INTRODUCTION

The arrival of a child inevitably changes a couple's life. The first child has the greatest impact, and the extent of the repercussions seem generally to dwindle with the arrival of each subsequent child, perhaps up to some unidentified optimum number. The diminution of effect results, of course, from the parents' experience and their development of more enlightened attitudes and tactics to cope with the diversity and quantity of situations, problems, and young people they have created. The entire procedure is, as every parent learns, challenging (a marvelous word), stimulating (to say the least), enlightening, deeply rewarding, often discouraging, and frequently exhausting.

People have to learn how to get along with each other according to the patterns of their particular cultures. In our society the development of an effective *modus vivendi* for both parents and children is greatly facilitated as the diverse members of the family learn to fit and to function with each other, with their living facilities, their neighbors, and their various associations. Familiarity with all these elements is more likely to breed comfort than contempt. Simple routines eliminate many of the ad hoc decisions and choices which are required in daily living and they help to release time for new explorations and ideas. Routine also enriches most lives by making it possible to look forward to the pleasant and desirable events in the family cycle: birthday parties, winter sports, summer vacations, Christmas with grandparents, and other things to anticipate. Even when children, and parents also, may feel more or less coerced into the patterns which family life tends to develop, they usually become aware that the benefits exceed the frustrations which may be generated. The possession of a real home location, a sense of place in the...
structure of the family, the expression of self in peer groups, and the appreciation of some consistent pattern of expectations help to provide both children and parents with personal security and some measure of optimism about the future.

This desirable state of being is not always attainable because it is the product of a complex and delicate balance of many factors, which come into effective relationship with each other usually, if at all, through a continuing process of learning and adaptation by all members of the family. The delicate balance is easily upset. One of the most disturbing things which can happen to the balance of relations within any family is the loss of the home base, with its consequent disarrangement of personal relationships in the neighborhood and with peer groups. Families which are forced to relocate their homes because of job demands, education, or other compelling reasons recognize the human problems of moving, and most of them would avoid the consequent period of readjustment if they had a choice. Many families which are at the mercy of a fluctuating job market, or which are forced into a state of intermittent migration in search of a livelihood, suffer constant or recurrent disruption of their relationships with friends and kin. Many children in such families grow up with no sense of either a "home base" or a predictable future. In such circumstances it is only the exceptional parents who are able to create a pattern of relationships within the family which will be sufficiently stable and satisfying to provide their children with any sense of security and continuity. It is very difficult!

There are also other families which do appear to have a choice in the matter, but because of innocence, ignorance, curiosity, ambition, or some other forces, elect to remove themselves and their children from their homes and transport them to foreign places. These are, for the most part, the families of anthropologists and other scientists who are engaged in foreign research, but many businessmen do the same thing and share the same family problems. People who are working abroad for their governments share many of the same concerns, but there are often elements of volition and special circumstances which make their experiences somewhat different.

In any case, adaptive strategies of various kinds must be devised to ameliorate the negative effects of the sudden changes in family circumstances. Some strategies succeed in reducing the feelings of loss and insecurity likely to be felt by both parents and children, and some strategies provide the ingredients necessary to facilitate adaptation and renewed growth. But no strategies are always effective and members of the family, especially the children, suffer and are unhappy. In any move away from the home base, every family must contend with hazards and difficulties which cannot be predicted. This is inevitable, but many problems, such as those mentioned here, will almost always occur; they are predictable and every family preparing to live abroad should anticipate them. Each family is forced to deal with them. In some cases they are