

Life After High School

Summary

One author argues that it is better to move away from home because in a new town, young adults will get the opportunity to make their own decisions. With no parents nearby, they'll have to learn to problem solve for themselves. Moving away also gives the chance to encounter people of different social and ethnic backgrounds, explore new cultural institutions, or even get to know a foreign country. The counterpoint argues that growing up is hard enough, so there's no need to make it harder by having to adjust to a new environment. Staying at home, young people can instead focus on saving money and contributing to their families. Furthermore, young people already have functioning social networks and if they were to leave home, they'd have to build all new friendships. Lastly, no digital connection can replace a hug nor the in-person wisdom and support of trusted friends and family.

Read

Life After High School: Is it better to move far away or stay close to home?

Point: It is better to move far away from home after high school.

For a recent high school graduate, now is the best time to move far away from home because moving to a new place offers more independence, new experiences, and increased awareness about the world.

Gain Independence

According to Eurobarometer and the 2005 Current Population Survey, almost 12% of people in the United States move each year. This percentage puts Americans only slightly behind the most frequent movers in the world, the Finnish and the Danish. Considering that the United States was founded by people moving from England to escape the restraints of their old lives and begin anew, moving seems to be an important part of our national character.

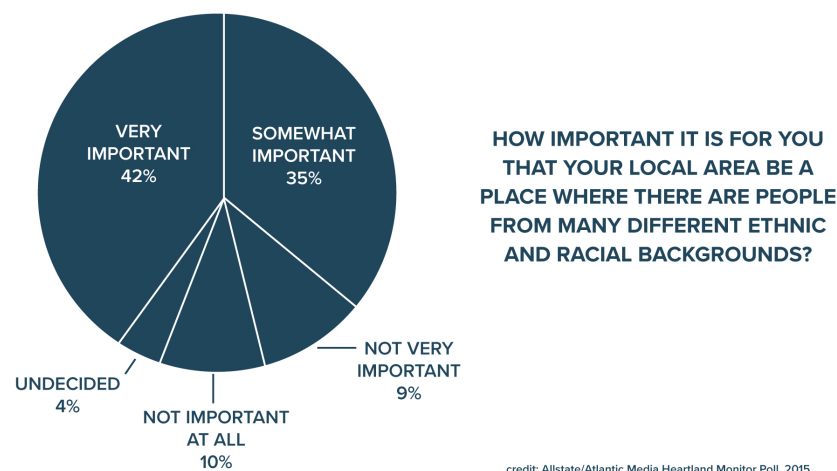
One of the main reasons to move far away from home after high school is to gain more independence. At home, young adults have to follow their parents' or guardians' rules. Even if these young adults move but stay close to home, they may find themselves encountering similar rules and hearing unwanted advice from family and old friends. In another place, whether at a college or at a new job in a new city, young adults will be able to make their own rules and form their own habits.

Some people argue that moving far away will make it harder for young adults to get help if they need it. It's

true that parents cannot easily rush to aid their children if they live hundreds of miles apart, but depending on the situation, this may actually be a benefit. For example, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011 Consumer Expenditure Survey, moving from an urban environment to a more rural one can actually save you money. Additionally, moving away from home forces you to learn critical budgeting and household management skills: it's a crash course in adulting. For example, if young adults have always had meals prepared by a parent or guardian, then living far away means that they must learn to provide meals for themselves that suit their individual tastes and budgets. Besides, parents or guardians will not always be available to help, even if young adults live close by, so it is important for young adults to learn how to pay bills, communicate with others, and solve problems on their own.

Expand Understanding

Another reason to move away is to have new experiences. Many students spend the majority of their childhood and adolescence in one place; they may have even spent their entire lives in the same house or apartment and learned alongside students a lot like themselves from elementary school through high school. Yet, most respondents to a 2015 Allstate/Atlantic Media Heartland Monitor Poll indicated that they would value living in an area where there are people from many different ethnic and racial backgrounds:



Once students move away from home, they will have the opportunity to meet new people. A college campus has people from all around the country and even from other countries; likewise, living in a new city allows young adults to explore new places, such as museums, restaurants, and venues for entertainment. As part of their military experience, some young adults may travel to distant bases or move to other parts of the country.

Moving to a new place also increases a person's awareness about the world. According to the Pew Research Center, 53% of people around the world and 60% of people in advanced world economies use social media as of 2017. Those numbers suggest that we already have increased connection to the world from our computers or smartphones. While it is possible to make new friends from around the world via social media, those numbers also show that 47% of people worldwide are not posting pictures, watching

videos, and chatting on the internet. In a new place, young adults can meet people they never would have met online. By taking a chance and exploring, young people may discover a whole new world; they may walk into a new favorite restaurant and meet fascinating people who help them see an entirely different way of experiencing the world.

Seize the Moment

Although it may seem scary at first, moving far away may be one of the most **beneficial** things young adults can do for themselves. Many young adults have not settled down with a partner, had children, or purchased property yet, which means that young adulthood is the perfect time to seize the moment and try living in an exciting, new place. Maybe the new place will become their new home—a place to settle down and raise their own family—or maybe the place will give them **unique** insight about the world that they can take back to their hometowns and share with others.

Takeaways:

- Moving far away is a great way to gain and **assert** independence.
- Moving far away will expand young adults' understanding of the world.
- Moving right after high school allows young adults to take advantage of the freedom of youth.

Being on their own, meeting new people, and learning new things are valuable experiences for young adults. After living in a new place, young adults will discover that the rewards of moving far away from home far outweigh any reason to stay behind.

Counterpoint: It is better to stay close to home after high school.

The struggle to leave childhood behind is difficult enough without having to acclimate to a new environment and create a new support system, so new high school graduates should stay close to home as they transition into their new roles as adults.

Stay Nearby, Save Money

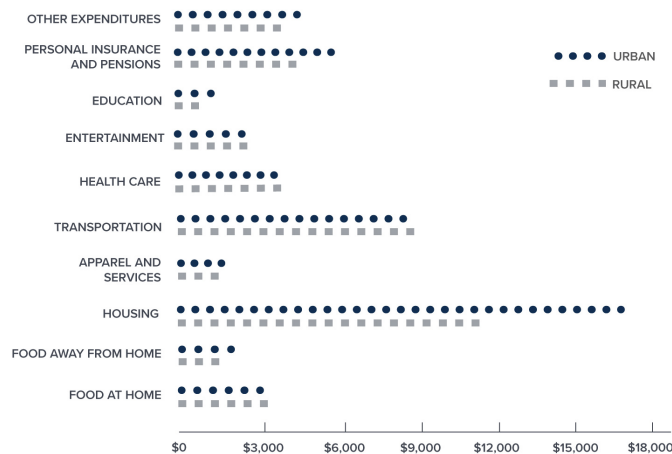
In “Out of High School, Into Real Life,” *New York Times* reporter Jack Healy reveals that 30% of the graduating class of 2017 did not plan to go directly to college. For many, this decision was based on the following criteria:

- Finances: some did not have enough money to pay for higher education, and others wanted to help support their parents or other family members.
- Employment: some young adults already have jobs before graduating, which allows them to contribute to their household's income.

Additionally, moving far away, whether it is to attend college or to pursue job opportunities in another city, involves moving expenses. Shipping furniture and electronics can be prohibitively expensive, so young adults will likely need to purchase such essentials once they've arrived at their new homes. Some say that living in a new city is exciting, and while it's true that urban environments often afford young people new opportunities, a new graduate has to consider whether or not a new lifestyle is worth the cost. The cost of living for **fundamental** requirements, such as food, clothing, and housing, can be more expensive in an urban environment.

AVERAGE ANNUAL EXPENDITURE OF URBAN AND RURAL HOUSEHOLDS, 2011

SOURCE: US BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, CONSUMER EXPENDITURE SURVEY



By staying close to home, students can contribute to their families as well as save money for their future plans instead of spending money on traveling or moving.

Use an Existing Network

Some people move to be closer to friends or distant relatives, but for most, moving away means starting over and losing networking connections. According to Healy's article, one graduating senior mentioned that he already works for a car detailing business and that his plan is to take advantage of the connections he already has in his hometown in order to start a career. He is already working to build a life for himself, so leaving to search for a new opportunity in a new place does not appeal to him.

Although not all families have the same business ventures, young adults can still benefit from family and friend connections. Young adults can ask people they know if someone is hiring or request advice when approaching local businesses for opportunities. Young adults may also have connections from their own experiences. Being a trusted member of the community could lead to other opportunities if people see and appreciate the young adult's work. These kinds of connections must start from scratch when young adults move somewhere new, unless they have pre-existing connections before moving.

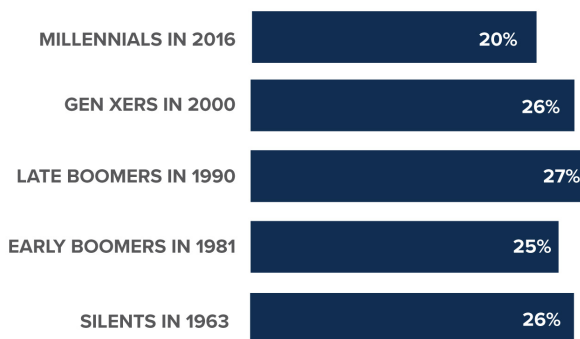
Maintain Relationships with Family and Friends

Some may claim that living in a digital world means we don't need to live physically near friends and family in order to stay connected to them. Social media and technological advancements like Skype and FaceTime do make it easier to spend virtual time with faraway loved ones. Still, nothing can replace time spent together in person; seeing a person's face on a screen does not fulfill the same emotional needs as a hug or sharing an experience together. For some, it is more important to strengthen bonds with parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins than it is to meet new people. This familial closeness can take the form of staying in the same area or living in multigenerational households, which as of 2016 make up 20% of all U.S. households according to the Pew Research Center.

Aside from being close and easily accessible, family and trusted friends can offer valuable moral support that can help ease young adults' transition from high school to the adult world. Everyone needs help sometimes, and knowing that a loved one is around to help at any time offers valuable peace of mind. A parent or guardian might be able to help with repairs around a nearby apartment or could offer roadside help with a flat tire, while trusted friends may be able to help you make important life decisions that a new acquaintance would not care to understand. Besides, according to the Pew Research Center, 53% of people around the world and 60% of people in advanced world economies use social media as of 2017. This means that young adults can create new friendships and expand their understanding of the world without having to leave loved ones behind.

Looking at recent data regarding the movement of different generations supports the assertion that it is better to stay close to home after high school. Research shows that almost 12% of people in the United States move each year (Eurobarometer and the 2005 Current Population Survey). That means the majority of Americans choose not to move. If moving was the best option, wouldn't more people do it? Additionally, for the past three generations of Americans, fewer and fewer young adults are moving. For all of the reasons provided above, young adults are abandoning a transient lifestyle for the stability of home.

MILLENNIALS ARE LESS LIKELY TO MOVE THAN PRIOR GENERATIONS
 % OF 25- TO 35-YEAR-OLDS WHO MOVED IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR



MILLENNIALS ARE LESS LIKELY TO MOVE THAN PRIOR GENERATIONS OF YOUNG ADULTS PEW RESEARCH CENTER, WASHINGTON, D.C. FEBRUARY 10, 2017.

While the transition to full independence may be slower, staying close to home ultimately offers more benefits than drawbacks. Young adults can save money or contribute to their family's income, **maintain**

lifelong networking connections, and strengthen the relationships with the people who mean the most to them. Travel can happen at any time, but the benefits of staying close to home are irreplaceable.

Annotations
