

# HOPE FOR SINGLE MOMS



## CHURCH SINGLE MOM MINISTRY STARTER KIT

*Compliments of Hope for Single Moms*



## The Need

Single mom families are a growing segment of our population, whether these women have never been married, have husbands who have abandoned them through divorce or widowed. Single mom families are in our churches and in the communities around our churches. Too often never-been-married moms feel judged. **Two-thirds of single moms do not go to a church** for this reason.

***You provide hope for eternity** by showing God's unconditional lavish love by unconditionally loving these families and telling them about salvation.*

**Loneliness, isolation and a feeling of hopelessness** plagues these women trying to do it all alone. Single moms drop their children off at daycare, go to work, pick them up and go home to parent, make dinner, put them to bed, to start it all over again the next day. There is little, if any, opportunity for social interaction.

A church that has a single mom ministry provides community. By walking alongside single mothers, the church decreases the stress and isolation of single parenting by providing community with other single moms at a weekly meal and possibly, a monthly activity. This is organized by a Church Coordinator from the congregation and overseen by the Women's Ministry. It is supported by childcare volunteers during the meal.

***You provide hope for today.** Your ministry lets them know they are not alone. Single mom dinners give them opportunities to interact with other single moms and women in the church. Activities offer children the opportunity to interact with men in a positive way.*

**Nearly half of single mom families live in poverty.** The moms are working multiple minimum wage jobs and are still not able to pay the bills. Their children are hungry; they can't focus on school.

Like all parents, single moms want their children to thrive. Without good nutrition to grow physically and achieve academically, it is likely they will continue to live in poverty as adults. Imagine their heartache as they see their children falling farther and farther behind in school. *You can change this!*



When you partner with Hope for Single Moms, you help identify single moms who are ready to be successful as a student parent. We help them develop a career educational plan that fits their interest and moves them to financial stability. You provide them with a life assistance team to encourage them and help them with the challenges life brings their way.

***You provide hope for tomorrow. A post high school education doubles her lifetime earnings. A mentor doubles the probability she will complete her education.***

**John 13:34-35:** After washing His disciple's feet, Jesus said...*"A new command I give you: Love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

Hope for Single Moms is a Christ-centered ministry. As a result of meeting Jesus, many women were restored. The apostles added positions in the early church to sustain widows (Acts 6:1-7). We believe that the Church has the calling to take care of single mom families as today's widow and orphan.

**1 Pet 4:10-11:** "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen"

We also believe that the Church can do a better job of meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of single parents than the government. It is through knowing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, developing a relationship with Him, and growing in spiritual maturity that these women will be able to achieve their full potential in Christ.

**Jer 29:11:** "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."



## HERE'S WHAT A SINGLE MOM MINISTRY CAN DO

### PROVIDE COMMUNITY

- With other single moms (dinners)
- With women in the church
- With family activities (monthly)
- With special single mom nights
- With a mentor
- Sit together at church
- Invite over for a holiday

### LIFE ASSISTANCE

General single mom assistance or a family specific team

#### MENTOR

#### TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

#### HOUSEHOLD CHORES

bring a meal, do laundry or dishes

### MENTORING

**ACADEMIC** – Develop a career path (HSM)

**FINANCES** – Budgeting (Dave Ramsey)

**EMOTIONAL** – mentor or professional help

**SPIRITUAL** – Learning about God's

unconditional love and forgiveness

Bible study

### HIGHER EDUCATION Key to financial stability

Once a family is stable, refer to HSM for an academic assessment and readiness

#### STUDY ROOM WITH CHILDCARE

#### TUTORS

#### EVENING/WEEKEND BABYSITTING

esp before a test, project, guest speaker

Hope for Single Moms provides support for people to care for single mom families. Your congregation will thrive when given opportunities to allow God to love these Families through their willingness to share their time and talent and treasure.

Many women have been abused and are withdrawn. We want to keep our families safe and give them the confidence and security to trust others and go to these activities. Please remember to perform a background check on everyone over 18 involved in the single mom ministry. HSM offers mentor training. Our training manual is available for \$10.



## Step #1: Church Leadership

A single mom ministry is meant to be a ministry of the congregation, not the pastor or church staff. It is women loving and caring for women and children. It is men being a positive male role model for single moms and their children.

However, it is vital that pastors, other church leaders and staff see the loneliness and heartache of single parenting as an opportunity to show God's unconditional love and acceptance to this often looked down upon and judged segment of society.

We encourage you to create a culture

- recognizing every child is a gift from God, not a mistake.
- believing every child deserves a stable family environment in which to thrive.
- honoring the worth, strengths and bonds of single parent families.
- lifting motherhood to an honorable status.

A single mom ministry is The Church being The Church and together helping raise the children God's entrusted to us. Endorsement and support by the church leadership is vitally important to the success of the ministry. The pastor, by virtue of his position, determines whether people embrace this opportunity or not. Then, communication is ongoing with the congregation via

- the pulpit
- the bulletin
- announcements
- the website

Congregants should be encouraged to identify single mom families in the church and its surrounding community, who would benefit from a single mom ministry. Their names and contact info can be communicated to your ministry coordinator via a referral card.



## Step #2: Build Your Team

### Coordinator

These are people who see the big picture and connect the best people with your single moms, ensuring they are being ministered to and no one falls “between the cracks.”

- Identify single mom families – collect referral cards
- Match families with a family team captain
- Develop a family-specific life assistance team
- Maintain a list of support teams
- Oversee the reporting system of family calls and visits.

HSM is happy to hold an orientation for Coordinators and provide additional materials to equip them, as well as the church single mom ministry team.

### Family Team Captain

Needs to be compassionate, understanding, non-judgmental and capable of tough love. She must be organized, patient and a good communicator. Responsibilities include:

- Checking in once a week with her single mom to build a supportive relationship. Another possibility is to have one or two women on her team take this role and serve as a mentor and then report to the team captain.
- Ask if there are any needs. If there are, you can address those needs, call on her life assistance team, or ask the church at large, especially if an area of expertise is needed.
- Send a monthly report to the Church Coordinator.

### Support Teams

These are people your Church Coordinator or Family Team Captain can call on to help on a one-time basis with specific needs as they come up. Examples include

- A list of babysitters, available evenings or weekends
- Transportation problems/Car maintenance
- Organize a weekly dinner, including childcare – either one-time or once monthly
- Organize a monthly family activity, including volunteers
- Organize holiday events for single mom families



## Step #3: Meeting the Moms Developing Trust and Relationships

Many single moms have been hurt by “religion” and “religious” people. Initial interactions with the moms should be social only. Walking into the church building is a big step for them. These women need to build trust with the women overseeing the dinners, the child caretakers and each other. This takes time.

### **FORM A DINNER COMMITTEE**

### **FORM A CHILDCARE COMMITTEE**

### **SET AN INITIAL DATE & SCHEDULE**

### **FIND THE SINGLE MOMS**

- **MAKE** a list of single moms from your congregation. Send them an invitation to the dinner, as well as bulletin, website and Facebook notices.
- **PLACE** flyers on grocery store community boards and meeting places. Restaurants often have these, too.
- **CALL/EMAIL** a local pregnancy care center. Invite them to invite their moms.

### **DINNER EVENT**

- **WELCOME & PRAYER**
- **PLAY A GAME WITH CHILDREN**
- **DISMISS CHILDREN TO CHILDCARE.** Serve children food and play with them.
- **DO A MOM ICE BREAKER.**
- **MOMS GET FOOD.** Go around table and introduce themselves, number of children.
- **PRAISE.** Go around table again. What’s one good thing that happened to you this week.
- **SET NEXT DINNER DATE.** Have them invite single mom friends.



## Step #4: Share The Gospel

After providing a social connection for single moms and building trust, the next goal is to share The Gospel. This is not something that you should rush into. If you run your single mom ministry in conjunction with the school year, then you may want to start a Bible study after the new year, or you may be led by the Holy Spirit to wait until the next fall.

We are all made for love and look for love from other people. But the true, unconditional love we are looking for is found in Jesus Christ. Hope for Single Moms wrote a **Bible study** entitled, “Why? for single moms.” Each lesson begins with a question and a real-life single mom family scenario she can relate to. It’s a new Christian study and doesn’t use terminology without explaining it.

This study can be adapted to the timeframe you have. There are eight lessons that can be completed in 30-40 minutes. Or, each lesson can be presented in two 20-minute sessions. The leader’s notes tell you when to stop a lesson, and then, where to begin the second session. Each closing slide has a sample closing prayer, or you can use your own.

There is no homework. Every lesson has a reproducible handout, which is done during the study time. Bible verses are on the handouts, so they don’t need a bible. Learn more at [www.why4sglmoms.com](http://www.why4sglmoms.com). Available for a \$97 donation.

The children of single moms have uncertainties about life. They see worried and struggling and sometimes, mad at dad. They think, “Why isn’t he around? Is it my fault?” HSM is in the process of developing a **children’s curriculum** to give them a safe environment to talk and help them heal. In the meantime, we do recommend the following books by Frank Friedmann:

- “I Was Wrong, but God Made Me Right!”
- “Who Am I”
- “If I’m Right, Why do I Keep Doing Wrong”



## Matching Needs

Our goal is to love as God loves and serve as Christ served us. With that in mind, there are two possible routes to go, depending on the number of families interested in more of a relationship with the church and their needs. Regardless of path, it is good for each single mom to be paired with a mentor, preferably an experienced mom.

- Explain that the church would like to gift her with a mentor, who will call weekly and help with the challenges life sends her way.
- Prayerfully match each single mom based on experience, personality and individual preferences.

### **PATH ONE – general church ministry**

See **Support teams**

Babysitter coordinator

Mentors- it's like loving your daughter

Transportation issues coordinator

Life activities coordinator – volunteers who can be called to help clean, help with laundry, bring meals

### **PATH TWO – for moms in school**

**Life assistance team** – 6-10 people family specific, includes **mentor**

-Handle **transportation** issues or refer to church transportation coordinator

-Handle evening **babysitting** needs before tests and during projects

-**Social activities** – invite over after church, check on holidays

**Host an evening study hall with childcare, possibly tutors**

Many single moms are not ready to go back to school. HSM has a program, “Discover Your Career,” to help them get ready. One way is it gets them excited about the possibility of a better future and that someone will help them on the journey. It begins with the basics, from determining their passion to resources available to applying to programs and financial assistance. This can be done in conjunction with the weekly dinner. [www.discover-career.com](http://www.discover-career.com). Available for a \$29 donation.



## WE ARE ABOUT HOPE!

HOPE for Today

HOPE for Tomorrow

HOPE for Eternity

### The Gospel, Education, Service, Leadership, Community

- **Transform lives** - Centered on identification with Christ's death, burial and resurrection for salvation from our sins, reconciliation with God, and a new identity with Christ as life, then to go out and transform the world.
- **Spirit-empowered** to live Christ as life.
- Quality **higher education** to empower single mom families to break the cycle of poverty.
- Demonstrate **God's lavish grace** to us by giving grace to others.
- Committed to meeting the needs of single moms with the **gifts God has given us.**
- **Community-focused** to partner with others and to strengthen society by helping single mom families.

### CENTRAL FOCUS:

To encourage and facilitate the body of Christ to allow Christ to live through them by using their abilities, skills and spiritual gifts in service to single student parents and their families for the advancement of the Gospel by providing for their physical needs, while sharing the Good News of salvation.

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