

# The DC4K Program Helps Children of Divorce



*To address the issue of “children of divorce,” CaringChurches.com met with Linda Ranson Jacobs at Church Initiative in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Linda is the creator and developer of the DivorceCare for Kids (DC4K) program, a 13-week program designed to help churches bring hope and help to children of divorce.*

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**CARING CHURCHES:** Can you briefly explain why divorce is so hard on kids?

**LINDA:** Divorce is the death of a family. The breakup of the family brings with it many losses. Besides losing the intact family, children usually lose at least one parent and sometimes they lose the other parent temporarily as the parent who is left struggles to cope and provide for the children. Children also lose their belongings and their things. They lose routines and rituals. They lose security and trust as well as self-esteem. To children, divorce brings about tremendous changes in their lives, and it comes at a time when they are not developmentally ready to cope with these changes. Relationships with grandparents, friends and church family are affected. Many children will have trouble trusting and relating to God during this time. Schoolwork is another area that is affected. Every area of a child’s life can be disrupted by the divorce of his or her parents.

**CARING CHURCHES:** What exactly is DC4K and how does it work?

**LINDA:** DC4K, or DivorceCare for Kids, is a biblically based, Christ-centered ministry tool intended to bring healing to children of divorce. It is a comprehensive 13-week program designed to run alongside the adult DivorceCare program ([www.DivorceCare.org](http://www.DivorceCare.org)) in the local church.

**CARING CHURCHES:** What do you think DC4K will do for kids?

**LINDA:** It will help children understand the various emotions they experience during the divorce. It gives children permission to be mad and/or sad, and it helps them cope with all these strange feelings. It teaches them to be helpful instead of hurtful with their actions and behaviors. Some of the sessions help children develop communication skills and relationship building skills. DC4K helps children to realize that divorce is an adult problem and it’s not the child’s fault. It makes children aware that they are not alone and there are other children experiencing some of the same struggles involved with the divorce of parents. It will point children to God and introduce them to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

CARING CHURCHES: Share with us what you have heard from church leaders who use the DC4K program?

LINDA: We have gotten tremendous feedback from leaders about the materials. I get calls daily from leaders who have patched together various pieces of materials in the years past to try and help children recover from the devastation of divorce. They are excited about how comprehensive the session lesson plans are and how the DVD dramas along with the stories, posters, music and the workbooks all go together so well.

CARING CHURCHES: Can you give examples of children helped by DC4K?

LINDA: Children who have completed the entire 13-week program have seen improvement in their schoolwork. Some report higher grades on their report cards. Their school attendance is more consistent. We get reports of less sibling conflicts at home. Children develop better communication with the parent they lived with, and one non-custodial dad reported that he has seen happier, more-adjusted children on his weekends since the children completed DC4K. Children are more open about their feelings. A second-grade boy wrote in his journal that because of DC4K, he realized that the divorce was not his fault.

CARING CHURCHES: Linda, what is your relationship to DC4K?

LINDA: The Lord has allowed me to play a major role in not only the development of DC4K but in writing the materials, overseeing the filming of the DVDs and working with some wonderful people along the way. It took the Lord's team working together to put all the pieces in place for the DC4K program to be a success.

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For more information about DivorceCare for Kids or to find a DC4K group near you, go to [www.dc4k.org](http://www.dc4k.org).