

Family Factors and Moving in Nonmetro Iowa

Sandra Charvat Burke and Mark A. Edelman

The Study

This report is the third in a series¹ that examines the experiences of people who have recently moved to or from 19 selected nonmetropolitan counties of Iowa. The goal is to better understand the decisions and thoughts of people who have moved and what they think about the communities and areas where they have lived. The objective of this project is to help community leaders better understand local household moving trends so they can develop actionable strategies to address the reasons why people come, why people leave, enhance the qualities that cause people to stay, and thus stabilize or increase their populations.

The research results are from a survey of nonmetropolitan movers in 19 selected counties in Iowa (Adams, Appanoose, Cherokee, Davis, Decatur, Dickinson, Floyd, Hamilton, Hardin, Henry, Howard, Jefferson, Page, Ringgold, Sioux, Taylor, Union, Van Buren, Wayne).² People who had moved either into or out of these 19 counties were identified through a purchased database of new movers. The criteria to be included in the study were that both current and previous zip codes had to be known, at least one of the zip codes had to be from the selected 19 counties, and the zip codes had to be different, indicating a community move rather than just a move across the street or down the block.

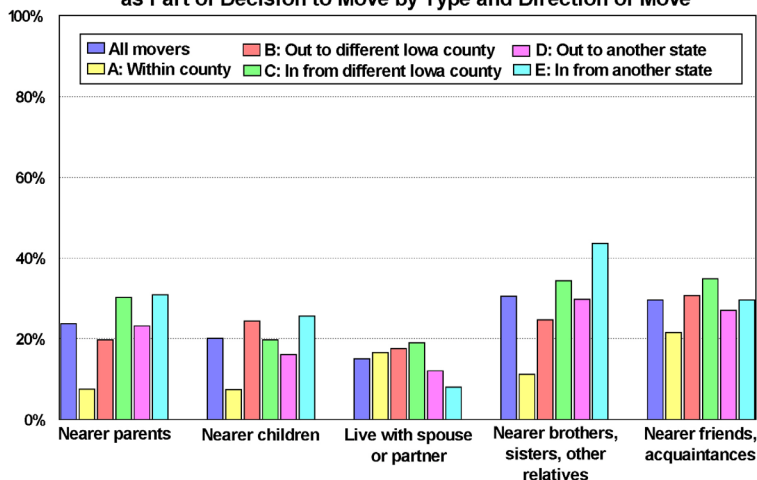
The survey asked questions about the respondent's previous location as well as their current location, reasons for moving, satisfaction with multiple factors in their communities, as well as their demographic, social, and economic situation. The surveys were mailed in the fall of 2005 and 737 respondents who met the study criteria replied for a response rate of 35 percent. Most respondents had moved during 2003 through 2005.

Findings

This study highlights the influence of family factors in the decisions of people who have recently moved to or from 19 selected nonmetropolitan counties of Iowa. The purpose is to increase understanding about why people move so community leaders and citizens can develop actionable strategies for attracting and retaining population. Using data from a survey mailed to residents who moved, this study finds that:

- Sixty-nine percent of respondents cited at least one family, friend, or health factor as important in their decision to move. Many more respondents reported moving to be closer to relatives or friends than said they moved to be farther away.
- Respondents moving into the counties, whether from other states or other areas of Iowa, were more likely than those who moved out to say they moved to be nearer parents, brothers or sisters, and friends.
- Nearly 18 percent of the respondents leaving Iowa for other states said they moved to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner. Thirty-six percent of those age 18 - 24 and leaving Iowa said this.
- The youngest respondents, age 18 - 24, were the most likely to say they moved to be closer to parents (39%) or to live with a spouse or partner (28.6%) but they also were the most likely to say they moved to be farther from relatives (12.5%).
- Two-thirds or more of the oldest respondents, age 70 or above, cited moving to be closer to children regardless of whether the move was between counties in Iowa or between Iowa and other states.
- Thirty percent of respondents 70 or older reported moving because of a decline in health. Fifty-seven percent of within-county movers this age cited health.

Figure 1: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

New Mover Studies: Family Factors and Moving in Nonmetro Iowa

Five categories of movers are used to examine the results (Table 1). Among the respondents, 696 (94.4%) fit into just one of the five mover categories. The other 41 respondents (5.6%) had moved out of one of the study counties and into another of the 19 included counties. These 41 responses are included as both out-movers to another Iowa county and in-movers to a county in the study. However, in the results that follow, the category of *All Movers* includes only the 737 respondents without duplication.

Family Factors and Type of Move

This report focuses on family-related factors, including marriage, friends, and health, that influenced the decision to move. This report adds to the results described in the previous reports¹ by presenting more detailed information about specific family factors that respondents said influenced their moving decision. These results come from a series of 10 questions that asked about being nearer parents, children, or friends, changes in marital status, and decline in health (Table 2).¹ For each of the 10 items, the respondent was asked to circle “yes” or “no” if the factor was involved in the decision to move. Respondents could respond “yes” to more than one of the 10 items.

When thinking about the role that these family factors played in their decision to move, 69 percent of the respondents selected “yes” for at least one of the 10 items. This reinforces the importance of family factors in the decision to move, however, the specific factors varied significantly in the role they played in the moving decision.

Among all respondents, being able to live with a spouse or partner was a factor for 15.0 percent, 23.7 percent said they moved to be nearer parents, 20.1 percent wanted to be nearer children, 30.5 percent reported moving to be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives, while moving to be nearer friends or acquaintances was selected by 29.6 percent (Table 2, Figure 1). Marital status changes affected 13.2 percent, while 7.9 percent reported moving to be in a place where finding

a prospective spouse or partner would be easier. A health decline affected the moving decision of 10.4 percent of the respondents, 5.9 percent reported moving to take care of aging parents, while 6.6 percent said they moved to be farther from family and relatives (Table 2, Figure 2).

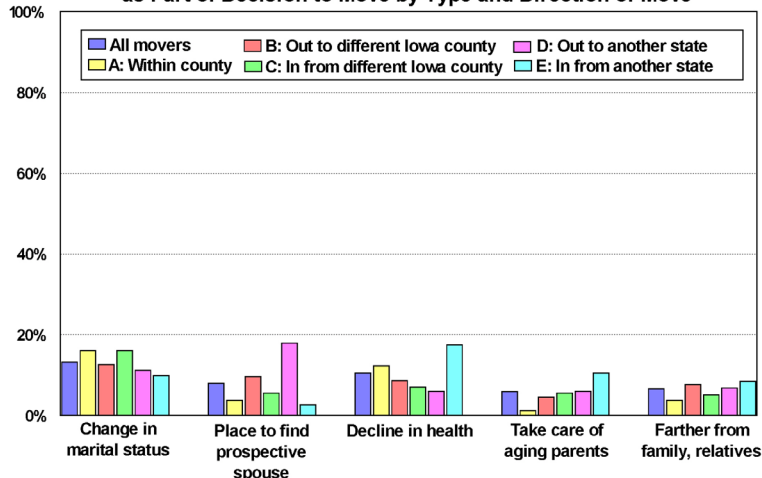
Responses by mover category (Table 1) provided clear differences in the roles that various family factors played in moving decisions. As an overall pattern, many more respondents reported moving to be closer to various relatives than said they moved to be farther away. In addition, respondents who stayed within a county when they moved (Group A) were least likely to report moving to be near relatives including parents, children, brothers and sisters, friends and acquaintances or to take care of parents. This suggests that the geographical distance of relatives has an impact on moving decisions (Table 2). On the other hand, life events such as a change in marital status, living with a spouse, or a decline in health did prompt localized moves as much or more than moves between counties and between states.

Respondents who moved into the counties, whether from other Iowa counties or other states (Groups C and E), said they moved to be near parents, brothers or sisters, and friends more often than those who moved out of the counties (Groups B and D). Nearly 44 percent of respondents coming from other states said that being near brothers or sisters was a factor in their move. In contrast, the respondents who left Iowa for other states were the most likely (17.9%, Group D) to report that they were moving to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner (Table 2, Figure 2).

Across all the moving types, the percentage of respondents saying they moved to be closer to parents was significantly higher than those saying they moved to take care of aging parents. This suggests that wanting to be nearer parents did not necessarily involve a need that the respondents take care of their parents. Those selecting a decline in health as a reason for moving were highest in those coming to Iowa from other states (Group E), followed by the local, within-county movers (Group A) (Table 2).

Category	Number	Type and Direction of Move
A: <i>Within County, Zipcode change</i>	85	Moved within one of the 19 study counties but changed zip code.
B: <i>Out To Another Iowa County</i>	206	Moved out of one of the study counties to another county in Iowa.
C: <i>In From Another Iowa County</i>	207	Moved from another county in Iowa into one of the study counties.
D: <i>Out To Another State</i>	121	Moved out of one of the study counties to another state.
E: <i>In From Another State</i>	159	Moved from another state into one of the study counties.

Figure 2: Percent Responding ‘Yes’ to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Table 2. Percent Responding “Yes”^a to Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move.

		Type and Direction of Move				
		All Movers ^b	A: Within County, Changed Zipcode	B: Out To Different Iowa County	C: In From Different Iowa County	D: Out To Another State
Family-Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To be nearer parents	23.7	7.5	19.7	30.2	23.1	30.9
To be nearer children	20.1	7.4	24.4	19.7	16.0	25.6
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	15.0	16.5	17.6	19.0	12.0	8.0
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	30.5	11.1	24.7	34.3	29.7	43.6
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	29.6	21.5	30.7	34.8	27.0	29.6
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	13.2	16.0	12.6	16.0	11.1	9.8
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	7.9	3.7	9.6	5.5	17.9	2.6
Decline in health of someone in household	10.4	12.3	8.6	7.0	6.0	17.4
To take care of aging parents	5.9	1.2	4.5	5.5	6.0	10.4
To be farther from family and relatives	6.6	3.7	7.6	5.0	6.8	8.4
*respondents could respond “Yes” to more than one question: ^b based on 737 total respondents						

^arespondents could respond “Yes” to more than one question; ^bbased on 737 total respondents.

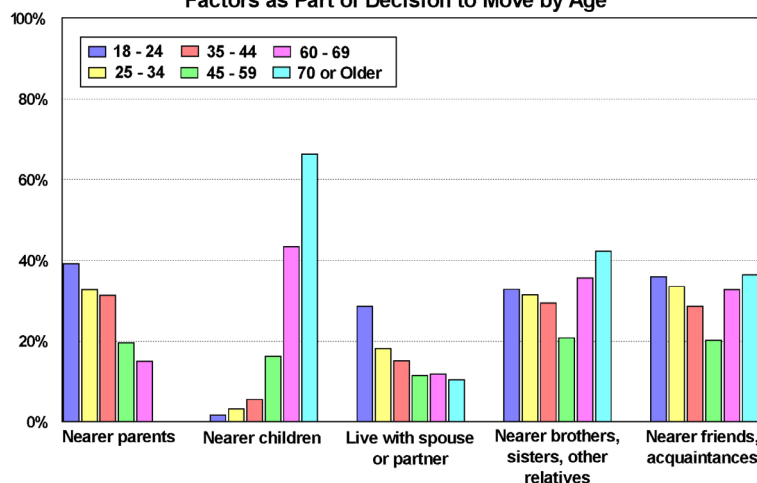
Family Factors by Age and Type of Move

Age and life-cycle stage influence decisions about moving. The respondents were grouped into six age categories to examine how family factors and the moving decision varied (Tables 3, 5).³ The youngest respondents, age 18 – 24, were the most likely to say they moved to be closer to parents (39.1%), to live with a spouse or partner (28.6%), to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner (17.2%), or to be farther from family and relatives (12.5%) (Table 3, Figures 3 – 4).

In contrast, fully two-thirds of the oldest respondents, age 70 or above, reported moving to be nearer their children as well as 30 percent who cited a health decline. The oldest respondents also most often said they moved to be nearer brothers or sisters or because of a change in marital status (Table 3). These differences in reasons for moving between the youngest and oldest respondents reflect the sequence of life events of marriage, widowhood, and health.

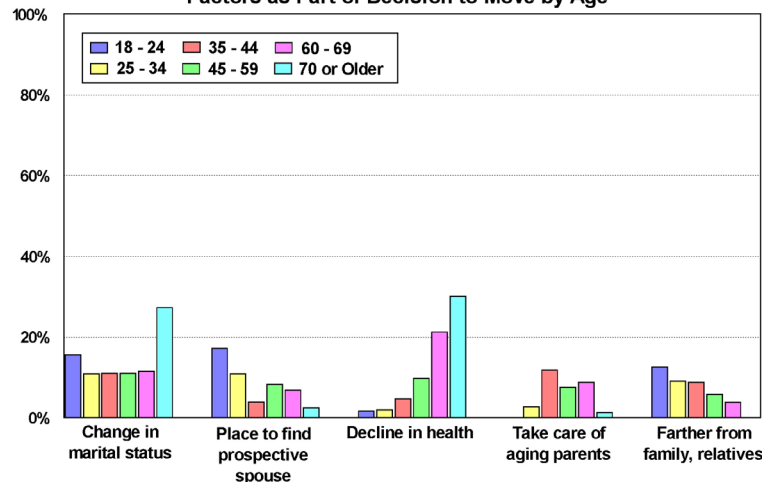
The age group of 45 – 59 contains most of the “baby boomers”⁴ and it was these respondents who were least likely to say they moved to be nearer brothers or sisters or friends and acquaintances (Table 3, Figure 3). The middle age groups (35 – 69), however, were the most likely to report

Figure 3: Percent Responding ‘Yes’ to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 4: Percent Responding ‘Yes’ to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

that a need to take care of aging parents was a factor in their decision (Figure 4).

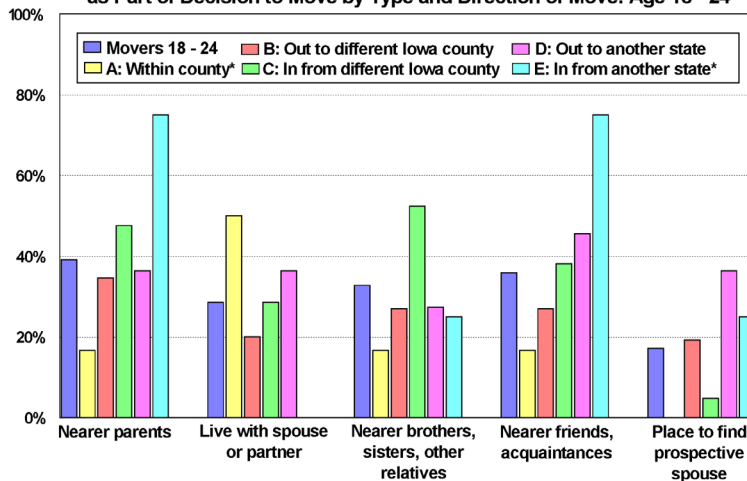
This study provides the ability to examine the reasons for moving by age and type of move together to look for decision patterns that might be unique or specific to one particular group or age combination (Table 4).⁵ Overall, few, if any, respondents age 18 – 24, regardless of type or direction of move, reported that they moved to be nearer children, to take care of aging parents, or because of a decline in health.⁶ On the other hand, 75 percent of this age group coming from other states to Iowa said they moved to be closer to parents or to be nearer friends and acquaintances (Figure 5).

Within-county movers age 18 – 24 had the highest percentage (50%) of any group reporting moving to be able to live with a spouse or partner. Those this age who moved to other states had the highest percentage (36%) saying they moved to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner (Table 4, Figure 5).

The respondents who were age 25 – 34 responded in ways that were similar to the youngest group. Within-county movers 25 – 34 had the second highest percentage (35%) of any group reporting moving to be able to live with a spouse or partner. Those this age who moved to other states had the second highest percentage (31%) saying they moved to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner (Table 4, Figure 6). Wanting to be near parents and brothers and sisters were important for those 25 – 34 but being nearer children, taking care of aging parents, or health declines remained unimportant in the moving decision for most of this age group in a way similar to the youngest respondents (Table 4, Figures 5 – 6).

There was greater likelihood of moving to take care of aging parents, especially for those moving between states, for the respondents age 35 – 44 than there had been for younger respondents. In addition, those 35 – 44 were much less likely than those younger to say they moved to be in a place

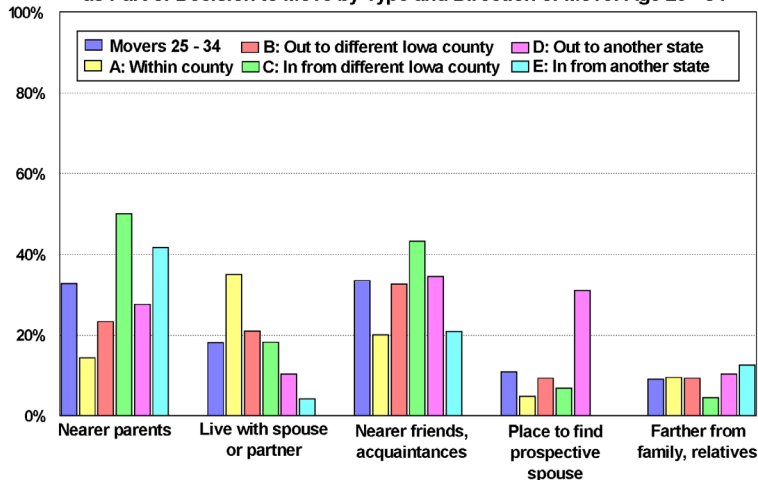
Figure 5: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move: Age 18 - 24



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

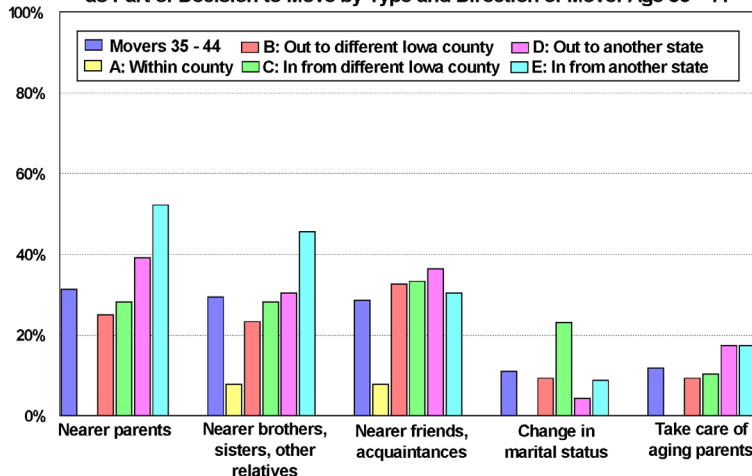
*caution with results for this group, fewer than 10 respondents

Figure 6: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move: Age 25 - 34



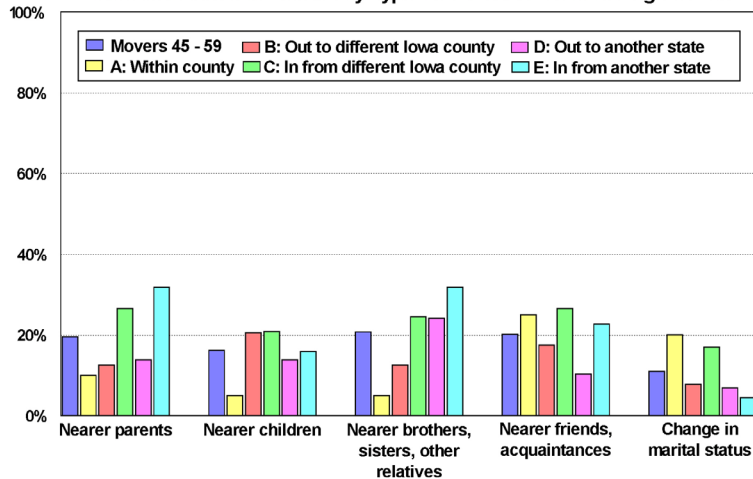
Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 7: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move: Age 35 - 44



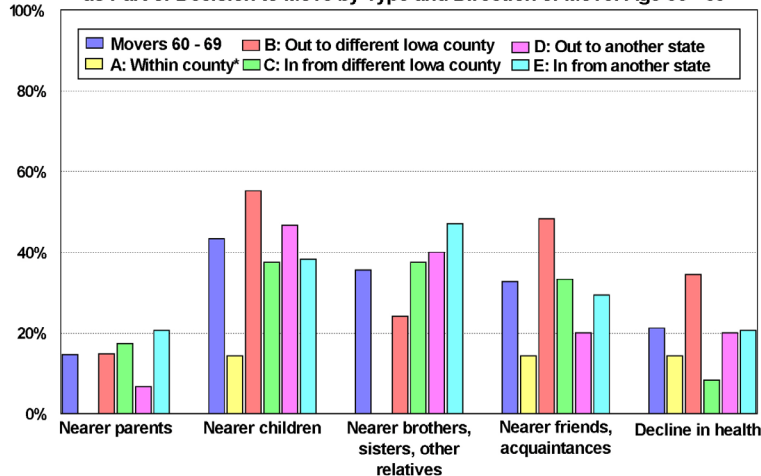
Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

Figure 8: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move: Age 45 - 59



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

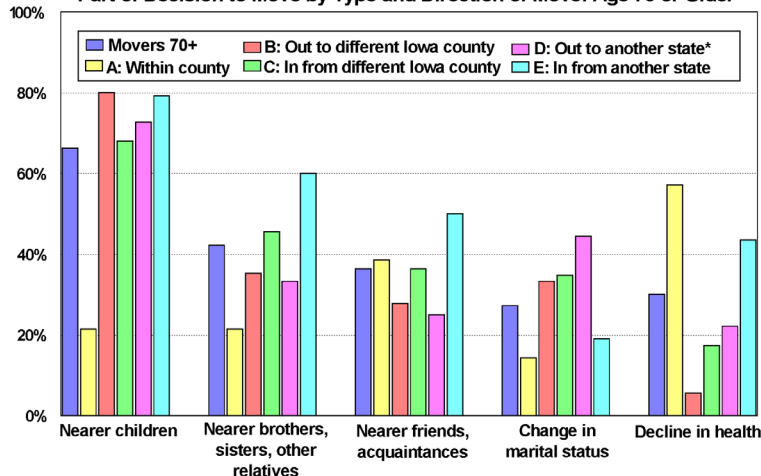
Figure 9: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move: Age 60 - 69



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

*caution with results for this group, fewer than 10 respondents

Figure 10: Percent Responding 'Yes' to Selected Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Type and Direction of Move: Age 70 or Older



Source: Community Vitality Center, New Movers Study

*caution with results for this group, fewer than 10 respondents

where it would be easier to find a spouse or partner. In contrast to both younger and older respondents, those age 35 – 44 who moved within a county were the least likely, of any age or group, to say they moved because of any of the family, friend, or health reasons (Table 4, Figures 5 – 10).

Moving to be nearer children or because of a health decline took on more importance in the moving decision for respondents age 45 – 59 compared with those younger. In addition, those age 45 – 59 were less likely to say they moved to be nearer parents than younger respondents. For this age, those who moved into the counties were more likely to say they moved to live with a spouse or partner, to be nearer parents, children, brothers or sisters, or friends than those who moved out (Table 4, Figures 5 – 8).

For the 60 – 69 age group, wanting to be nearer children took on prime importance for those moving between counties or between states, although somewhat more of those moving out of the counties reported this than those moving in. Within-county movers of this age were less likely than those moving between counties or between states to report that they moved for these family or friend relationships. For most of the mover groups, health declines figured more prominently in the moving decision than they had for the respondents age 45 – 59 (Table 4, Figures 8 – 9).

The oldest respondents, 70 or older, were very likely to have moved to be nearer their children. From 68 to 80 percent of those who moved between counties or between states reported nearness to children as a reason for the move. Wanting to be nearer brothers or sisters or friends and acquaintances was important as well. None of the respondents this age reported moving to be nearer parents or to be farther from relatives. Fifty-seven percent of the within-county movers this age said they moved because of a decline in health, the highest percentage of any age or mover group.

New Mover Studies: Family Factors and Moving in Nonmetro Iowa

Table 3. Percent Responding “Yes”^a to Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age.

	Age in Years						
	All Ages ^b	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 59	60 – 69	70 or Older
Family-Related Factors	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
To be nearer parents	23.6	39.1	32.7	31.3	19.5	14.9	0.0
To be nearer children	20.3	1.6	3.2	5.5	16.2	43.3	66.3
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	15.0	28.6	18.1	15.0	11.4	11.8	10.4
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	30.4	32.8	31.4	29.4	20.7	35.6	42.2
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	29.7	35.9	33.5	28.6	20.1	32.7	36.4
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	13.4	15.6	10.9	11.0	11.0	11.5	27.2
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	8.0	17.2	10.9	3.9	8.2	6.8	2.4
Decline in health of someone in household	10.5	1.6	1.9	4.7	9.8	21.2	30.1
To take care of aging parents	5.9	0.0	2.6	11.8	7.5	8.7	1.2
To be farther from family and relatives	6.7	12.5	9.0	8.7	5.8	3.8	0.0

^arespondents could respond “Yes” to more than one question; ^bbased on 728 respondents who completed the age question.

Summary

Family, marital, friends and health factors played a role in the moving decision of 69 percent of the respondents in the study. There were differences in the most important factors cited by the respondents based on their age and the type of move made.

Twenty percent or more of all respondents said that they moved to be closer to children, parents, brothers or sisters, or friends and acquaintances, many more than said they moved to be farther away from relatives. Within-county movers were less likely than those moving between counties or between states to say they moved to be closer to relatives, indicating an impact of geographical distance of relatives on the moving decision.

Respondents who moved into the study counties, whether from other states or other counties in Iowa were more likely to say they moved to be near relatives than those who moved out of the counties. Respondents who left Iowa for other states were the most likely to report moving to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner.

The youngest respondents were the most likely to say they moved to be closer to parents or to live with a spouse or partner. Two-thirds of the oldest respondents reported moving to be nearer children. Middle age groups were the most likely to say they moved to take care of aging parents.

Half of the within-county movers age 18 – 24 said they moved in order to be able to live with a spouse or partner. Thirty-six percent of those 18 – 24 who moved out of Iowa said they moved to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner.

The oldest respondents, 70 or older, were very likely to have moved to be nearer their children. From 68 to 80 percent of those who moved between counties or between states reported nearness to children as a reason for the move. In addition, older respondents cited a health decline much more often than younger respondents. Fifty-seven percent of the within-county movers this age said they moved because of a decline in health, the highest percentage of any age or mover group.

Thinking About Next Steps

Most people are interested in living near their relatives. The findings in this study reinforce the importance of family and friends as motivations in moving decisions but there were important variations by age.

For the younger respondents under age 35, there is a clear pattern of moving to be with or find a spouse or partner. It is unsettling to find that among the respondents who left Iowa for another state, nearly 18 percent overall and 36 percent of those age 18 – 24 said that part of their reason for moving was to be in a place where it would be easier to find a prospective spouse or partner. This implies that communities might focus

some effort on getting young people to know each other.

A focus on social relationships of younger workers is not a usual concern for community development, however, as Iowa communities look to their future, strategies that facilitate the social relationships of young adults may help to attract and retain young people. Social events might be sponsored by a variety of groups on a county-wide or regional basis so that young adults in an area can meet. Young professional organizations and church groups could play a role. With appropriate safeguards, internet sites devoted to relationships and networks could help rural Iowans find a mate from the area. Young residents who enjoy nonmetropolitan amenities and lifestyle are much more likely to stay long-term in the area if they can find a spouse or partner with similar interests.

What might be a surprising result in the study is the interest expressed by the younger respondents in living nearer their parents and moving to be closer to them. In addition, many respondents across all ages expressed an interest in being nearer brothers and sisters. Focusing on the relatives and friends of the residents who live there already may provide a natural pool of people who would have an interest in living in the same town or area. This suggests that families might be encouraged to recruit other family members to move to their area. In recent years, two business relocations to Northeast Iowa occurred

New Mover Studies: Family Factors and Moving in Nonmetro Iowa

Table 4. Percent Responding “Yes”^a to Selected^b Family-Related Factors as Part of Decision to Move by Age and Type and Direction of Move.

Family-Related Factors by Age	All Movers in Age Group ^c	Type and Direction of Move				
		A: Within County, Changed Zipcode	B: Out To Different Iowa County	C: In From Different Iowa County	D: Out To Another State	E: In From Another State
	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes	% Yes
Age 18 - 24						
To be nearer parents	39.1	16.7 ^d	34.6	47.6	36.4	75.0 ^d
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	28.6	50.0 ^d	20.0	28.6	36.4	0.0 ^d
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	32.8	16.7 ^d	26.9	52.4	27.3	25.0 ^d
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	35.9	16.7 ^d	26.9	38.1	45.5	75.0 ^d
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	15.6	33.3 ^d	15.4	4.8	27.3	0.0 ^d
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	17.2	0.0 ^d	19.2	4.8	36.4	25.0 ^d
To be farther from family and relatives	12.5	16.7 ^d	15.4	9.5	9.1	0.0 ^d
Age 25 - 34						
To be nearer parents	32.7	14.3	23.3	50.0	27.6	41.7
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	18.1	35.0	20.9	18.2	10.3	4.2
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	31.4	14.3	32.6	36.4	27.6	41.7
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	33.5	20.0	32.6	43.2	34.5	20.8
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	10.9	19.0	11.6	11.4	3.4	8.3
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	10.9	4.8	9.3	6.8	31.0	0.0
To be farther from family and relatives	9.0	9.5	9.3	4.5	10.3	12.5
Age 35 - 44						
To be nearer parents	31.3	0.0	25.0	28.2	39.1	52.2
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	15.0	0.0	16.3	20.5	17.4	13.0
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	29.4	7.7	23.3	28.2	30.4	45.5
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	28.6	7.7	32.6	33.3	36.4	30.4
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	11.0	0.0	9.3	23.1	4.3	8.7
To take care of aging parents	11.8	0.0	9.3	10.3	17.4	17.4
To be farther from family and relatives	8.7	0.0	7.0	7.7	8.7	17.4
Age 45 - 59						
To be nearer parents	19.5	10.0	12.5	26.5	13.8	31.8
To be nearer children	16.2	5.0	20.5	20.8	13.8	15.9
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	11.4	0.0	19.5	22.4	3.4	6.8
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	20.7	5.0	12.5	24.5	24.1	31.8
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	20.1	25.0	17.5	26.5	10.3	22.7
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	11.0	20.0	7.7	17.0	6.9	4.5
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	8.2	10.0	12.8	6.4	6.9	7.0
Decline in health of someone in household	9.8	0.0	10.3	8.3	6.9	15.9
To take care of aging parents	7.5	5.0	2.6	8.3	6.9	11.4
Age 60 - 69						
To be nearer parents	14.9	0.0 ^d	14.8	17.4	6.7	20.6
To be nearer children	43.3	14.3 ^d	55.2	37.5	46.7	38.2
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	11.8	14.3 ^d	17.2	8.7	6.7	9.1
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	35.6	0.0 ^d	24.1	37.5	40.0	47.1
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	32.7	14.3 ^d	48.3	33.3	20.0	29.4
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	11.5	14.3 ^d	10.3	4.2	13.3	14.7
To be in a place where easier to find a prospective spouse	6.8	0.0 ^d	10.7	0.0	26.7	0.0
Decline in health of someone in household	21.2	14.3 ^d	34.5	8.3	20.0	20.6
To take care of aging parents	8.7	0.0 ^d	6.9	12.5	6.7	11.8
Age 70 or Older						
To be nearer children	66.3	21.4	80.0	68.0	72.7 ^d	79.2
To be able to live with a spouse or partner	10.4	15.4	5.6	13.6	11.1 ^d	5.3
To be nearer brothers, sisters, or other relatives	42.2	21.4	35.3	45.5	33.3 ^d	60.0
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	36.4	38.5	27.8	36.4	25.0 ^d	50.0
A change in marital status (marriage, divorce, widowed)	27.2	14.3	33.3	34.8	44.4 ^d	19.0
Decline in health of someone in household	30.1	57.1	5.6	17.4	22.2 ^d	43.5

^arespondents could respond “Yes” to more than one question; ^bresponses to questions not included are available from the authors; ^cbased on 728 respondents who completed the age question; ^dcaution with results for this group because fewer than 10 respondents.

New Mover Studies: Family Factors and Moving in Nonmetro Iowa

Table 5. Age of Respondents by Type and Direction of Move.

Age Categories	All Movers ^a	Type and Direction of Move				
		A: Within County, Changed Zipcode	B: Out To Different Iowa County	C: In From Different Iowa County	D: Out To Another State	E: In From Another State
Median Age	46.0	45.0	43.0	44.0	41.0	53.5
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
18 – 24	8.8	7.1	12.7	10.2	9.3	2.6
25 – 34	21.6	24.7	21.0	22.0	24.6	15.4
35 – 44	17.7	16.5	21.5	19.0	19.5	14.7
45 – 59	24.3	23.5	20.5	24.4	24.6	28.2
60 – 69	14.3	8.2	14.1	11.7	12.7	21.8
70 or older	13.3	20.0	10.2	12.7	9.3	17.3
Total Number of Respondents	728	85	205	205	118	156
18 – 24	64	6	26	21	11	4
25 – 34	157	21	43	45	29	24
35 – 44	129	14	44	39	23	23
45 – 59	177	20	42	50	29	44
60 – 69	104	7	29	24	15	34
70 or older	97	17	21	26	11	27

^abased on 728 total respondents who completed the age question.

after entrepreneurs from U.S. coastal cities visited relatives, liked the communities, and decided to move their companies to Iowa. With the help of family members, a community could develop contacts of potential recruits as well as hosting informal tours promoting the town when relatives visit.

This study implies that there is value in maintaining high school alumni networks. High school graduation lists can be used to develop contacts for promotions about coming back to live in the community. In addition, class and school reunions are additional events where the community and area can be showcased and perhaps even used as a local job or business fair showing opportunities to visiting graduates. This may be particularly useful as business succession grows in importance on the agenda of many rural communities.

A desire to move nearer to children coupled with a decline in health was the impetus for moving for many of the oldest respondents.

Multi-generational housing might be a solution for some families so that aging parents could, in fact, live with children and grandchildren. Sometimes just an addition of a ramp can make first-floor living quarters accessible to older persons with mobility difficulties enabling them to live in conventional housing rather than needing institutional living. This suggests that communities might think about how housing rehabilitation and redesign could increase livability for older residents and support families who would like their parents to live with them or nearby.

A final comment is in order regarding the reasons for moving of younger adults. This report focuses on family-related reasons and these were important in the decisions of younger as well as older respondents. It is likely, however, that family reasons alone may not be enough to entice young residents to Iowa. The work-related findings discussed in our second report in this series¹ make clear the high importance of work in the moving decisions of younger adults. Both work and family factors play a

role in moving decisions and communities must take both into account when promoting their locations.

Notes

1. Previous reports and the survey questionnaire are available on the Community Vitality Center web site at: www.cvcia.org.
2. The 19 counties were selected based on population, migration patterns shown in Census 2000, and geographic distribution across Iowa.
3. The median age of respondents was 46, but ranged from 41 for those leaving for other states to 53.5 for the respondents who came into Iowa (Table 5).
4. Children born after World War II between 1946 through 1964.
5. Because three age by mover categories (18 – 24, Within County; 18 – 24, In From Other States; 60 – 69, Within County) have fewer than 10 respondents, the results for those groups must be considered more tentative than the findings for the other groups.
6. Responses to questions not included in Table 4 are available from the authors.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
University Extension

Community Vitality Center
478 Heady Hall
Iowa State University
Ames, IA 50011-1070
515-294-3000
cvc@iastate.edu
www.cvcia.org
October, 2007

... and justice for all

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Many materials can be made available in alternative formats for ADA clients. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jack M. Payne, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.