

CHANGING RESIDENCE: RISKS FOR SUBSTANCE USE AND OTHER DELINQUENT BEHAVIORS BY ADOLESCENTS

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Each year, about 5 million adolescents change their residence. This moving often results in not just a changed residence. In addition, moving often results in changed school, social, and physical environments. These external changes combined with the various hormonal and other internal changes that occur during adolescence present various challenges and opportunities for both the youth and for those adults interested in their well-being. If not dealt with appropriately, these changes can result in the adolescents' feeling alienated, vulnerable, and depressed and, thus, at high risk for delinquency and mental health problems.

This paper presents national data on the characteristics of adolescents most likely to move and compares the family and neighborhood characteristics, substance use, and various healthy and delinquent activities of movers and non-movers. These relationships are examined using the data collected on adolescents from the National Household Survey of Drug Abuse (NHSDA).

The importance of family and peers in child development has been established (Levine, Carey, & Crocker 1999). Research suggests that the adolescent domains primarily impacted by the family, peers, schools, and neighborhood differ. The family primarily impacts mental health. Peers have the greatest influence on negative social behavior. Schools influence academic performance. Social networks and neighborhoods influence various behaviors, especially school attendance (Cook, Herman, Phillips & Settersten 2002; Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov & Sealand 1993). Neighborhood influences are more difficult to isolate because neighborhoods are often indicators of socioeconomic status as well as determinants of the schools the adolescents are eligible to attend. Research has also established that substance use and delinquent behavior are impacted by the family, peers, and other role models (Guo, Hill, Hawkins, Catalano & Abbott 2002; Keller, Catalano, Haggerty & Fleming 2002; Yancey, Siegel & McDaniel 2002; Brooks, Stuewig & LecRoy 1998; Florsheim, Tolan & Gorman-Smith 1996; Chas-

sin, Pillow, Curran, Molina & Barrera, 1993; Dinges & Oetting, 1993) and social support systems (De La Rosa & White 2001; Ellickson, Collins & Bell 1999; Brook, White-man, Balka & Cohen 1997; Rhodes & Jason 1990). This paper examines moving, that is, changing residence and social environments, as a risk factor for substance use and other delinquent behaviors and its implications for their prevention and intervention.

SAMPLE AND METHODS

This study consisted of the random sample of adolescents, aged 12 to 17, who responded to the NHSDA, a nationally representative sample of persons age 12 and older in the general population. This analysis was based on data collected in 2000 from 19,374 respondents, aged 12 to 17. Respondents provided information on their own Hispanic origin and racial identity and were given the opportunity to report more than one race. There were 2,687 Hispanics, and 16,687 non-Hispanics. Among the non-Hispanics, 12,929 were whites, 2,617 were blacks, 179 were American Indians/Alaska Natives, 654 were Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 308 reported more than one race. The sample sizes for American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and those reporting more than one race were often too small to provide separate estimates by the factor of interest and mover status.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) sponsors the NHSDA. This survey series has been conducted since 1971 and is the primary source of data on alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and their consequences in the nation's general population. All data are anonymous and confidential. The data are used to plan substance abuse prevention programs, monitor drug control strategies, and estimate the need for substance abuse treatment. SAMHSA's NHSDA collects data from residents in households and noninstitutionalized group quarters as well as civilians living on military bases. Noninstitutionalized group quarters include homeless

shelters, rooming houses, and dormitories. The NHSDA was initiated in 1971 and conducted periodically until 1990. After 1990, the survey has been conducted annually. It is currently called the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Persons randomly selected to participate in the survey are informed of the nature and purpose of the survey. Participation is voluntary. Consent to participate for adolescents aged 12 to 17 occurs on two levels. A parent or guardian must consent before an adolescent can be asked to participate. The adolescent is then given an opportunity to refuse or to participate in the survey. In 2000, the weighted interview response rate for household screening for the total sample was 92.8 percent. The 12 to 17 age group's weighted interview response rate was 82.6 percent.

Respondents are interviewed privately in their living quarters. Tested methodologies to enhance privacy and confidentiality are used to collect the data. In 2000, the respondents provided data in a computer-assisted interview conducted by the professionally trained interviewer. Essentially, the interviewer explains the survey, answers any questions the participant might have, and administers the questions on basic sociodemographics. This personal interview is combined with an audio computer-assisted interview administered by the respondent for reporting alcohol, tobacco, illicit drug use and other sensitive behaviors. Before proceeding with this part, the participant is given a short practice session on the computer. For this part of the interview, the participant answers questions by listening to the questions over the headphones and/or reading the questions on the laptop computer screen. Then the participant answers the questions by entering the responses using the computer's keyboard. Only the participant can hear and see the questions and only the participant knows the answers entered. The interview takes about an hour to complete. It is available in both English and Spanish. Among the adolescent respondents, 1.4 percent chose to have the interview conducted in Spanish.

Substance use in this study included alcohol, cigarettes, and illicit drug use. Illicit drug use includes marijuana/ hashish, cocaine/crack, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or any prescription-type psychotherapeutics used nonmedically. Nonmedical use

Table 1: Percent of Adolescents Who Changed Residence by Sociodemographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Percent Who Moved in the Past Year
Total	20.1
Gender	
Males	19.5
Females	20.6
Age Group	
12-13	20.6
14-15	19.2
16-17	20.5
Hispanic Status & Race*	
Hispanic	26.1
Non-Hispanic	19.1
White	16.8
Black	28.0
American Indian/Alaska Native	17.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	23.2
>1 race	22.9
Place of Birth*	
Born in the U.S.	19.0
Not both in the U.S.	33.1
Foster Care Ever*	
Yes	38.0
No	19.6
Parental Presence in Household*	
Both present	15.2
Mother only	29.8
Father only	32.4
Neither in household	41.9

*Differences by characteristic are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

of any psychotherapeutics includes only prescription-type pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives and does not include over-the-counter drugs. For each type of psychotherapeutics, respondents are shown "pill cards" that have color photographs of the various prescription type pills or capsules to help the respondent correctly identify the substances used. Binge drinking is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion at least one day in the past month. Heavy drinking is defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion on five or more days in the past month. The same occasion is defined as at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other.

Sociodemographic characteristics, neighborhood characteristics, substance use, and youth activities were compared by moving status. Moving status was defined as changed residence in the last year or not.

Table 2: Percent of Movers and Non-Movers Reporting Negative Neighborhood Characteristics

Neighborhood Characteristics*	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
People often move in/out of neighborhood	30.1	34.6	29.0
Lots of drug selling	26.8	30.0	26.0
Neighbors don't visit often in each others' homes	26.4	29.0	25.7
Lots of crime	22.8	27.5	21.7
Neighbors often don't help each other out	21.3	24.9	20.4
Lots of graffiti	15.9	18.3	15.3
Lots of street fights	15.0	18.6	14.1
Many empty/abandoned buildings	11.5	14.9	10.7

*Differences between movers and non-movers for all listed neighborhood characteristics are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Table 3: Percent of Past Year Movers and Non-Movers Who Participated in Selected Activities in the Past Year

Activities*	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
Activities*			
Volunteer/Community Work	35.8	30.0	37.0
Team Sports	61.4	54.4	63.2
Violence Prevention Program	16.3	18.3	15.8
Boy/Girl Scouts	10.1	8.4	10.5
Church Choir	20.1	21.5	19.8
Delinquent Acts*			
Serious School Fights	18.0	25.0	16.3
Gang Fights	15.1	20.6	13.8
Attacked Someone with Intent to Hurt	7.5	11.8	6.4
Stole/Tried to Steal Something < \$50	4.3	5.6	3.9
Sold Illegal Drugs	3.5	5.0	3.1
Carried Handgun	2.8	4.2	2.4
Drug Prevention*			
Any School Drug Education	77.9	74.2	78.9
NonSchool Drug Prevention Program	11.9	13.5	11.5
Alateen and/or Counseling	4.4	6.1	3.9

*Differences between movers and non-movers for all listed activities are statistically significant at $p < .001$ except for church choir participation ($p < .01$).

Estimates were weighted to take into account the scientific sampling design. The weighted estimates were used to get the national estimates of adolescents who moved. Chi-Square tests were used to compare categorical characteristics and prevalence estimates. T-tests and analysis of variance were used to test differences in means.

RESULTS:

Frequency of Adolescents Changing Residence:

In 2000, half of the adolescents aged 12 to 17 reported that they had not moved in the past five years, 30 percent had moved in the past five years but not in the last year, and 20 percent had moved in the past year. Of those who had moved in the past five years, 48 percent moved only once, 24 percent moved

twice, and 28 percent moved three or more times. An estimated 800,000 adolescents moved five or more times in the past five years. To examine the relationship of moving status to substance use and delinquent behavior in the past year, adolescents who had moved in the past year were classified as movers; those who had not moved in the past year, even if they moved in earlier years, were classified as non-movers.

Sociodemographic and Family Characteristics

The percent of adolescents who moved in the past year did not differ significantly by gender or age group but did differ based on place of birth, family characteristics, Hispanic status, and race (see Table 1). Adolescents born in the United States were less likely to

Table 4: Average Number of School Days Missed Because of Sickness in the Past Month for Movers and Non-Movers by Hispanic Status and Race

	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
Total Adolescents Aged 12-17*	0.93 days	1.26 days	0.85 days
Hispanic Status and Race*			
Hispanic	1.04 days	1.16 days	1.00 days
Non Hispanic	0.91 days	1.28 days	0.83 days
White	0.88 days	1.19 days	0.82 days
Black	1.11 days	1.62 days	0.92 days
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.44 days	2.95 days	1.20 days
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.59 days	0.74 days	0.54 days
> 1 race	0.91 days	0.99 days	0.88 days

*Differences based on movers status, Hispanic status, and race are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Table 5: Age of First Substance Use by Past Year Mover Status

	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
Alcohol	12.9 yrs	12.6 yrs	13.0 yrs
Cigarettes	12.3 yrs	11.9 yrs	12.5 yrs
Marijuana	13.5 yrs	13.2 yrs	13.6 yrs

Differences between movers and non-movers for all listed substances are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

have moved in the past year than those born outside the United States. A third of the adolescents not born in the United States had moved in the past year.

Family characteristics were significantly associated with moving status. As shown in Table 1, adolescents who had neither parent living in their household and those who had ever been in foster care were more likely to move than their counterparts. Almost 42 percent of the adolescents who did not have at least one parent in the household had moved in the past year. Those with their father living in the household were more likely to have moved than those with only their mother living in the household.

Among the racial/ethnic groups, Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks were the most likely to move in the past year. The sample for American Indians/Alaska Natives was too small for testing but the association of parental presence was tested within the rest of the Hispanic status and racial groups. Moving status still differed significantly by parental presence for all tested Hispanic status and racial groups.

Neighborhood Characteristics

Over half of the adolescents reported at least one of the major negative neighborhood characteristics shown in Table 2. The

rates of the selected major negative neighborhood characteristics were significantly higher for movers than for non-movers. Overall, 30 percent of the adolescents reported that there was a high rate of resident turnover in their neighborhood and significantly more movers than non-movers lived in neighborhoods where people moved in or moved out often. It should not be a surprise then that adolescents in general felt that people in their neighborhoods are not closely connected, that is, don't often help each other or visit in each others' home. Movers were more likely to feel this lack of connection. Movers were more likely to live in neighborhoods characterized by crime, violence, neglected physical environments, and less neighbor helpfulness (see Table 2).

Confidants

Overall, most adolescents (95%) reported that they had a confidant, that is, a person that they felt they could talk to about a serious problem. About 67 percent felt that they could talk to their parent or guardian if they had a serious problem. Females were more likely than males to report having someone to confide in about a serious problem. Controlling for gender, movers (7%) were significantly more likely than non-movers (4%) to report having nobody they felt they could talk to about serious problems. Movers (36%) also were more likely than non-movers (32%) to report that they could not talk to their parent or guardian about serious problems.

Community and School Activities

In the past year, 19 percent of the adolescents participated in programs to improve their problem solving abilities, communication skills and self-esteem. About 13 percent

Table 6: Percent of Movers and Non-Movers by Sociodemographic Characteristics Who Used Alcohol in the Past Year

Characteristics	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
Total*	33.1	35.1	32.6
Gender*			
Males	32.1	33.7	31.7
Females**	34.2	36.6	33.5
Age Group*			
12-13***	12.6	14.8	12.0
14-15	33.8	35.9	33.4
16-17	53.2	55.2	52.7
Hispanic Status and Race			
Hispanic	32.6	35.5	31.6
Non-Hispanic**	33.2	35.0	32.7
White*	36.4	40.9	35.4
Black	21.1	20.8	21.1
American Indian/Alaska Native***	39.5	57.7	35.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	21.7	21.6	21.7
> 1 race	35.5	39.3	34.4

*Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

**Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .01$.

***Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .02$.

participated in big buddy programs like Big Brother or Big Sister programs. Rates of participation in these two types of programs for movers and non-movers were comparable.

About 36 percent of the adolescents participated in volunteer or community work, such as recycling or clean-up projects (see Table 3). However, movers were significantly less likely than non-movers to participate in such activities. Movers were also less likely to be in the scouts or to participate in team sports such as football, basketball, swimming or gymnastics. In contrast, movers were more likely than non-movers to participate in a church choir or in a violence prevention program to learn ways to avoid fights and control anger.

Delinquent Acts

Movers were significantly more likely than non-movers to participate in violence and other delinquent acts. Not only were movers more likely to get into a serious fight at school or work but they were also more likely to carry a handgun and to attack someone with the intention to hurt. In addition, movers were more likely than non-movers to participate in "gang" fights, i.e., where a group of their friends fought against another group. Finally, movers were more likely than non-movers to participate in other serious delinquent acts such as selling illegal drugs and stealing or trying to steal something valued over \$50 (see Table 3).

In general, males were about twice as likely as females to report the selected delinquent acts. The exceptions were gang fights (males 17.1% and females 13.1%) and carrying a handgun (males 4.5% and females 0.9%).

When movers and non-movers were compared within each gender, movers reported significantly higher rates of the selected delinquent acts than non-movers except for carrying a handgun. The rate of handgun carrying was higher for movers for both genders and was significantly higher than non-movers for males. The sample size for handgun carrying among females, however, was too small to test the differences between movers and non-movers for statistical significance.

Substance Abuse Prevention

About 60 percent of the adolescents reported that their parents had talked with them about the dangers of using alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Movers and non-movers were equally likely to talk with their parents about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drug use. However, movers were less likely than non-movers to participate in school drug education and more likely to participate in outside school drug prevention programs or counseling. (see Table 3).

School Attendance

Some of the differences in school pro-

Table 7: Percent of Movers and Non-Movers by Sociodemographic Characteristics Who Used Cigarettes in the Past Year

Characteristics	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
Total*	20.8	26.1	19.5
Gender*			
Males*	19.9	24.9	18.7
Females*	21.8	27.3	20.3
Age Group*			
12-13*	7.2	11.7	6.0
14-15***	20.8	23.2	20.3
16-17*	34.6	43.8	32.3
Hispanic Status and Race			
Hispanic*	18.6	22.5	17.3
Non-Hispanic**	21.2	26.9	19.8
White*	23.5	32.2	21.7
Black**	11.3	13.9	10.3
American Indian/Alaska Native	36.4	35.0	36.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	15.6	20.4	14.2
> 1 race	22.2	23.6	21.7

*Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

**Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .01$.

***Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .02$.

gram participation may be due to differences in school attendance. Overall, adolescents missed an average of 0.93 school days in the past month because of sickness; movers missed 1.26 days and non-movers missed 0.85 days. As shown in Table 4, movers and non-movers differed significantly in the number of school days missed because of sickness, even when controlling for differences in Hispanic status and racial group. There were no significant gender differences in school days missed because of sickness.

Alcohol, Cigarettes, and Illicit Drug Use

Age of First Substance Use: Regardless of their mover status, adolescents began using substances in the same sequence; that is, cigarettes were generally used first, followed by alcohol, and then marijuana. Those who moved in the past year, however, first began using alcohol, cigarettes or marijuana at a significantly earlier age than non-movers (see Table 5).

Overall Substance Use: In the past year, 36 percent of the adolescents used at least one substance (alcohol, cigarettes, or an illicit drug) at least once. In general, adolescents were more likely to drink than either smoke or use an illicit drug in the past year. Significantly more movers than non-movers used a substance. Movers also were more likely to be polydrug users, that is they used all three types of substances (alcohol, ciga-

rettes, and an illicit drug) in the past year.

The probability that an adolescent would use any substance increased with age. Females were slightly more likely than males to drink, smoke, or use an illicit drug in the past year but only the gender difference for past year alcohol or cigarette use was statistically significant. The prevalence of past year cigarette or illicit drug use was so low for the smaller racial groups (American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and more than one race) that the sample sizes were not sufficient to test for statistical differences between movers and non-movers for each substance separately.

Alcohol Use: About 33 percent of the total adolescents drank at least once in the past year. By ages 16 to 17, over half of the adolescents had used alcohol at least once in the past year. As shown in Table 6, moving status was statistically significant for females and the youngest age group (aged 12-13) but was not significant for Hispanics. Among the non-Hispanics, movers had statistically higher rates of alcohol use in the past year than non-movers only among whites and American Indians/Alaska Natives. Among the whites, 41 percent of the movers drank in the past year compared with 35 percent of the non-movers. The rates were higher among the American Indians/Alaska Natives: 58 percent of the movers drank in the past year compared with 36 percent of the non-movers.

Table 8: Percent of Movers and Non-Movers by Sociodemographic Characteristics Who Had Any Illicit Drug Use in the Past Year

Characteristics	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
Total*	18.5	22.6	17.5
Gender*			
Males*	18.4	21.8	17.5
Females*	18.6	23.3	17.4
Age Group*			
12-13*	7.3	10.6	6.5
14-15*	18.9	21.8	18.2
16-17*	29.4	35.4	27.8
Hispanic Status and Race			
Hispanic***	17.8	20.3	16.9
Non-Hispanic*	18.6	23.1	17.6
White*	19.6	25.5	18.4
Black**	15.1	18.1	14.0
American Indian/Alaska Native	41.7	49.1	40.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	11.5	15.2	10.4
> 1 race	18.4	16.7	18.9

Illicit drug use includes marijuana/hashish, cocaine/crack, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or any prescription-type psychotherapeutics used nonmedically.

*Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .001$.

**Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .01$.

***Differences between movers and non-movers are statistically significant at $p < .02$.

Cigarette Use: While the rates of past year cigarette use among adolescents were lower than for alcohol, movers generally had statistically significant higher rates than non-movers when controlling for gender, age group, Hispanic status, and race (see Table 7).

Overall, 21 percent of the adolescents reported smoking cigarettes in the past year. Only 7 percent of those aged 12-13 smoked and by ages 16 to 17, about a third of the adolescents smoked in the past year. Among the oldest age group, 32 percent of the non-movers smoked compared with 44 percent of the movers. The rates of past year smoking were higher for movers for all gender, age, and racial groups except for American Indians/Alaska Natives. The difference based on moving status among American Indians/Alaska Natives, however, was not statistically significant.

Illicit Drug Use: About 30 percent of the adolescents reported using at least one illicit drug, primarily marijuana, in their lifetime. Significantly more movers (33%) than non-movers (25%) had ever used an illicit drug. The overall rate of past year illicit drug use among adolescents was slightly lower than for cigarette use. As shown in Table 8, movers generally had statistically significant higher rates than non-movers when controlling for gender, age group, and Hispanic sta-

tus. The sample sizes for American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and persons reporting more than one race were too small to test for statistical significance based on moving status. For the rest of the racial groups, movers had statistically higher rates than non-movers of past year use of an illicit drug.

Current Substance Use: More movers than non-movers not only used alcohol, tobacco, or an illicit drug in the past year but they also were more likely to be current users. Current use is defined as the use of a substance in the past month. As shown in Table 9, the current use rates for movers were significantly higher than for non-movers for all substances except for hallucinogens.

Substance Abuse Treatment

Among all adolescents, 5 percent in their lifetime had received some kind of substance abuse treatment. This included treatment in any location, not just a specialty facility such as a hospital, rehabilitation facility, or mental health center. The rate for any substance abuse treatment in the past year was 2 percent. Movers were more likely than non-movers to have ever received treatment in any location for an alcohol or drug problem (8% vs. 4%). Movers also were more likely than non-movers to have received any substance abuse treatment in the past year (3% vs. 1%).

Table 9: Percent of Past Year Movers and Non-Movers Who Were Current Users of Alcohol, Cigarettes, or Illicit Drugs

Substance Used in Past Month*	Total	Moved in Past Year	Not Moved in Past Year
Any Substance**	35.9	40.1	34.9
Any Illicit Drug	9.7	12.5	9.0
Alcohol***	16.4	18.5	15.8
Binge Drinking	10.4	12.4	9.9
Heavy Drinking	2.6	3.4	2.4
Cigarettes	13.4	18.2	12.2
Marijuana	7.2	9.6	6.6
Cocaine	0.5	0.9	0.5
Heroin	0.1	0.2	0.1
Inhalants	0.9	1.3	0.8
Any Prescription Psychotherapeutic Drug Used Nonmedically	2.9	3.5	2.8

*Differences between movers and non-movers for all listed substances are statistically significant at $p < .01$ except for heroin ($p < .05$).

**Any substance includes alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drug use. Illicit drug use includes nonmedical prescription psychotherapeutic drug use (pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, or sedatives).

***Binge drinking is defined as drinking 5 or more drinks on the same occasion at least one day in the past month. Heavy drinking is defined as drinking 5 or more drinks on the same occasion on 5 or more days in the past month. The same occasion is defined as at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other.

DISCUSSION

Millions of adolescents change their residence and school each year. Substantial numbers of adolescents move more than once a year. In this study, both substance use and delinquent behavior were associated with whether or not adolescents had changed residence in the past year. However, this cross sectional analysis cannot determine whether these behaviors resulted from the adolescents moving or whether the adolescents moved because of these behaviors. Furthermore, the causal relationship of moving status to neighborhood crime and violence is difficult to assess because more movers than non-movers reported that they committed criminal and violent acts and thus may be responsible for the increased crime and violence in their neighborhoods. The relative influence of home and neighborhoods is also difficult to assess. For example, research has found that children exposed to high levels of community violence feel less secure with their caregivers than children exposed to less violence (Lynch & Cicchetti 2002).

Although the causal relationship of the constellation of moving status, substance use, and delinquent behaviors cannot be determined with this cross sectional study, this constellation is consistent with adoles-

cents' feelings of alienation, isolation, and lack of trusting relationships. Adults often have some measure of control over if, when, and where they move. Adolescents, on the other hand, may feel a loss of control due to moving. Feelings of loss of control coupled with the challenge of fitting in a new social and physical environment may alienate adolescents from both their family and their schoolmates. Indeed, this study found that movers were significantly less likely than non-movers to feel that they could talk to a parent, guardian or other person if they had a serious problem. In general, this study found that movers were more likely than non-movers to have various symptoms of alienation, such as separation from parents, lack of confidants, and living in an unstable neighborhood.

Adolescents who move to new environments may use alcohol and other drugs as self medication to deal with such negative feelings as loneliness, anxiety, anger or depression. For example, Tani, Chavez & Defenbacher (2001), when studying Mexican American and non-Hispanic white adolescents, found that isolated youth (i.e., with no friends) had more anger than those with non-drug-using friends. However, isolates had less anger than youth with friends who used drugs. Perhaps their using drugs was a way

to feel a sense of belonging to a less rejecting group. Indeed, studies have found that over half of the adolescents get their drugs free from family or peers (Moon, Hecht, Jackson & Spellers 1999). In any case, the substance use makes it increasingly difficult for adolescents to adjust to their new environment in healthy ways.

While various factors are related to adolescent substance use and delinquent behaviors, many are considered sensitive (e.g., as parental abuse, friends' substance use, sexual activity) or time consuming to measure (e.g., personality, emotional distress). This analysis provides a potential risk factor, i.e., moving status, to identify adolescents in need of social supports, violence prevention skill building, and alternatives to drug use. By a single, simple question, such as "Are you new here?" asked in a friendly manner, adults wanting to be helpful could easily identify adolescents potentially at risk for substance use and delinquent behaviors. Or one might say: "Haven't seen you around before, good seeing you" especially if the legality of the adolescent's status in the U.S. may be an issue. School, community, and neighborhood programs need to be developed to provide the information, social supports, and guidance needed by the "new kids on the block" to navigate successfully in a healthy manner in their new environments.

Changing residence can lead to an increase in a person's standard of living as well as a decrease. Theoretically, therefore, moving can lead to increased opportunities, improved quality of life, better social supports, etc. For adolescents, moving could result in attendance at a better school system, exposure to more caring adults, the opportunity to redefine oneself in a more positive way, and a chance to start over in one's social relationships using more mature social skills and understandings. However, data on changes in the standard of living or quality of life as a result of moving were not available for this analysis to determine the benefits from moving.

There are positive actions that schools and communities can take to provide benefits and to counter the negative risks of moving for adolescents. For example, the concept of the community "welcome wagons" where neighbors come and greet newcomers with a basket of goodies and information on community services can be ex-

panded to focus on adolescents. Schools or communities can have "welcome book bags" or some such programs to welcome new adolescents to their schools or communities. Such programs could provide information and perhaps a "buddy" to help the adolescent navigate through the new surroundings, make healthy friendships, join a supportive network, feel a sense of belonging, and contribute to the new environment. In any case, this study suggests that it is important to recognize that adolescents who move need help in adjusting to their new environments and that appropriate interventions can be provided to decrease the likelihood of their drug use and delinquency.

Note:

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