variable Personal Adjustment, the distance of the move was the only significant predictor. It was hypothesized that adjustment would be inversely related to the distance of the move, based on the rationale that with shorter distance moves (particularly local), children would be better able to maintain contact with friends and other aspects of the former environment. As a result, the relocation experience would be less stressful. Contrary to this expectation, however, a direct relationship existed between adjustment scores and distances of relocation. Of the 17 subjects in the transient group, 5 had moved from outside the province, 5 had moved from within the province, and 7 had moved locally from communities within the city. The group's mean scores on the Interview Rating Scale for each of the seven predictive variables are presented in Appendix F.

The best predictor of Social Adjustment was the number of times moved previously. Consistent with the rationale used in constructing the Interview Rating Scale, adjustment increased as did the number of previous moves. A possible explanation is that children become more flexible and

Table 6

Multiple Correlations Between Predictive Variables
and Personal, Social, and Total Adjustment Scores
Obtained on the CTP (N = 17)

Criterion Variable	Predictive Variable	Multiple R	Significance
Personal Adjustment	distance of move	.52	.03
Social Adjustment	number of previous moves	.53	.03
	child's perception of father's attitude toward move	.73	.005
	sex of child	.82	.002
Total Adjustment	child's perception of father's attitude toward move	.53	.03

Note: Only predictors which correlated significantly with the criterion are reported.

adaptive as they experience moves. By combining this initial predictive variable with the children's perceptions of their father's attitudes toward the move, the level of significance improved to $p = .005$. Again, as hypothesized in developing the Interview Rating Scale, better adjustment was related to the child's perception of the father having a positive attitude toward the move. This finding supports both the hypothesis and the results of previous research indicating that parental attitude toward a family move is a significant factor in children's adjustment. The third predictive variable which significantly contributed to the prediction of Social Adjustment scores ($p = .002$) was sex of the child. Higher adjustment scores were associated with female subjects. The female subjects in the transient group, in fact, attained higher mean adjustment scores on each of the three criterion measures than did the male subjects. However, t-test analyses of each of the main differences failed to reach statistical significance at $p < .05$.

With regard to the criterion variable Total Adjustment, the only significant predictor was the child's perception of the father's attitude toward the move ($p = .03$). Children's perceptions of their father's attitude toward the move as positive were again related to higher adjustment scores.

The final research question sought to identify the concerns of transient children and their perceptions of the relocation experience. The children's responses to four open ended questions were considered. The first question asked

the children to consider both the good things about moving as well as the things that were difficult about it. Using the process of content analysis outlined in Chapter III, seven categories of "good things about moving" were identified. The categories, verbatim examples from each, and the number and proportion of responses within each category are presented in Table 7. The criteria for assignment to response categories are presented in Appendix D.

The results were consistent with the findings of previous studies which sought to identify the major concerns of transient children (Lane, 1972; Lehr & Hendrickson, 1968; Smardo, 1981), in that meeting new friends was the thing these children liked best about moving (71%). Having the opportunity to do new things (53%), see new places (48%), live in a new house and neighborhood (41%), and go to a new school (12%) were also cited as good things about moving by the subjects in this study consistent with those of previous studies. However, a category emerged for these subjects which was not cited in previous research. For the subjects in this study, the opportunity to maintain contact with aspects of the former environment (i.e., friends, relatives) by mail, telephone or visits, was seen as a positive aspect of moving. This response category is likely related to the children's perceptions of the difficulties of the relocation experience considered next.

In considering the "hard things about moving", nine categories of responses were identified as presented in Table

Table 7

Responses to the Question: "If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, what would you tell them it might be like for them? What are the good things they might expect?"

Response Category	Example	Number of Children Responding	Proportion of Responses
1. Meeting New Friends	"You get to make new friends."	11	71%
2. Doing New Things	"It's fun to be in a different place because there's different things to do."	7	53%
3. Seeing New Places	"You get to see lots of other places, on the drive out you get to see the mountains."	7	48%
4. Living in a New House or Neighborhood	"My new bedroom is bigger."	6	41%
5. Ability to Maintain Contact with Former Environment	"You can write letters to your friends and it's nice to get a letter back from them."	5	29%
6. Going to a New School	"There's computers, choir, the teachers have some really neat ideas."	2	12%
7. Other	"My grandparents live here."	2	18%

8. Again, consistent with the findings of previous research, leaving old friends was identified as the most difficult thing about moving (82%). Other categories similar to those cited in earlier studies included: being new or different (47%), leaving the old house and/or neighborhood (41%), having to make new friends (35%), going to a new school (35%), making the trip to the new city (29%), doing the work (packing, loading, etc.) involved (18%), and leaving relatives (18%).

A unique category which emerged from many of the subjects in this study was a generalized "fear of the unknown" related to moving (71%). The children tended to describe the relocation experience in a general sense as being "scary". When asked to elaborate more specifically, they referred to not knowing what to expect about various aspects of the new environment (e.g., school, neighborhood, and friends). This finding seems to support the importance of what Stokols and Shumaker (1982) identified as "increasing the predictability" of the new environment by making available as much information as possible about the new community in advance of the move. While their research was concerned with an elderly transient population, the results of this study indicate that the concept seems relevant to children, as well.

Predictability or "pre-move preparation" was, in fact, one of the predictive variables assessed in this study. The mean predictability score on the Interview Rating Scale for

Table 8

Responses to the Question: "If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, what would you tell them it might be like for them? What are the hard things they might expect?"

Response Category	Example	Number of Children Responding	Proportion of Responses
1. Leaving Old Friends	"Leaving your friends is very hard because you like them."	14	82%
2. Fearing the Unknown	"It's pretty scary, for the first couple of weeks we were here, I mostly stayed in the house."	8	71%
3. Being New	"You feel different for a while, like 'new'."	7	47%
4. Living in a New House or Neighborhood	"You were really used to your old house, you had your room all nice and then you had to leave."	6	41%
5. Making New Friends	"They'd have to make new friends and that's kind of hard."	6	35%
6. Going to a New School	"It takes a while to get used to school, your friends aren't there and the teachers are all different."	5	35%
7. The Trip	"The drive out was boring."	3	29%
8. The Work	"You have to unpack all the stuff when you get there."	3	18%
9. Leaving Relatives	"I don't get to see just about all my family, my grandma, aunts, they all live there."	3	18%

the subjects in this study was 3.83 (S.D. = 1.08), indicating that, before they moved, most of the children had discussed, with an adult, at least one or two of the following aspects of the new environment: going to a new school, leaving and making friends, living in a new house and neighborhood, and living in a new city. The high proportion of responses still revealing a fear of the unknown would seem to suggest that discussion of more, or all, of the aspects would have been helpful. The value of orientation programs in communities and schools is also supported by this finding. The goals of such programs (Blair, Marchant & Medway, 1984; Crabbs & Crabbs, 1981) are to familiarize relocated families with the new community and with school policies and procedures.

Since meeting new friends was seen as the best aspect of moving, and conversely, making new friends was perceived as one of the the most difficult aspects of it, the second question was intended to gain information about how transient children proceeded through this aspect of the social re-adjustment process. The children were asked how they would suggest that someone their age who had moved could make friends. The results are reported in Table 9. Clearly, the majority of subjects recommended initiating contact with peers in the neighborhood or at school (71%), as opposed to waiting for others to initiate contact with them (18%). Given the small size of the sample in this study, it is difficult to conclude if this is a trend among transient children in general, or if it is particular to this group of

Table 9

Responses to the Question: "If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, how would you tell them they might make new friends?"

Response Category	Example	Number of Children Responding	Proportion of Responses
1. Initiate Contact	"I rode around the neighborhood on my bike quite a bit, if I saw someone who looked about my age I talked to him."	11	71%
2. Wait for "Other Initiated" Contact	"I just wait 'til people say 'Hi'."	3	18%
3. Other	"Just be yourself, if they don't like you the way you are, just accept it."	1	5%

subjects.

Transient children's perceptions of the effect of moving on their families were considered in the third question. Response categories are presented in Table 10. The majority of the children felt that moving did not have any effect on their families (53%). Those who did feel that moving affected the family (either negatively, 18%, or positively, 12%) noted that the effects were only temporary. It may be relevant to remember that, as a group, these subjects tended to perceive their parents as having positive attitudes towards the move. This factor may have led the children to see the effect on the family as minimally disruptive.

The children's moving related concerns were amplified in their responses to the final question, which asked them to suggest ways in which moving could be made easier for people their age. Response categories are presented in Table 11. The most common suggestion was to maintain contact with old friends (41%), either by bringing them along for the trip or by writing, phoning, or visiting them. The children's perception of leaving old friends as being the most difficult aspect of moving is clearly reflected in these suggestions.

The "fear of the unknown" associated with moving for transient children was also apparent in the subjects' suggestions to be prepared in advance (or increase predictability) for the new environment (18%). The children suggested getting as much information as possible about the new environment (i.e., people, places, school, etc.), as well

Table 10

Responses to the Question: "Do you think moving has any effect on the family?"

Response Category	Example	Number of Children Responding	Proportion of Responses
1. No Effect	"It doesn't really have any effect."	9	53%
2. Circumstantial Effect of Being Hard on Family	"Just when they're moving, everyone gets mad, they say, "Don't put that there, it goes over there!"	3	18%
3. Brings Family Closer Together	"It brings them closer because you don't know very many people so all you have is your family for a while."	2	12%

Table 11

Response to the Question: "If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, what are some things you would suggest that they could do to make moving easier for them?"

Response Category	Example	Number of Children Responding	Proportion of Responses
1. Maintain Contact with Old Friends	"Call your friends every time you get lonely."	7	41%
2. Make the Trip More Appealing	"Bring something to read in the car."	4	24%
3. Increase predictability	"They could ask their parents what moving was going to be like."	4	18%
4. Think Positively	"If you just think about leaving your friends, it only makes it worse. You should think about the new friends you could make."	2	12%
5. Other	"Phone some movers, go on a holiday, and come back when it's done."	3	18%

as means of doing so (i.e., discussion with parents). Other categories of suggestions included making the trip more appealing (24%), especially by having entertainment (i.e., books or games) in the car, as well as by stopping off for activities enroute, and maintaining a positive attitude about the move (12%).

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Implications

General Statement of Findings

While there was a tendency for the transient subjects to score lower than their non transient peers on the criterion measures of adjustment employed in this study, the score differences did not reach statistical significance. It cannot be concluded, therefore, that transient children necessarily experience "adjustment problems" in association with residential relocation. However, the responses of the subjects in this study to descriptive interview questions designed to identify the moving related concerns of transient children were consistent with those cited in similar studies over the past three decades.

We can conclude, therefore, that in general, most transient children do experience some stress associated with the relocation experience. Specifically, we know that the majority of transient children experience, at least temporarily, very real feelings of loss (particularly of friends, but also of other aspects of the former familiar environment) and of fear (related to the uncertainty of change and the unknown new environment).

By being aware of transient children's concerns in general, and sensitive to their individual needs, supportive adults in their environment (particularly parents and school

staff members) are in a position to help reduce such stress and to facilitate positive adjustment.

Implications for Counselling

Parents, being central figures who remain dependably constant in the changing world of transient children, are the most available to provide a caring, supportive environment in which the children can explore their concerns prior to, during, and following the move.

The results of this and other studies suggest that if parents convey a positive attitude toward the move, it is reflected in their children's adjustment. It is important, too, however, that the attitude conveyed is realistic. By tempering their optimism with the acknowledgement that leaving friends and familiar surroundings is difficult for everyone, parents can validate their children's concerns and help to reduce their feelings of entire uniqueness.

To facilitate such discussion, Smardo (1981) has published an annotated bibliography of children's books about moving. Through reading about the experiences of others, children gain insight into the relocation experience, realize that others have successfully adapted to it, and (perhaps most importantly) become aware that life changes are inevitable and tolerable.

As the children in this study indicated, knowing as much as possible about the new environment in advance of the move is helpful in decreasing their fears. To this end, parents

should share with their children whatever information they have about the new house, neighborhood, school, and community. Parents might also help their children to anticipate such experiences as making new friends and entering a new school by including these topics in such preparatory discussions.

Following the move, it is important that parents remain supportive and available to discuss their children's concerns. If the family can explore the new community together, the children's sense of isolation and fear of the unknown is likely to decrease.

Finally, as the children in this study expressed, maintaining contact with their old friends is important to them. Such contact helps them to experience some sense of continuity and security in their changing lives. By helping their children to write letters or make occasional phone calls to their old friends, parents can encourage this sense of belonging.

Teachers also play a critical role in helping transient children experience a sense of belonging. The children in this study expressed a fear of being "different", particularly in the school setting. Conducting a "new comers" day, in which new children are introduced and welcomed and a "buddy system" established is one approach teachers can take to help reduce this fear. Allan and Bardsley (1984) have developed and successfully field tested a class discussion series for children who move, designed to

help children understand their thoughts and feelings about moving, to make other class members aware of the new children, and to help all class members feel at home in their school.

Where it is not possible for all class members to be involved in such discussion, school counsellors can facilitate "mobility groups" (such as those proposed by Singer, 1982) which provide opportunities both for children who are leaving the school, as well as children who are new to the school, to share their moving related concerns, to make friends, and to develop strategies for entering new schools. School counsellors (with the aid of teachers) need to be sensitive to individual children's concerns and to be available for ongoing support where necessary.

Through the combined support of parents, school staff, and other relevant community members, transient children's adjustment can be optimally facilitated, making residential relocation a positive experience.

Limitations of the Present Study and Suggestions for Future Research

The ex post facto nature of the independent variable (residential relocation) in this study reduced the amount of variance which could be controlled for and prevented purely random assignment of subjects. It was beyond the scope of this exploratory study to examine all of the factors which could possibly have influenced each subject's personal

and social adjustment. To encompass all such information, a more individualized case study approach would be necessary, employing an experimental research design to measure adjustment both prior to, and following, the relocation experience.

The use of a single paper and pencil test as a criterion measure of adjustment may also be considered a limitation of this study. First, it can only be assumed that the subjects responded seriously and honestly to the test. The possibility exists that some may have answered facetiously or only in a socially desirable manner. In fact, the very low variability in responses among all subjects on the CTP may be suggestive of the latter. Second, being a measure of attitudes, the reliability and validity of the CTP can be questioned. The test attempts to measure some sensitive attitudes which are subject to fluctuation within short periods of time. An expansion of methodological breadth in future research is suggested, possibly including a variety of adjustment measures, such as sociometric instruments and behavioral observations by parents, teachers, and significant others in transient children's lives.

The relatively small sample size in this study limited the conclusions which could be drawn and the generalizability of the results. Further, it should be remembered that the present study included only children who had moved as part of intact families and results cannot be generalized to children who relocate because of parental separation or a variety of

reasons which do not involve relocation by intact families.

With the rising rate of divorce and separation in our society, an increasing number of children must relocate without the "family" support encouraged by the results of the present study. The need clearly exists for further research with this growing population.

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APPENDIX A

Letters of Consent

Letter to parents of transient subjects:

Dear _____ :

I am a graduate student in the Counselling program at the University of Victoria. My area of specialization is counselling children, and I am presently interested specifically in what moving and adjusting to a new school and community is like for children.

I am conducting a study which I hope will help me to identify the needs and concerns of children who move, with the ultimate goal of helping such children in the future. A list of the names of new students to this school in your child's age range was gathered for me by a school staff member. A random selection of names will be drawn from this list for participation in my study.

If your child's name is drawn, it would be very helpful if s/he could fill out a short questionnaire with me at school in which s/he would answer "yes or no" questions about how s/he feels and acts in a variety of situations (for example: at school, on the playground, or in your home neighborhood. Some sample items are: (1) Do you feel that most of your classmates are glad that you are a member of the class? (2) Do you sometimes do things to make the place in which you live look nicer? (3) Do you feel that your folks fuss at you instead of helping you? (4) Is school work so hard that you're afraid you might fail? I would also like to have a brief interview with your child in which we would discuss what moving was like for him/her. We would talk about such issues as making new friends, adjusting to a new school, and leaving the old neighborhood.

So that I may give your child my full attention, the interview will be tape recorded, but as with the questionnaire, all information will be kept confidential.

I should mention that in my previous research, children have found the interview to be very enjoyable. Your child would be assured, however, that if at any time s/he decides that s/he does not wish to carry on with the interview (or the questionnaire), s/he does not have to. When the study is completed a summary of the results will be available for you to see at the school's main office.

Letter to parents of transient subjects, continued . . .

If you have any further questions about the study, I can be contacted at 598-8036. If you are willing to have your son/daughter participate in the study, please sign below and return this form to the school before (date) _____.

I thank you in advance for making it possible for me to gather this very useful information.

Yours sincerely,

Vanessa Farr

Parent's Signature

Date

Letter to parents of non transient subjects:

Dear _____:

I am a graduate student in the Counselling Psychology program at the University of Victoria. My area of specialization is counselling children, and I am particularly interested, specifically, in understanding more about what moving and adjusting to a new school and community is like for children.

I am conducting a study which I hope will help me to identify if and how the needs and concerns of children who move differ from those who do not. A school staff member has compiled a list for me, of the names of those children (including your child) who have not moved (from this community) since beginning elementary school. A random selection of names will be drawn from this list for participation in my study.

If your child's name is drawn, it would be very helpful if s/he could fill out a short questionnaire with me at school in which s/he would answer "yes or no" questions about how s/he, as a child who has not moved recently, feels and acts in a variety of situations (for example: at school, or in your home neighborhood. Some sample items include:
 (1) Do you feel that most of your classmates are glad that you are a member of the class? (2) Do you sometimes do things to make the place in which you live look nicer?
 (3) Do you feel that your folks fuss at you instead of helping you? (4) Is school work so hard that you're afraid you might fail?

All information will be kept confidential. When the study is completed a summary of my results will be available for you to see at the school's main office.

If you have any further questions about the study, I can be contacted at 598-8036. If you are willing to have your son/daughter participate in this study, please sign below and return this form to the school before (date) _____.

I thank you in advance for making it possible for me to gather this very useful information.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Farr

Parent's Signature-----
Date

APPENDIX B

Interview Schedule

Questions yielding predictive information:

1. How long ago did you move here?
2. Where did you move here from?
3. Why do you think your family moved here?
4. Have you ever moved before that you actually remember?
How many times?
5. How do you think your parents felt about moving?
Your mom? Your dad?
6. Before you moved, did you talk to your parents or anyone else about what moving might be like for you?
7. How much "say" did you feel you had in your family's decision to move?

Questions yielding descriptive information:

1. If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, what would you tell them it might be like for them? What are the good things they might expect? What are the hard things they might expect?
2. If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, how would you tell them they might make new friends?
3. Do you think moving has any effect on the family?
4. If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, what are some things you would suggest that they could do to make moving easier for them?

APPENDIX C

Interview Rating Scale

1. How long ago did you move here?

1	2	3	4	5
1-2 mos. since school started or within 2 weeks before school started		2-4 mos. during summer vacation		4-6 mos. full summer vacation here

2. Where did you move here from?

1	2	3	4	5
out of province		within province		locally

3. Why do you think your family moved here?

1	2	3	4	5
no idea		vague idea "Probably they wanted to"	good idea some doubt: "I guess because of dad's job"	clear perception

4. Have you ever moved before that you actually remember? How many times?

1	2	3	4	5
clearly negative "She was really upset". Voice indicates very negative emotional tone.	somewhat negative "She didn't like it too much" or wasn't too happy because . . ."	indifferent "She didn't care" or she was both happy and unhappy "She didn't like it because . . . but she liked it because . . ."	somewhat positive "She liked it" or "She liked it because . . ."	clearly positive "She really liked it" or "She felt great about it". Voice indicates very positive emotional tone.

5. Your dad?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
clearly negative somewhat negative indifferent somewhat positive clearly positive

6. Before you moved, did you talk to your parents or anyone else about what moving might be like for you?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
not at all a little 2 of 4 a lot
1 of 4 or At least 3 of
vacationed the following:
here in the past school
friends (making/
leaving)
house/neighborhood
city (including
weather)

7. How much "say" did you feel you had in your family's decision to move?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5
none at all a little a lot
"None" "Well, they would
"They would have moved anyway
have moved but they did listen
anyway." to my feelings" or
". . .but we did
talk about it" or
"A little."

APPENDIX D

Response Category Criteria Guidelines

Question 1:

If someone you knew, your age, were going to move, what would you tell them it might be like for them? What are the hard things they might expect?

Response Categories	Criteria Guidelines
1. Leaving Friends	Includes all references to leaving or missing old friends, and/or the sadness, anger, or difficulty associated with doing so. e.g., "It's really hard to leave your friends."
2. Fearing the Unknown	Includes any specific mention of being scared or afraid in a general sense (i.e., "It's scary) or in reference to a specific aspect of the new environment (i.e., "You're scared on the first day of school.") Also includes references to "not knowing" how/why/where etc. which imply a fear of the unknown. e.g., "You don't know people -- I was scared on the first day of school." "It's pretty scary when you first get there."
3. Being New	Includes all references to feeling "new" or "different" or unimportant and/or the difficulties or embarrassment associated with that feeling. e.g., "I used to be president of the French club, now no one knows me." "People stare at you because you're new."
4. Living in a New	Includes all references to missing

- House or
Neighborhood
- the former house or neighborhood (or particular aspects of each) and any reference to general or specific disappointment in the new house or neighborhood.
e.g., "Our old house was really close to a park."
"There's only one bathroom in the new house."
5. Making New Friends
- Includes all references to missing the former house or neighborhood (or particular aspects of each) and any references to general or specific disappointment in the new house or neighborhood. e.g., "It can be hard to make new friends."
6. Going to a New School
- Includes all references to specific undesirable or confusing aspects of the new school (i.e., rules, courses, etc.) and differences between the old and new school which favor the old school. e.g., "You don't understand the grading system at the new school."
"The rules are all different from my old school."
7. The Trip
- Includes all references to undesirable aspects of the trip, the drive, the car, or hotels and motels.
e.g., "It was so hot and boring on the drive out."
8. The Work
- Includes all references to the hard work of packing/unpacking or transferring boxes, etc.
e.g., "You have to pack up everything you own."
9. Leaving Relatives
- Includes all references to leaving or being separated from "family" or specific relatives.
e.g., "I don't get to see my cousins anymore."
9. Other
- Includes any responses which you feel do not belong in any of the above categories.

Question 2

How would you tell them they might make new friends?

Response CategoriesCriteria Guidelines

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Initiate Contact | Includes all references to initiating contact with others. These include introducing oneself, saying "hi", assisting others in some way, being friendly, or seeking friends out in the neighborhood.
e.g., "I just walked around the neighborhood and if I saw someone my age I said "hi"." |
| 2. Wait for "Other"
Initiated Contact | Includes all references to waiting for others to contact you, or where someone else initiated contact.
e.g., "Well, I was just sitting there and Shannon said, "hi"." |
| 3. Other | Includes unique methods of making friends which do not belong to either of the above categories, or ambiguous statements which do not make it clear who initiated contact.
e.g., "Just hope that you meet someone." |

Question 3

Do you think moving has any effect on the family?

Response CategoriesCriteria Guidelines

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1. No effect | Includes all references to no change or specifically stating, "no effect".
e.g., "I don't think it's any different." |
|--------------|---|

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2. Circumstantial
Effect on Being
Hard on the
Family | Includes any reference to stress or irritability within the family related to an aspect of the move.
e.g., "Since we moved we sure fight a lot." |
| 3. Brings Family
Closer Together | Includes any reference to increasing "closeness" among family members as a result of the move.
e.g., "I feel a lot closer to my my mom and dad since we moved." |
| 4. Other | Includes any responses which you feel does not belong in any of the above categories. |

Question 4

What are some things you would suggest that they could do to make moving easier for them?

Response Categories

Criterion Guidelines

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Maintain Contact with
Old Friends | Includes all references to old friends. This includes bringing them along, or writing, phone, or visiting them.
e.g., "They could bring a friend with them." |
| 2. Make the Trip More
Appealing | Includes all references to making any aspect of the trip more appealing. This includes references to the car, the drive, or activities en route.
e.g., "They could stop off at exciting places on the drive down." |
| 3. Increase Predictability | Includes all references to knowing about aspects of the move (people, places, school, etc.) in advance and any mention of means of getting such information.
e.g., "They could talk to their parents about what the city is like." |
| 4. Think Positive | Includes all references about |

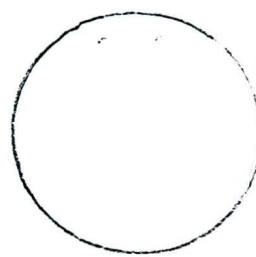
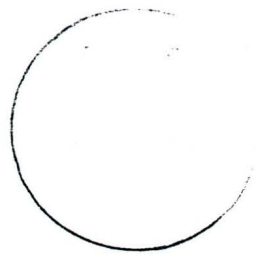
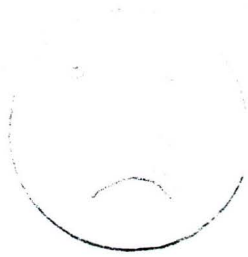
moving in a positive manner.
e.g., "Don't dwell on missing
your friends, think
about all the new
things ahead."

5. Other

Includes all unique responses
which you feel do not belong
in any of the above
categories.
e.g., "Live with your
grandmother."

APPENDIX E

Self Rating Scale of Adjustment



Very Unhappy

Unhappy

Happy

Very happy

(Score Value=1)

(Score Value=2)

(Score Value=3)

(Score Value=4)

APPENDIX F

Transient Group's Mean Scores on Predictive Variables

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum
length of time since move	2.12	1.22	1	5
distance of move	3.24	1.72	1	5
clarity of perception of reason for move	4.53	1.07	1	5
number of times moved previously	2.53	1.46	1	5
child's perception of parents' attitude toward the move				
(mother)	3.65	.93	1	5
(father)	3.88	1.05	1	5
predictability	3.82	1.02	1	5
perceived control	1.77	1.25	1	5

Note: N = 17

VITA

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ITS RELATIONSHIP TO PERSONAL
AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Author:



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VANESSA LYNN FARR
Name

August 1986
Date