

Hot Topics

LEADER GUIDE

growing up without a Dad

Note to Leader: *This could be a very sensitive subject for many of the girls in your group. Growing up without a dad can make girls feel insecure, seek out unhealthy dating relationships, and have a difficult time accepting God as a father figure. Focus on the importance of their relationship with Jesus, the Son, their Brother and Friend, if they can't trust God the Father right now.*

Today, over 10 million families don't have dads living in the home. So, if you're growing up without your dad living with you, you're definitely not alone. Growing up with just one parent can be hard, but God has a plan for helping you get through the tough times.

Use these Scripture verses in your discussion:

Have a girl read Psalm 68:5,6

⁵ A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,
is God in his holy dwelling.

⁶ God sets the lonely in families,
he leads forth the prisoners with singing;
but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land (NIV).

What are some characteristics of good fathers?

What does it mean to have God as your Father? How can God father you if He's in heaven?

What does "God sets the lonely in families" mean? How can God provide families for people who are lonely?

Who has God provided to be your family?

Have a girl read Luke 15:11-24

¹¹ Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. ¹⁷"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' ²⁰So he got up and went to his father.

growing up without a Dad — continued

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹ "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate' (NIV).

What do you think about the father in this story? How do you think his son felt?
What can we learn about God the Father from this story? Have you ever felt like the son?
Have you ever experienced God the Father this way?

Have a girl read Hebrews 2:10–13

¹⁰ In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

¹¹ Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. ¹² He says,

"I will declare your name to my brothers;
in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises."¹³

And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again he says,
"Here am I, and the children God has given me" (NIV).

What does it mean to be part of God's family?
Why is Jesus not ashamed to call us his brothers? What does it mean to have Jesus as your brother?

For more information, see:

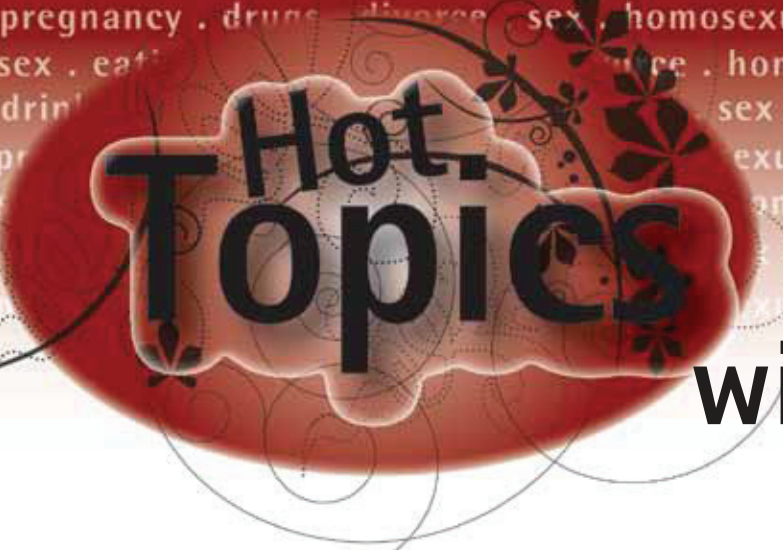
A Dad-Shaped Hole in My Heart by H. Norman Wright, Bethany House, 2005.

Stupid Parents: Why They Just Don't Understand and How You Can Help by Hayley DiMarco, Baker, 2006.

Not-So-Stupid Parents: Why Your Kids Think You're Weird and How to Prove Otherwise by Hayley DiMarco, Baker, 2007.

Five Conversations You Must Have with Your Daughter by Vicki Courtney, B&H Publishing, 2008.

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