

FIRST THINGS

A publication of First Things First

Forgiving, Forgetting and Moving On

Relationship Quiz

Have you experienced any of the following?

- The inability to trust in relationships
- Fear of failure and doom—the sense that “the other shoe is going to drop” even when things go well
- The inability to communicate effectively
- Insecurity which causes you to become controlling in relationships or become passive-aggressive and resist the requests of your partner
- Lack of a healthy role model for conflict resolution because your parents' only solution to their problems was dissolution

If you answered **yes** to any of the above, chances are you are an adult child of divorced parents.

Studies consistently show that adult children of divorced parents have a high rate of divorce in their own marriages. It is also true that they are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety, have lower self-esteem and tend to tolerate or exhibit more abuse and neglect in their relationships.



Drs. Tom and Bev Rodgers are both adult children of divorced parents. In spite of being therapists, it took them years to realize there were many things they were doing to sabotage their own marriage. In fact, it wasn't until they themselves were on the brink of divorce that they began to uncover the legacy of divorce in their own lives.

On October 3-4, 2008, The Rodgers will come to Chattanooga to present **Forgiving, Forgetting and Moving On: A Seminar for Adult Children of Divorced Parents.**

Since children of divorce are at higher risk for divorce than children of intact families you might think that this would deter the younger generation from matrimony, but findings show that generation Y is

more motivated than ever to get married and stay married. The Rodgers believe society should work to help them meet this goal.

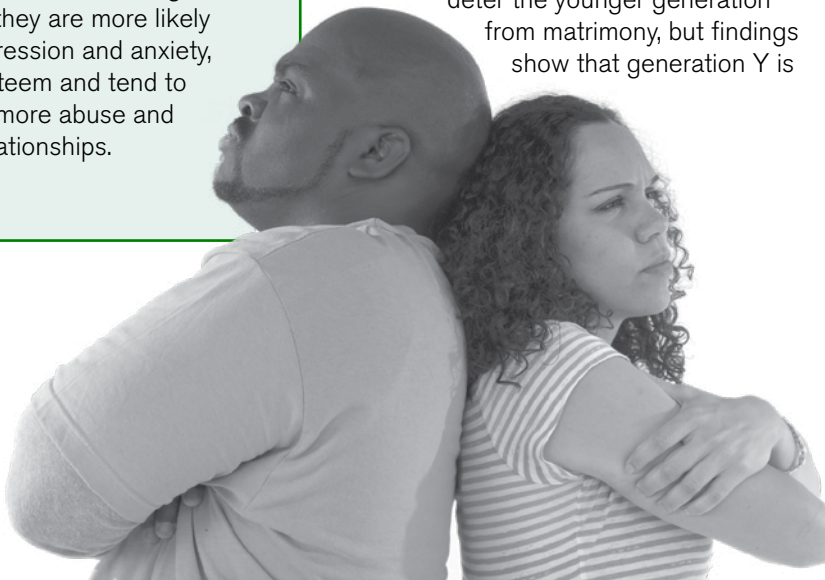
Through their seminar, the Rodgers will discuss the common wounds of adult children of divorced parents (listed in the quiz) as well as talk about solutions for the wounds adult children of divorce often have such as:

- Awareness of how your parents' divorce affected you
- Dealing with the pain of their divorce and moving to a place of healing and forgiveness
- Putting the unhealthy thoughts and beliefs about yourself and your marriage behind you
- Learning marriage relationship skills

“I will say I know I would be divorced today had it not been for that wonderful woman that you brought here (Beverly Rodgers),” said Makala Bumgarner, who attended FTF’s Adult Children of Divorced Parents seminar in 2003. “It really changed my attitude, my ideas and my life! I have wanted them to come back and do another class just like the one they did back then. I have so many friends that suffer the symptoms and the DENIAL that I did before I became educated on this subject.”

Whether you are single or married, if you are an adult child of divorced parents, this seminar will teach you skills to help enhance the most important relationships in your life.

Mark your calendar for October 3rd, 7–9 p.m. and October 4th, 8:30–Noon. The seminar will be held at the Oak Street Center located directly behind First Centenary United Methodist Church. The cost is \$5 per person. To register go to firstthings.org or call 423.267.5383.



Phone: 423.267.5383

Fax: 423.267.8876

Email: ftf@firstthings.org

Julie Baumgardner
Executive Director

Gary Behler
Director of Operations

Kate Cole
Grant Assistant

Todd Crawford
Board Chair

Karen Godwin
Office Manager

Eddie Grant
Chief Development Officer

Deborah Gunn
Grant Project Director

Alishea Hixson
Grant Support

Brandon Strickland
Marketing Manager

Denise Whitby
Marketing Designer

©2008 First Things First is a nonprofit 501-c-3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible.

Staying Sane in a Working Women's World:

A seminar for women seeking to balance work and family life

Do you live in a world where it seems like everybody wants a piece of your time? If you answered yes, this seminar is for you. Join us as we seek to bring sanity to the crazy reality of life as a working woman, wife, mom, friend, daughter, community leader, cook, dishwasher, event planner. . . .

**Mark your calendar for Thursday,
November 6th, 7-9 pm**

\$10

Treat yourself to a special evening of comfort food and helpful information.

For more details visit firstthings.org

YOU ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE by making excellent resources available to people across the greater Chattanooga area and beyond. FTF salutes you for your generosity and thought you might appreciate knowing how you are impacting marriages and families.

A few weeks ago I was asked to share about the work of FTF. As I talked about our classes and special programs like:

- **Raising Healthy Teens in a Toxic Culture** with Dr. Meg Meeker,
- **Forgiving, Forgetting and Moving On: A Workshop for Adult Children of Divorced Parents** and
- **Movies in the Park** where more than **15,000** people enjoyed free family friendly movies,

one woman raised her hand and said, **"My husband and I had filed for divorce, but signed up to take the class for couples in distress as a last resort. I can honestly tell you that that class saved our marriage. It was amazing the things we learned that helped us get our marriage back on track."**

These unsolicited testimonials are not unusual. Lives are clearly being changed through skills-based classes. In the past year we have taught more than 8,000 people face to face in various locations in the greater Chattanooga area.

Through our **Connections** classes, teens—**4,067** to be exact—have learned how to pace their dating relationships in a healthy manner; identify abusive or toxic tendencies in relationships; assess if they are ready to date, and to break up when a relationship is not healthy.

More than **1,000 singles** attending our **How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk/ Jerkette** or premarital education classes have learned important things to consider before walking down the aisle. One attendee shared, **"I need as much information on relationships as possible so I can not only recognize unsafe people, but see what was wrong in my past relationships, etc. so as to hopefully never repeat the same ignorant choices."**

We have been so pleased with the number of couples attending **Maximize Your Marriage**, a class for couples in distress. More than 142 couples have attended the class this year. These couples are telling us the skills they learn are making a positive difference in their marriage.

Our marriage enrichment classes and retreats have served hundreds of couples. Following one retreat this husband shared, **"I had fun at this marriage retreat. I believe my wife and I connected more at this retreat than we have in the five years we have been married."**

Thus far 54 people have gone through **Love's Cradle**, a class for non-married expectant couples.

Boot Camp for New Dads continues to grow and we are developing other classes to help dads stay engaged in the lives of their children.

In addition to our informative website—which had more than **17,000 hits** in July—our media campaigns and special events, we are touching people across the country with our national trainings.

When it comes to building strong marriages and families there is no doubt that prevention measures are less costly and painful and more productive and beneficial. That is why your support matters. These numbers tell the story—people clearly are **SEARCHING** for information and skills. It is critical that we continue to provide these necessary resources to the people in our community.



Julie Baumgardner
FTF Executive Director

Raising Healthy Teens in a TOXIC CULTURE

October is Let's Talk Month, a nationally celebrated month emphasizing the importance of communication between youth and the adults they trust in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and make wise choices.

Studies show that parents who have ongoing conversations with their children about issues such as sex, drugs, alcohol and other risky behaviors can have a significant impact on the choices their children ultimately make.



Dr. Meg Meeker, author of *Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters*, *Boys Should Be Boys: Seven Secrets to Raising Healthy Boys* and *Your Kids at Risk* will speak Thursday, October 23rd from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Girls Preparatory School.

Dr. Meeker is a highly sought after speaker on teen health issues at national conferences.

She has appeared on the NBC Dateline Special 411: Teens and Sex, with Katie Couric and was a guest on the Today Show in addition to being a guest on more than 300 radio shows including NPR and the Michael Medved Show.

Dr. Meeker has spent the past twenty years practicing pediatric and adolescent medicine. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She lives and works in Traverse City, Michigan where she shares a medical practice with her husband, Walter. They have four children—a son in high school, one daughter in college and two daughters who are college graduates.

Whether you have teens or children who will be teenagers, join us on October 23rd for an upbeat conversation about raising teens. To register for the seminar go to firstthings.org or call 423.267.5383. The cost to attend is \$5 per person.



ANNUAL FALL BANQUET

The 11th Annual Fall Banquet for First Things First Presented by Covenant Transport will be Thursday evening, September 18th. The doors open at 6:00 p.m. with the festivities to begin at 6:30 p.m. The event will be held at the Chattanooga Convention Center. The theme of this year's event is *The Journey*. Major sponsors of the event

include Chambliss, Bahner & Stophel, P.C., Cornette & Associates, Personal Fitness Specialists and The Sports Barn. This year, we are honored to welcome **Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears**.

Chief Justice Sears has achieved a distinguished position in Georgia's history. When appointed by the Governor of Georgia, she was the youngest person ever to serve in the Georgia Supreme Court. In retaining her appointment, Justice Sears became the first woman to win a contested state-wide election in Georgia.

Chief Justice Sears has received numerous honors including: Emory University's "Outstanding Young Alumna" and Barkley Forum "Georgia Speaker of the Year"; Georgia Trend magazine's "100 Most Influential Georgians" and the "Excellence in Public Service" award from the Georgia Coalition of Black Women. She was also named as one of ten "Outstanding Woman of Achievement" by the YWCA of Greater Atlanta.

Justice Sears is the daughter of Colonel and Mrs. Thomas E. Sears of Savannah, Georgia. She is married to Haskell Sears Ward of Griffin, Georgia and has two children, Addison and Brennan.

If you are interested in hosting a table or attending the Annual Fall Banquet, visit firstthings.org or call 423.267.5383.





MOVIES IN THE PARK

*Movies in the Park was a huge success!
Thank you to our sponsors for making it possible:*

Chattem

T.C. Thompson

Children's Hospital at Erlanger

GEICO, Local Chattanooga Office

Comcast

Chattanooga Times Free Press

Sunny 92.3

**Chattanooga
Parks and Recreation**

Lifeguard Ambulance Service



SPRINT TRIATHLON THANK YOU

On Sunday morning, August 10th more than 600 participants (and a total crowd estimate of 1,000+) came out in the early morning hours to participate in the Quintanaroo/Sports Barn Sprint Triathlon which consisted of a quarter-mile swim in the Chickamauga Lake, an 8.2 mile bike ride to downtown Chattanooga and a two mile riverfront run. Proceeds from this year's record-breaking event benefit FTF. Special thanks to Citadel Broadcasting, Newschannel 9, Scott and Teresa Wade, Personal Fitness Specialists, David Brock, Don Bowman and all of our family and friends at the Sports Barn.



Styling Successful Relationships

We would like to express our thanks to the salons who attended our "Styling Successful Relationships" luncheon for partnering with us to strengthen families in our community.



Heavenly Styles

Hair Logic

Total Image

EOC Inc.

Genesis Hair Gallery

Exposure Hair Concepts



Families on the Run is just around the corner. Saturday, December 6th serious runners, as well as those who prefer a more leisurely pace will gather on the river walk downtown to participate in a 5K, 10K competitive and non-competitive run as well as a Santa Stroll and Kiddie K fun jog.

The course is set to begin and end at the Hunter Museum of American Art and

will include Chattanooga's beautiful riverfront. Registration includes a hot breakfast and a commemorative t-shirt!

Participants can enter as individuals, a couple team or as a family! Individual participants and teams can collect contributions from their families and friends to support FTF's community initiatives. Top fundraising individuals and teams qualify to win incentives!

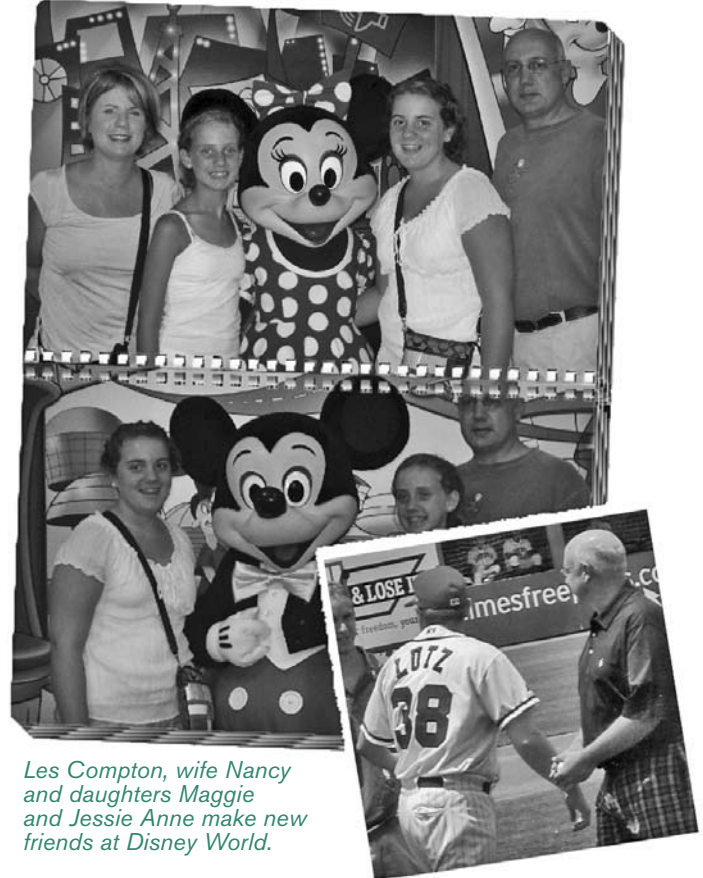
For the second year, we are pleased to announce we will be using ChampionChip®, the running industry's leading, high-tech and easy- to-use timing device.

Following the race, participants and their families are encouraged to enjoy a Holiday Party filled with festivities, door prizes, entertainment and a visit from a certain white-bearded friend.

Registration/Package Pick-up, the Kiddie K, breakfast and the Holiday Party will be held at the downtown Sports Barn. The Holiday Party will be held from 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. with breakfast served from 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Come celebrate the Winter Season with FTF! Pre-register online at www.firstthings.org

Father of the Year



Les Compton, wife Nancy and daughters Maggie and Jessie Anne make new friends at Disney World.

Les prepares to throw out the first pitch at the Lookouts game at AT&T Field.



At work, inside burning buildings, Capt. Caleb Holt lives by the old firefighter's adage: Never leave your partner behind. At home, in the cooling embers of his marriage, he lives by his own rules.

Growing up, Catherine Holt always dreamed of marrying a loving, brave firefighter . . . just like her daddy. Now, after seven years of marriage, Catherine wonders when she stopped being "good enough" for her husband. Regular arguments over jobs, finances, housework, and outside interests have readied them both to move on to something with more sparks. As the couple prepares to enter divorce proceedings, Caleb's father challenges his son to commit to a 40-day experiment: "The Love Dare." Wondering if it's even worth the effort, Caleb agrees—for his father's sake more than for his marriage. While trying to stay true to his promise, Caleb becomes frustrated time and again. He finally asks his father,

FROM THE CREATORS OF *FACING THE GIANTS*

FIREPROOF

NEVER LEAVE YOUR PARTNER BEHIND

"How am I supposed to show love to somebody who constantly rejects me?" Caleb Holt faces his toughest job ever . . . rescuing his wife's heart.

Fireproof is the third movie produced by Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia. It will be released in theaters on September 26th. Locally, it will show at the Rave Motion Pictures East Ridge 18, Carmike WynSong 10 Chattanooga, Carmike Cinemas Northgate 14 and in Cleveland. Many churches in the area have bought out show times or purchased tickets in bulk. For more information about the movie visit www.fireproofthemovie.com.



FIRST THINGS



A publication of First Things First

First Things First
620 Lindsay Street, Suite 100
Chattanooga, TN 37403

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
Paid
Permit #103
Chattanooga, TN

Sign up for our e-news today!

to register, visit:

www.firstthings.org

Date Night

Join us on Saturday, October 18 for another date night at River Street Deli from 6–8:30 p.m. The theme is Oktoberfest! Couples will learn great cooking tips and enjoy a specially prepared meal.

The cost is \$50 a couple and includes dinner. Space is limited. Deadline to register is October 13. Call FTF (423.267.5383) or visit our website (firstthings.org) to register.

Das Menu

- Italian sausages, knockwurst and bratwurst roasted with potatoes/onions
- Red cabbage
- Salad with mustard/vinaigrette dressing
- Strudel
- Water/iced tea/coffee

First Things First

with Julie Baumgardner



Beginning Saturday October 4, you can tune in weekly to First Things First with Julie Baumgardner, our series dedicated to strengthening families.

Each week, Julie will lead insightful and meaningful discussions on the dynamics of family life and how to overcome marriage obstacles.

Tune in to WTCI (Cable Channel 5) each Saturday at 6:30 a.m. Encore presentations will air Sunday at 10 a.m. and Friday at 10:30 p.m.

