

# Walking the Walk Leadership Academy

Transforming Loss into Leadership

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# The Challenge

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50% of all the children born to married parents today will experience the divorce of their parents before they are 18 years old.

Fagan, Fitzgerald, Rector  
"The Effects of Divorce On America"

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# The Looming Crisis

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43% of all divorced children haven't seen their fathers in the last year.

Wade, Horn and Busy. Fathers, Marriage and Welfare Reform, Hudson Institute Executive Briefing, 1997

## Risks to Children of Divorce

They are:

- **4 times more like to have problems with peers**
- **3 times more likely to need counseling**
- **2 times more likely to drop out of school**
- **2 times more likely to be suicidal as adults**

## More Risks to Children of Divorce

**They also have:**

- **More problems with school performance**
- **More emotional and psychological problems**
- **More likely to be overly aggressive (boys)**
- **More likely to be lonely, unhappy, anxious, and insecure more than 5 years after the divorce**

# Special Risks to Father-absent Children

**They are:**

- **4 times more likely to be poor**
- **More likely to have behavior problems**
- **Mother is more likely to be depressed**
- **More likely to experience asthma/respiratory illnesses**

## More Risks to Father-absent Children

**They are also:**

- **More likely to be a victim of abuse**
- **More likely to be sexually active as a teen**
- **More likely to abuse drugs/alcohol**
- **More likely to end up in jail**

## Risks to the Church

- **62% of divorced kids reject the faith of their parents**
- **37% of these children will not worship regularly, and 60% will leave the church**
- **People under 30 are 20% of the US population but 31% of people “unaffiliated with any church”**



# **One Solution: Walking theWalk Leadership Academy**

Train up a child in the way he should  
go, and when he is old he will not  
depart from it.

Proverbs 22: 6

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# **WTW Leadership Academy**

## **The Strategy**

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## The Vision

**WTW Leadership Academy (GLA) will create a new generation of leaders through positive relationships with committed men.**

## The Mission

**WTW Leadership Academy (WTWLA) will engage men in a leadership development process to develop new young leaders from a group of children with no fathers through a structured, and supervised mentoring program that is focused on developing character and leadership skills.**

## The Strategy

**WTW Leadership Academy (WTWLA) will develop leaders among both the adults and the children simultaneously by:**

- **Recruiting and screening mentors.**
- **Training and coaching mentors**
- **Recruiting and screening kids with no fathers and matching them with a mentor**
- **Providing activities, coaching, and peer support to mentors.**
- **Publicly affirming successful completion**

## Meeting the Security Challenges

**WTW Leadership Academy (WTWLA) will insure the safety of mentors and kids by never letting a single adult and a single child meet alone:**

- 1. For children aged 3-5: Conduct weekly Read-a-thons**
  - In large groups with breakout Bible story reading groups of 4-5 kids per mentor**
- 2. For kids aged 6-18: Weekly mentoring "2 by 2"**
  - A pair of mentors works with their kids together, in a public setting, but always in sight of the other pair**

# **Why Mentoring? Rationale and Research**

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<sup>5</sup> God in His holy house is a father to those  
who have no father...

<sup>6</sup> God makes a home for those who are  
alone.

Psalms 68:5-6 NLV

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## Mentoring Works

Research shows that kids who spend time regularly with a caring adult mentor for at least one year are:

- 46% less likely to start using illegal drugs
- 27% less likely to start drinking
- 52% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school
- 37% less likely to skip a class
- 33% less likely to hit someone
- 5 times more likely to graduate from high school
- More trusting of their parents or guardians

This changed my life. No one ever  
took the time to do this for me  
before...

Participant in Blockbuster mentoring program

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## What Makes Mentoring Work?

- **Mature, committed mentors**
- **Regular, informal contact**
- **Time to build a relationship**
  - **Frequency: 2-4 times per month**
  - **Duration: at least a year**
- **Mutual trust**
- **Orientation/training/coaching**

## Does it last?

**Adults who had a mentor through Big Brothers /Big Sisters compared to non- participant peers were:**

- **75% more likely to have college degree**
- **39% more likely to have household incomes of \$75,000 or more.**
- **More likely than non-alumni to be actively engaged in their community**

## *Phase 1--Launch*

- *Get Community buy-in*
- *Teach initial class on leadership mentoring*
- *Recruit /screen potential mentors*
- *Identify potential mentees*
- *Kick-off meeting for moms, kids, mentors*

## *Phase 2-Implement; Collect Testimonies*

- *Recruit and train first 35 mentor pairs*
- *Plan and deliver first kickoff workshop*
- *Run program for one school year*
- *Get video testimonies from moms, mentors, and kids*
- *Hold graduation dinner/ceremony*
- *Present certificates to mentors and kids*

## *Phase 3—Roll out*

- *Finalize processes and procedures for WTWLA*
- *Get partner buy-in for model*
- *Spread the model to 10 partners*
- *Execute Cowboys Stadium event*
- *Plan media coverage*
- *Repeat in top 10 US cities*
- *Plan for world-wide expansion*



## *Phase 4 - Multiply*

- *Plan and Execute Cowboys Stadium event for 50K mentors and 50K kids*
- *Plan media coverage*
- *Repeat in top 10 US cities*
- *Plan for world-wide expansion*