

FIRST THINGS

A publication of First Things First

did you know
that children of teen
moms are more likely
to become teen parents
themselves?

did you know
that 80 percent of
teen moms end up on
welfare for the rest
of their lives?

did you know
that 8 out of 10 teen
fathers don't marry the
mother of their child?

BREAK THE CYCLE. CHOOSE ABSTINENCE.



These statistics reflect an ongoing cycle that often spans from one generation to the next. Turning a deaf ear or blind eye to these very real facts is not the answer. The most effective tool to help break this cycle is education in action.

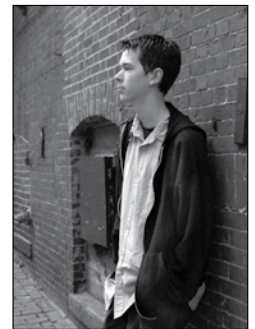
May is Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month. First Things First is partnering with On Point Abstinence Education and the Girl Scout Council of Southern

Appalachia to help inform parents and teens about the consequences of risky sexual behavior.

"Talking with your teen about sex may be difficult, but not talking about it can seriously derail a teen's plans for a healthy and successful future," said Julie Baumgardner,

FTF President and Executive Director. *"Teen pregnancy has become so common in our society. But if we can get teens to recognize the benefits of delaying sexual activity until marriage, maybe we can help break the cycle in our communities."*

Throughout the month of May, you will see our new billboard campaign with a strong message to our teens to "Break the Cycle. Choose Abstinence".



TALK TO FRIENDS CAMPAIGN WINS BIG AT THE ADDYS



The FTF *Talk To Friends* media campaign was recently honored at the 53rd annual ADDY Awards sponsored by the American Advertising Federation of Chattanooga. This campaign, geared toward teens, was a collaborative effort between First Things First and KMT Creative. *Talk To Friends* won two Gold ADDYs: one for Mixed Media and one for the television ad, and a Silver ADDY for the outdoor billboard campaign. The work will now go on to regional and possible national competitions for advertising.

"This initiative has already proven successful in giving teens an outlet to discuss relationships and ask questions," says Julie Baumgardner, President and Executive Director at First Things First. *"The ADDY awards are just the icing on the cake for a program that we hope continues to grow and promote healthy dating relationships in our community."*

"We couldn't be more thrilled that this campaign was recognized by the AAF," says Missy Thompson, president and creative director at KMT Creative. *"The TalkToFriends.org campaign is one of those special assignments every agency loves, when you can have fun while making a difference. We couldn't be more pleased with the result."*

Special thanks to the staff at KMT Creative for helping to make the campaign a huge success.

Visit talktofriends.org

Funding for this project was made possible by a Healthy Marriage Demonstration grant.

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You can donate to
First Things First through
the CFC Campaign!

We Need You!

In the last 13 years, First Things First has touched hundreds of thousands of people locally, nationally and globally. On any given day, I usually encounter several people either in person or via email who share stories about the positive impact FTF has had on their life or the life of a family member.

How does this good work come about? You have probably heard that several years ago we received a federal healthy marriage demonstration grant. While this grant allows us to offer many types of relationship skills classes to people across the community free of charge, **it does not cover at least half of our 2010 budget** including all of our fathering classes, faith-based seminars, parenting classes, Movies in the Park, firstthings.org, Family University, the marriage and family resource center, media not related to grant classes and many other expenses.

Our 2010 budget is almost two million. **In order to provide resources to you and the community at large, we need to raise \$800,000 this year.**

Some may assume that because we have the grant, or because we were started by the Maclellan Foundation that we have all the money we need. This could not be further from the truth. Although our anchor-funder historically has been the Maclellan Foundation, their partnership only accounts for **25 percent** of the funding needed to operate. We are relying on people like you to help us continue to help others.

Your support can help prevent statistics like these:

"Nearly 80 percent of long term child poverty occurs in broken or never-married families. . . . The beneficial effects of marriage on individuals and society are beyond reasonable dispute, and there is a broad and growing consensus that government policy should promote rather than discourage healthy marriage." Statement of Robert Rector, Senior Research Fellow, Domestic Policy Studies, The Heritage Foundation: Before the Sub-committee on Human Resources Of the Committee on Ways and Means U.S. House of Representatives.

"The best predictor of father presence is marital status; when a father's romantic relationship with the child's mother ends, more likely than not, so does father involvement with their children". (Source: "Divorce, Dads, and the Well-Being of Children". Institute of American Values, Center for Marriage and Families, Research Brief 23, July 2008)

While there are organizations that offer intervention services to help ease the burden, it is critical that people learn the skills necessary to prevent the need for those services.

In the long run, prevention work is less costly, less painful, less time-consuming and ultimately more helpful as people learn skills to be self-sustaining. First Things First offers preventive maintenance to strengthen marriages and families. Our goal is to be there when you need us. The good work of FTF is only possible with your support.

We need your help! If 1000 people gave the money they spend on a cup of coffee and a bagel three days a week to FTF we would have the money we need to help make marriages and families healthy in this community.

*Please join us in the fight to save families at firstthings.org and click **GIVE***



Julie Baumgardner
President and
FTF Executive Director

Our Board Rocks!

FTF is so fortunate to have a wonderful group of individuals to serve on our board. They come from a broad cross-section of the community, and each offers a wealth of knowledge and experience to help us build strong marriages and families. We are truly grateful for their commitment.

Our 2010 Board members are

Blaise and Leslie Baxter, Mildred Bethea, Vickie Blalock, Ann Caldwell (Board Chair), Lynda Childress, Karlene Claridy, Cindy and Earl Cornette, Andre' Dantzler, Kathie Fulgham, John Henegar, Michelle Hunter, T.J. Johnson, James Hurst, Monique Lea, Charlotte Lindeman, Mayor Ron Littlefield (City), Matt McLelland, Mayor Claude Ramsey (County), Kathy Sanders, Lynda Sattler, Dan Summerlin, Andy Thomas, Wanda Threat, Beth Warren and William Washington

Special thanks to Todd Crawford, Doug Fisher, Margaret Ferguson, Mike McCleery and Bettye Taylor who rotated off our board in 2010.



Whatever happened to "Date Night"? You know, that thing you used to do before you got married or had kids. The FTF Partnership Plus Campaign revives the date night concept with a variety of great monthly benefits but at a fraction of the cost. For an annual commitment of \$19.99 a month or a lump sum gift of \$200.00, you will receive:

- Monthly date night ideas
- Discounts at restaurants & other venues
- Special event seating at *Movies in the Park*
- 2 tickets to a First Things First special event
- *Families on the Run* Registration
- 4 free classes for two people
- 4 free books (one per quarter)

As a member, you'll receive a different gift each month. Your partnership with First Things First will help to build up and support the families in our community. Sign up for Partnership Plus today at firstthings.org.

Have you heard the latest?

Save the date!

The *FTF Annual Fall Banquet* is **Thursday, September 16**. This year's theme is "Going the Distance" and our guest speaker is the phenomenal Carey Casey, CEO of the National Center for Fathering. He is also author of the book *Championship Fathering*. More details to follow!



**LEARN TO
PLAY AT
AT&T FIELD**



Batter up!

Dads and their kids are invited to the *FTF Big League Dreams Baseball Camp* on June 24-26 at AT&T Field. **The event is especially designed for children and their fathers or father-figures.** The camp will feature Coach Doug Simmons of Covenant College, who is also a former MLB player, coach and scout. Kids ages 7-12 will learn basic skills to help improve their game, while dads will learn techniques to coach their kids both on and off the field. **Grandfathers, uncles or male mentors are also welcomed, and are encouraged to participate in the final day of camp activities on Saturday.** Registration for this three-day event is \$120, with an Early Bird registration fee of \$95 through April 30th (no refunds after June 15).

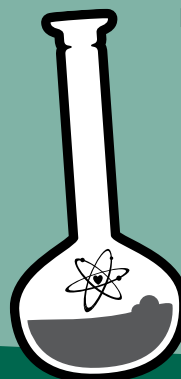
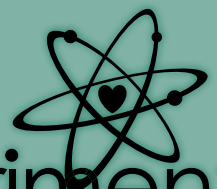
**Early Bird
Special
\$95**
Register by
April 30th



FTF welcomes Fox Sports as our 2010 Media Sponsor

For complete details or to register, visit firstthings.org.

the big 6 great Date experiment



Keep your romance in bloom this spring with the Great Date Experiment! This fun-filled journey of date night ideas is designed to build a stronger and more intimate relationship between you and your spouse. If you want to get started, Great Dates 1, 2 and 3 are all available for you to try. If you're ready for more, check out Great Date #4!!! Log on to our website at firstthings.org and dive right in!

A Mind-Blowing Marriage Experience

More than 200 participants joined us for the second annual *Celebrate Marriage* seminar on February 20th. The event was held at Ridgedale Baptist Church and featured relationship coach and author, Dr. Greg Smalley. Both married couples and single individuals attended the seminar which empowered them to build up their own relationships.

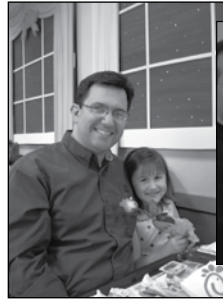
Special Thanks to Pastor Bill McGinnis and the friendly staff at Ridgedale Baptist for partnering with us, and for their gracious support.



Daddy-Daughter Date Night with Chick-fil-A

FTF once again teamed up with our friends from Chick-fil-A at Gunbarrel Pointe for a special evening out called **Daddy-Daughter Date Night**. Fathers were invited to treat their little girls to dinner at the restaurant, and show them how a young lady should be treated on a date. Some even dressed up for the occasion. It was a great chance for dads to spend quality time with their daughters, and make her first date one she'll always remember.

Visit firstthings.org to learn about more events in the coming months.



DAD to DAD

Dads are parents, too!

That's why FTF offers the new fathering e-newsletter, *Dad to Dad*. Fatherhood is one of the most enjoyable aspects of life, but it can also be one of the most challenging. *Dad to Dad* offers fathers from all walks of life tips and tools to make the journey through fatherhood a little easier to navigate. Enjoy dad-friendly articles, learn fun ways to engage your kids and get a fresh perspective on what family life is really all about. One father had this to say about *Dad to Dad*:

"I just read your article in the newsletter that came out today (Did the Apple Fall Far From the Tree? February 2010). As a father of one child, a daughter, I can certainly relate as our interests don't begin to approach each other's! You did a great job with the piece. I am thankful for FTF and people like you (Todd Agne, fathering coordinator) who do so much for our community!"

To sign up for the newsletter, visit firstthings.org.

FIRST TIME DAD?



Have no fear, **Boot Camp for New Dads** is here!

This is a fun and educational class for new dads and dads-to-be. Veteran dads bring their babies and discuss the challenges new fathers face: uncontrollable crying (from baby and mom), dealing with the in-laws and living on little or no sleep. Matt Cook recently took the class and had this to say:

"It seems I didn't take the class a moment too soon. My wife was coming into the hospital as I was going out. Her water broke while we were in class, so she drove herself to the hospital. Long story short. . . . Our son was born at 12:53 a.m. on Sunday morning. Mom and baby are doing extremely well and we are home enjoying a populated nursery. Thank you again for the class, I enjoyed it and found it very informative."

Upcoming classes:

Saturday, April 24 at Parkridge East Hospital, 9 a.m.-Noon

Saturday, May 15 at Erlanger Women's East, 9 a.m.-Noon

Saturday, June 19 at Erlanger Women's East, 9 a.m.-Noon

Saturday, June 26 at Parkridge East Hospital, 9 a.m.-Noon

For a listing of additional classes, visit firstthings.org



Flower Fest

Our fourth annual Flower Fest proved to be another successful event for Valentine's Day. This year's selections included two specialty gift baskets that were a big hit for both ladies and men. Special thanks to our 2010 chairperson, Lynda Sattler who did an outstanding job in making Flower Fest a success.

We sincerely appreciate your support, especially this year. Monies raised from the event go toward the continued work of First Things First to strengthen your marriages and families.

Look for details on Flower Fest 2011 later this year!



Special thanks to Unum, our flagship partner company, WDEF News 12 and WUUQ/WUUS, as well as our other participating companies for all your support:

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Ready, Set, Go... to the Prom



Our first-ever "Prom Night 4-1-1" class for teens was a smash hit!! Area high school students turned out at The BX on March 6 for a day of laughter and learning as they got the real "4-1-1" on prom night, dating relationships and much more. Topics included how to respect your prom date and how to dress to impress. There was also a prom fashion show and lots of door prizes. The highlight of the day was the "Powder Puff Prom Relay" where teams were challenged to create a prom dress using all kinds of props—including duct tape and toilet paper!! The winning teams received money toward their school's prom. A great time was had by all, and teens left with valuable information to keep their prom night from becoming a "9-1-1".

*1st Place—Bachman Academy, \$200
 2nd Place—Baylor School, \$100
 3rd Place—CSAS, \$50*



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Visit firstthings.org

COMING SOON!

MOVIES IN THE PARK!

Dust off your lawn chairs!! *Movies in the Park* kicks off this July in Coolidge Park for the eighth year of great family entertainment. Bring the kids down to the Tennessee River to watch a family-friendly movie at sundown on the big inflatable screen. Dates are July 10, 17, 24 and 31. To volunteer or for more information on movies, call 423.267.5383.

LIVING SINGLE SEMINAR

Area singles are invited to this 2nd annual seminar scheduled for Saturday, August 7. This event is full of facts to help you find Mr. or Ms. Right. Look for more information to come.

SPRINT TRIATHLON

Attention athletes!! Start training now for the Annual SportsBarn/Quintana Roo Sprint Triathlon on Sunday August 8th. Athletes and weekend warriors alike will converge at the Chickamauga Dam, then swim, ride and run to Chattanooga's Riverfront and downtown district. Cash prizes will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners overall and in each age group. The event is presented by the SportsBarn and Personal Fitness Specialists. Details are coming soon.

You can get complete details on all these events at our website, firstthings.org

BASEBALL SUNDAYS



EXCITING NEWS!!

CHATTANOOGA



LOOKOUTS

FTF teams up with the Chattanooga Lookouts this season to sponsor select Sunday afternoon home games. You are invited to arrive early and play catch with your kids on AT&T Field before game time (baseballs are provided, but you'll need a glove). **The gates open at 12:30 p.m., and you will be allowed on the field from 1:15 p.m.-1:45 p.m.** Be sure to listen for our special announcements and watch the FTF commercials on the video board. Don't miss Baseball Sundays with the Lookouts and First Things First. **(Subject to change due to weather conditions).**

Baseball Sundays with FTF and the Lookouts:

May 2 • May 23
June 6 • June 27
July 25 • August 15