



## Saying Goodbye to a Friend

Jacob DeLuna, 8, was feeling sad after his best pal moved away due to a parent's job transfer. "One night, he asked if there was any chance my job might 'transform' me to Chicago, too," says his mom, Lisa, of Hemet, CA. Blame it on the economy, but plenty of families seem to be relocating these days. What to do if your child is pining for a lost pal:

**Hear her out.** Allow your child to talk about what's on her mind, says Gail Heyman, Ph.D., a professor of developmental psychology at the University of California in San Diego. Make it clear that those feelings are legitimate: "It really stinks that you can't ride the school bus with Ella anymore." The worst thing you can do is dismiss her emotions and tell her she'll make new friends. She will eventually, of course, but meanwhile, she needs time to mourn her loss.

**Try some new activities.** Help redirect her focus by signing her up for

a sports team or teaching her to play chess. Take her to a movie or other event and ask if she'd like to invite someone along. Be careful, however, not to appear too pushy or demanding, cautions Heyman. It's good to get her mind off missing her friend, not so good to foist a replacement upon her before she's ready.

**Help her stay in touch.** It's a perfect opportunity for you to teach your child to safely navigate social media, so let the IMs and the Skype chats fly! And remember that, given some space, your child will move on. —June Corrigan

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