

# Moving house can benefit kids

**MOVING** house from one area to another has the potential to influence children's lives positively, researchers have found.

A study by Wits University's Developmental Pathways for Health Research Unit, which explored the patterns of residential mobility, has shown that moving home does not prejudice children's educational progression or potential for achievement.

But said while the move had potential for improved living conditions, it could also result in inequality and vulnerability, the study said.

The research showed that 64 per cent of children had moved home at least once by the time they were 15.

"Mobility was found to be more likely amongst children whose mothers or caregivers had no formal education and who lived in poorer

households, suggesting that residential movement within this group of children was more common in the context of disadvantage," said the study.

"However, the consequences of such movement were somewhat unexpected. The results of the research showed no evidence that residential mobility impacted negatively on children's progression through school. On the contrary, children who had moved home appeared to achieve higher scores in a numeracy and literacy evaluation."

The research explored the patterns of residential mobility within a group of Joburg-Soweto-based children over 15 years and its overall findings suggest that children are resilient and can adapt to change and residential mobility positively. - Thabiso Thakali