

Great Dads




*Turning fathers' hearts
to their children*

A GREAT


“Father absence is strongly associated with poverty, high rates of school failures and dropouts, early sexual activity, teenage pregnancy, youth suicide, juvenile delinquency and adult criminality.”

—New York City
Department of Youth and Community Development



“I don’t like my dad very much. Not once has he really hugged me. Rarely has he told me he loves me. I feel so awful because I can’t ever run to my dad and have him make things okay. . . . I want so badly to scream and let out all of this hurt. I feel so alone.”

—Julie, a teenaged girl

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- Fatherless children are five times as likely to live in poverty as kids with dads;
 - Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school;
 - Children who exhibit violent behaviors are 11 times more likely to come from a fatherless home than from a two-parent home;
 - 60 percent of America’s convicted rapists grew up in homes without fathers;
 - 72 percent of adolescent murderers grew up in homes without fathers;
 - Three out of four teenage suicides occur in households where one parent is absent, most often the dad;
 - In addition, 11 million children suffer from emotional-spiritual father absence.

NEED

A father's bond with his children is one of the most powerful forces on earth. Fathers shape their kids' lives . . . for good or for ill. Fathers pass on moral values that build up a society . . . or tear it down.

Fatherhood is also one of life's most extraordinary opportunities. It can be a great joy, more fulfilling than any career, more gratifying than any leisure activity.

Yet so many dads are missing it. Their hearts turn toward other things. They're preoccupied, distant, removed . . . and their families pay the price.

This phenomenon is so widespread that there's a term for it: *father absence*. Some fathers are physically gone from their children's lives. Because of divorce, abandonment, or imprisonment, 24 million children in America don't have a dad at home.

But a dad can live at home and still be absent. Some are addicted to pornography, alcohol or drugs. Some have more culturally acceptable addictions: they neglect

their kids because they're preoccupied with their career, self-advancement, clubs, hobbies, even ministry.

Eleven million kids today have dads who are absent, even though they live at home. These kids long for their

dads . . . from whom they just might get a few minutes' attention per week.

So today's trend of father absence affects, to some degree, 35 million kids . . . *one half of America's children under the age of 18!* Father absence hurts poor kids, rich kids, and children in between. It disables their potential to be good parents when they grow up. It creates generational chains of dysfunction, crime, and physical and emotional poverty. It splinters families and tears community bonds. It destabilizes our nation.



What can stop this crisis? Is there hope?

**That's what Great Dads
is all about.**



Great Dads' Vision . . .

to encourage fathers to turn their hearts to their children.

This will:

- enrich children's lives by equipping dads to love them unconditionally, spend significant time with them, and build a positive, lasting fathering legacy;
- enrich fathers' lives by giving them practical fathering skills and the joy of fathering;
- enrich American society by dramatically reducing the key problems caused by father absence: teenage crime and violence, drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancy, and suicide.

“As a pastor, I want to wholeheartedly endorse the benefits and blessings of the Great Dads seminar. As a father of two girls, I definitely want to endorse the workshop! Practical. Enjoyable. Scriptural. They all apply.”

—a pastor in Florida



SOLUTION

In the early 1990s a dad named Bob Hamrin was deeply concerned about the issue of father absence. Bob (Dr. Robert Hamrin) was a distinguished economist who had served the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, the EPA, a presidential commission, and consulted with the World Bank. He was also a husband, dad to three kids, basketball coach, and a leader in his church and community.

Bob knew that God's call for men to be great fathers cuts across every social, economic, and cultural divide. He believed that God alone could "turn the hearts of fathers to their children," as the last verse of the Old Testament puts it. He knew that there were powerful biblical tools available to help men become truly great dads.

Bob wrote a book that laid out those principles, *Straight From a Dad's Heart: 12 Keys to Joy-Filled Fathering*. He appeared on dozens of national television and radio

talk shows on the topic of great fathering. He found a huge hunger for men to be trained in how to be great dads. Most had never consciously decided to pull away from their children . . . it was a gradual gulf that widened over time. They desperately wanted to bridge that gap.

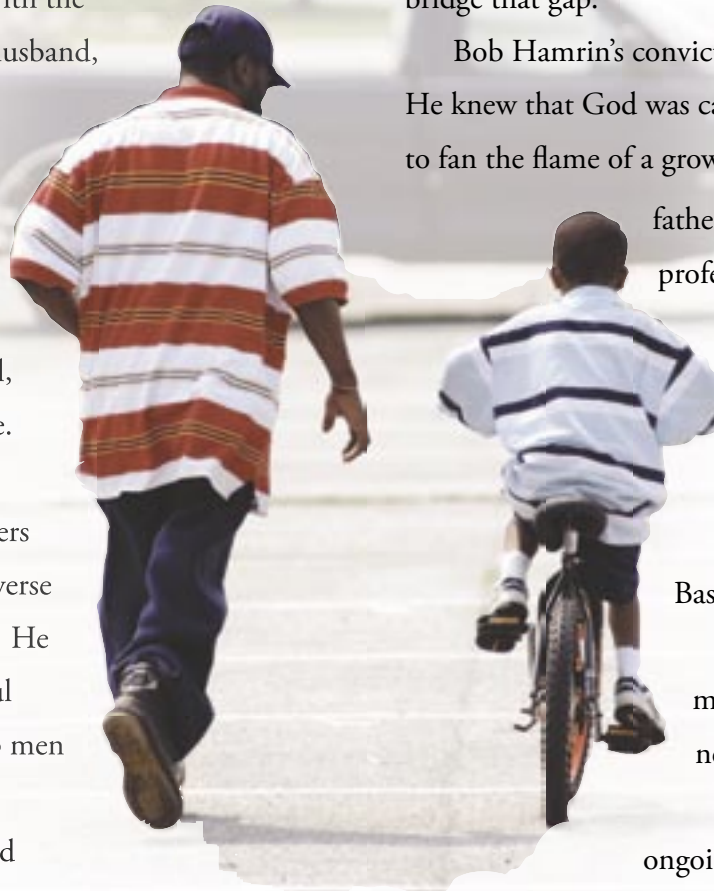
Bob Hamrin's convictions continued to grow. He knew that God was calling him to work full-time to fan the flame of a growing movement of godly

fathers. Bob left behind his lucrative professional practice and started

Great Dads in 1996.

Simply put, Great Dads:

- Calls fathers to turn their hearts to their children;
- Trains dads in the Six Basics of Being a Great Dad;
- Motivates dads as role models for their friends, neighbors, and colleagues;
- Encourages dads with an ongoing community of support—a team that can cheer them on when times get tough.



GREAT DADS



“Children miss nothing in sizing up their parents. If you are only half convinced of your beliefs, they will quickly discern that fact. Any ethical weak spot—any indecision on your part—will be incorporated and then magnified in your sons and daughters. Their faith or faithlessness will be a reflection of our own.”

—Dr. James Dobson

GREAT POTENTIAL

Each Great Dads seminar:

- Trains an average of 33 men in the principles of great fathering;
- Transforms the lives of over 80 children;
- Strengthens marriages;
- Prevents crime, dysfunction, abandonment, and the other social issues that flow from bad fathering;
- Introduces parenting changes that affect the next generation, strengthening America’s families.

GREAT PRINCIPLES

During Great Dads seminars, fathers learn to:

- Love unconditionally
- Spend time generously
- Communicate creatively
- Partner with mom
- Instill moral and spiritual values
- Establish a fathering legacy

GREAT TRAINING

Fatherhood is a man’s most challenging, complex, and important calling. But 99.5 percent of all dads receive zero hours of training. Men are mentored every day in management techniques, their golf swing, how to fix a faucet. Yet they’re somehow expected to make up their fathering skills as they go along. Many don’t have good role models to draw from. Great Dads seminars fill that gap with clear teaching in biblically-based fathering principles and practical skills.

SEMINARS

These seminars are fun, concise workshops held at local churches, prisons, and military bases all over the U.S. Great Dads Associates—a team of powerful motivational speakers—take dads through a course that:

- Equips them with the six basics of being a great dad;
- Models each point with practical, everyday-life applications;
- Challenges each dad to complete a personal *Action Plan*. This plan keeps the day's teaching from being just theoretical . . . each dad personalizes what he learns so he can apply it with his own kids, right away;
- Provides dads with Commitment Pledges to sign and present to each of their children. These simple pledges form the foundation of a brand-new relationship between dads and their kids—and hold the dads accountable to a lifelong commitment to love, encourage, and care for their children.

After every seminar . . . participants receive the *Great Dad* newsletter, which provides them regular, strategic advice and encouragement. They are challenged to connect with an accountability partner, and they can also join other dads in a six-week Action Team. These teams review each of the Great Dads “6 Basics,” and give men a place to talk through the action steps they’re putting into practice with their kids. They also have the 24/7 resource of the Great Dads website, www.GreatDads.org.



Church and Community seminars

Great Dads seminars take place in communities from suburbia, to the inner city, and rural towns. They are usually hosted by local churches, and provide a great outreach opportunity for communities of faith to draw in neighborhood men who may not yet be connected in a church.

Military-base seminars

Military fathers confront additional challenges in their relationships with their children. Through a partnership with Family Life chaplains, Great Dads has presented seminars with all branches of the military on bases in the U.S., at NATO headquarters in Europe, and at West Point.

In-prison seminars

Through a strategic partnership with Prison Fellowship--the world's largest prison ministry—Great Dads also takes seminars behind bars, where fatherlessness is a key component of crime and its cycles of failure, poverty, lack of moral training . . . and more fatherlessness. Great Dads is breaking that cycle: each year thousands of inmates are turning their hearts to their children.





...Convicted that he needed to set his priorities straight and put his wife and family first....

Putting Family First

Joel had been married for about six years. He was a rising star in a national corporation. Working late was an unquestioned part of the job. But Joel was getting home every night at nine or ten p.m., exhausted. He'd creep in, late, and kiss his toddler daughter in her little bed, but she didn't know he was there. Meanwhile, his wife was becoming more and more remote.

Joel read Bob Hamrin's fathering book. Convinced that he needed to set his priorities straight and put his wife and family first, he took a deep breath and had a talk with his boss the

following Monday morning.

"I need to spend the evenings with my family," he told his superior. "I've got to get out of the office in time to get home for dinner."

Joel's boss just looked at him. "It's your call," he said. "But if anything starts falling behind, there will be consequences."

Joel started leaving his office every day by 6:30. His daughter was waiting by the front door. He played games with her, helped his wife with dinner, tucked his little girl into bed and read her stories. He rebuilt his frayed relationship with his wife. Instead of breaking apart, Joel's marriage flourished . . . and now, ten years later, he and his adolescent daughter have a great relationship.

"If I had put my job first 10 years ago," Joel says, "I wouldn't have a family today."

One more detail. After Joel's boss saw him going home to his family every night—and still getting his work done—he began to question his own priorities. Then he started going home at 6:30 also . . . and re-connecting with his wife and kids.

STORIES

Changing a Fathering Legacy

Growing up in the inner city, Dupree Johnson was more fortunate than a lot of his friends. He had two parents at home.

But even though Dupree's father lived at home, he was still absent. He never came to any of Dupree's football games, never threw his arm around his shoulders, never told him he loved him. He was too busy drinking. Every time Dupree put his father to bed because his dad was too drunk to walk, Dupree realized that his dad loved alcohol a lot more than him.

Dupree got into smoking, drinking, and drugs. By the time he was a football star in high school, he was also dealing drugs on the side. He was driven . . . driven by the desire for a father who was never there for him.

In the years that followed, Dupree cared less and less about life. He lived in abandoned buildings and hustled quarters on the streets. He got shot. He went to jail. His friends got killed. He wasn't even dealing any more, because he was his own best customer. Using drugs dulled his pain.

But God had His hand on Dupree. He got clean and sober. He married his high school sweetheart. He came to Christ, was baptized, and threw himself into helping people in hopeless situations. He found the blessings of caring for people in need.

Dupree went to a Great Dads seminar. He realized how much he'd missed in terms of parenting his two sons . . . and he told his dad, who was now sober, all about it.

Dupree got certified as a Great Dads Associate. At the first seminar he taught, he invited his dad. And when his father—who had never, ever come to any of Dupree's events when he was growing up—actually came in the door, it was a whole new beginning for Dupree. But there was more.

During each Great Dads seminar, participants are asked to write a love note to each of their children. Dupree's eyes filled with tears as he opened his dad's letter. It said things he had dreamed about all his life....

Today, Dupree teaches Great Dads seminars in churches and correctional institutions, including the same prison where he once served time. He gives hope to the inmates, who see in him that they, too, can be changed by Christ. And today Dupree's father is truly a great dad. He's also a great granddad for Dupree's two sons. He comes to all their games . . . and he never misses a chance to tell them that he loves them.



(actual photo of Dupree and his sons)

*...as he opened his dad's letter.
It said things he had dreamed
about all his life.*

**"Son, I'm proud
of you."**

**"I've loved you
since the day you
were born."**

**"I will always
love you."**



...he knew for the first time in his adult life that he would be there for his kids....

Breaking Chains

Tom reluctantly came to a Great Dads seminar after his wife signed him up. He promised himself he'd leave early if it was a waste of time. "If nothing significant happened in the first half-hour," Tom says, "I was out of there."

Happily, many relevant, powerful things happened in the first half hour, and the second, and the third. Tom reflected on his own father, who had committed suicide when he was eight

years old. He had been haunted by the thought that he would do the same thing, abandoning his three small children the way he had been abandoned by his dad. He hadn't been consciously planning to do himself harm . . . but he had lived with this paralyzing mindset for years.

By the end of the Great Dads seminar, Tom filled out a lifelong Commitment Pledge for each of his three children. As he signed his name, he knew for the first time in his adult life that he would be there for his kids, for the long run. Great Dads had broken the chains of fear and pain that had held him for years.

"It is a wise father that knows his own child."

—William Shakespeare

STORIES

Great Husbands

When a man named Darryl started telling his wife all about his experience at the Great Dads seminar, she wasn't as impressed as he had thought she would be. The reason soon became clear.

“When are you going to go to a Great *Husband* seminar?” she asked.

Darryl had realized that he hadn't been there for his kids . . . but suddenly it was obvious he had been neglecting his wife as well.

“I realized that I really had to apply the material from Basic 4,” Darryl said. “Partner with Mom.”

Darryl started dating his wife again, something he hadn't done for their 18 years of marriage. He turned off the TV and listened to her. He took her out of town. As he puts it, there was new sizzle in their marriage. In the end, says Darryl, “I could say to my wife, ‘Honey, I *did* attend a Great Husband seminar when I attended the Great Dads seminar!’”

“By profession I am a soldier and take pride in that fact. But I am prouder—
infinitely prouder—to be a father.”

—General Douglas MacArthur



**“Honey, I did
attend a Great
Husband seminar
when I attended
the Great Dads
seminar!”**



GREAT DADS FOR GREAT KIDS A National Campaign

“I want to applaud your efforts on behalf of the children of this nation and pray that you are able to reach many dads so that those children know how special they are.”

—Joe Gibbs, head coach,
Washington Redskins



IMAGINE....

IMAGINE—every new dad starting out has a whole array of video training products to help him be a great dad throughout his fathering journey....

IMAGINE—the 400,000 incarcerated dads who are released back into society every year do so with a heart turned to their children and equipped with the skills to be a great dad to their children....

IMAGINE—every teenage boy in America is taught what being a great dad is all about....

Can these three scenarios really happen?

We know that our heavenly Father's will is for healthy, holy relationships within families, particularly between fathers and their children.

We dare to dream that He can use Great Dads as a vehicle to bring these Imagine Scenarios into reality!

Just IMAGINE!



“Bob has applied both his brilliant mind and his deep commitment to Christ to this challenging subject.”

—Billy Graham
in his foreword to Bob Hamrin’s
book, *Great Dads*

Dear Friend,

I have never been more excited about the ministry of Great Dads. We’ve established a sound foundation; God has used our seminars to change the lives of tens of thousands of men and their families, for generations. We’re so thankful to Him for all He has done and will continue to do through this outreach!

As we look ahead, Great Dads is at a strategic point in its development—and we need your help to bring this ministry to a new, broader level of impact to dads and their families.

Right now we reach well over 6,000 dads a year with our live seminars. This includes thousands of incarcerated dads we train each year. This is tremendous; there’s no way to truly measure the incredible social effects of transformational change in this many men and their families. These results simply could not have been achieved without the support of our many friends.

But it’s clear that we can’t reach our goal—“EVERY DAD A GREAT DAD”—unless we multiply and leverage this ministry through strategic partnerships, video and web-based training of dads, and a broader base of financial support.

Take a look at the sheets in the back of this brochure; they will give you specific information about how we’re doing that, and how you can help. The BIG PICTURE is captured in the national campaign we hope to launch called GREAT DADS FOR GREAT KIDS and in our three IMAGINE scenarios. And right now, opportunities exist to significantly expand our outreach to fathers.

With your help, we will over the next few years:

- *Continue to increase our training of incarcerated fathers*
- *Expand our outreach to inner city dads in Washington DC and begin new outreaches in other key urban areas*
- *Train dads of preschool children through our new partnership with MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)*
- *Reach tens of thousands of fathers through newly developed online training*

This significant increase in our outreach to fathers will require a significant increase in our budget. We need your sustaining support to bring our transformative training to tens of thousands more dads in coming years. Most exciting is that their children—between 50,000 and 100,000 kids—will receive the gift they most desire: the hearts of their fathers turned toward them.

Great Dads has a bold vision. But I’ve seen over the many past years that with God, nothing is impossible. I believe He has raised up Great Dads for such a time as this, and that with your prayers and generous gifts, we can transform the face of fatherhood in America today.

In His service,

Dr. Robert Hamrin



Our Challenge:

To combat pervasive Father-Absence in America -- both physical absence and emotional-spiritual absence -- by continually fanning the flames of a Great Dads movement.



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