

to be interfering with the business of getting on with the move. Fortunately, when given the chance to participate in the action, most young people rise to the occasion superbly.

Parents sometimes make the mistake of expecting their children to want to return home as eagerly as they do. Why should they? If we have done our job well they were so successfully adapted to the post that they do not want to leave.

Their memories of home, relatives, friends and school in Canada have faded in the excitement and turmoil of growing up. The post surroundings with its familiar people, school friends and life style represent security and "home".

An adolescent's knowledge of Canada may be limited to a few books, magazines and films. They may have created a very inaccurate impression of the reality. The pseudo-sophisticated foreign service child gives an impression of maturity and "cope-ability" that is often false. They can converse intelligently with adults, but may be struck dumb at a party of Canadian peers; their experience has not prepared them for this. The privileged protected life of diplomatic children can create a hot house plant unable to flower in the rough and tumble of Canadian public school. On the other hand it may produce mature, adaptable, self-sufficient individuals who wrest the most out of every situation life throws at them. It is important to know your children for what they are, and do the best for them individually.

Your teenager will appear "different" in the eyes of his/her Canadian peers which is almost an unforgivable sin. He/she may be shocked by the commonness of divorce, pregnancy and abortion, drugs, alcohol, sex and violence on TV, in school, in films and in publications. He/she may resent the return to pre-adult status; feel lost in large schools; or overwhelmed by our consumer oriented society. You will no longer know their friends or their friend's families. This is a time for discussion and communication and may strain your family relationships.

Take time to discuss family values, local customs, current trends in dress/behaviour/entertainment. Indulge in a crash course in Canadian adolescent culture: music, singers, actors., sports, TV programmes, teen publications. The best source is another family with teens of their own.

Some signs of mobility stress in adolescents are: recurrent minor maladies, proneness to accidents, a drop in grades, withdrawal or clinging, irritability, change in leisure activities or in eating or sleeping habits.

Continuity and support are important for the maturing and volatile adolescent. It is up to you to provide the security in a mobile lifestyle. Being aware of the potential pitfalls is the first step in preventing a situation from getting out of hand.

Once a problem is so great that you feel you can no longer help or cope, professional assistance should be sought.