

Successful Stepfamilies

Christian Resources for Church & Home

Helping Stepfamilies Beat the Odds

The odds are stacked against stepfamilies. You may be aware that approximately 30% of all weddings in America today form stepfamilies and that 1 in 2 Americans will have a steprelationship at some point in their lifetime. But what is even more stunning to most is that *at least* 60% of all stepfamily marriages end in divorce according to national research (73% of third marriages end in divorce).



Furthermore, for most children, watching a parent's remarital divorce is the *second time* they've experienced a family break up. This repetitive experience of divorce leaves an emotional residue on a child that culminates in a generational impact: *children of repetitive divorce are more likely to delay marriage, cohabit before marriage, and once married to themselves divorce (and more quickly than most)*. The net result is a social weakening of marriage and families for generations.

Successful Stepfamilies breaks this generational cycle of divorce by educating and equipping couples to go the distance in their marriage and provide a stable, safe emotional environment for their children to grow. A stronger home also facilitates the process of faith development as parents are better able to pass the baton of faith to their children when their marriage and family is stable over time.

Directions for the Journey

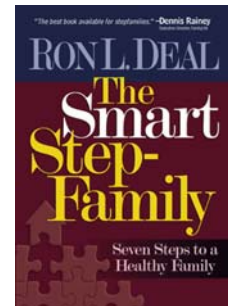
Imagine being dropped into a wilderness without a map or someone to guide you. Stepfamilies often experience feeling lost in their "wilderness wanderings" and are easily defeated



when pre-marital relationship fears are activated by family conflict. But hand them a GPS device and they learn not only their current location but where they need to go to find harmony. Successful Stepfamilies offers a practical, faith-centered perspective on the common relational wilderness experienced by stepfamilies and gives direction toward intimacy and family stability.

How Does Successful Stepfamilies Currently Help?

In America today Successful Stepfamilies is considered the primary educational ministry to stepfamilies by organizations like Focus on the Family, FamilyLife, and many marriage experts. Successful Stepfamilies offers a unique combination of faith-centered and research-informed education. Strategies include:



1. The most comprehensive web site for Christian stepfamilies and church-leaders available today;
2. Books, video-based small group series, audio resources, and other materials that are available through our Online Smart Store;

Building Your Ministry Pack

- 8-sessions on 2 Discs
- 1 copy of *The Smart Stepfamily*
- FREE downloadable Participant & Leader Study Guide
- Understanding & Ministering to Stepfamilies on 3 CDs

Train Leaders & Teach Stepfamilies

3. Training: cutting-edge events like the Building A Successful Stepfamily conference for couples and national church-leader training seminars;
4. Couple Checkup Program: this world renowned online relationship inventory from Life Innovations is available through our web site. It is now coupled with a new book co-authored by Ron L. Deal and Dr. David Olson entitled *The Remarriage*

Checkup that reports on our national survey of stepcouples, the largest study of its kind ever completed.

5. Public education of stepfamily living via media interviews (radio and TV), strategic partnerships, and research on stepcouple marriages.

attending your conference in Iowa. The challenges of being a stepfamily had left us pretty overwhelmed lately. We were feeling like failures and knew we needed godly counsel. This conference was so encouraging and gave us the godly principles we need. We are so grateful! As we have returned home to face those same challenges we do so with renewed strength and a changed attitude. We are correcting our errors and it has yielded positive responses already...Thank you and God bless!!"



"I had no idea how difficult stepfamily life is—nor did I realize that I was inadvertently giving the wrong advice to couples in my church." This senior pastor's comments reflected many that we've received from church leaders after attending a ministry workshop. "Now I get it. I understand much better what they need from me."

Plans for the Future

Successful Stepfamilies believes we must expand our marketing and training opportunities. Here are strategies we believe will enhance our ability to equip couples to beat the odds of divorce.

- Create a series of videos for stepfamilies on a variety of topics.
- Stepfamily ministry video training. Church leaders around the country are asking for help in conceptualizing and planning local stepfamily ministries. We hope to create a video that will provide this training for both staff and lay leaders.
- Expand our administrative staff. Currently our staff consists only of Ron and Nan Deal. There are many book projects and resource items that we want to create, but much of our time is spent in administrative duties. A full-time administrative assistant and part-time shipping clerk to handle online orders would be a great asset to our organization.
- Expand our strategic partnerships. There are a number of large pro-family organizations that can help to legitimize and market our ministry to their constituencies. Nurturing partnerships with these organizations requires time and personal attention; again, the addition of administrative support staff would free Ron and Nan to develop and maintain these relationships.

- Expand the use of technology and web based training. Because stepfamilies often hide their past, getting them to turn out for conferences and local church group studies is a challenge. We must continue to develop video-based materials and online resources, such as webinars (online seminars through the internet), so families can learn in the privacy of their home. In addition, webinars for church leaders, who can learn about ministry to stepfamilies without having to leave their offices, can vastly expand our ability to empower the local church throughout the world.
- Create special growth stimulating opportunities for stepfamilies (e.g., camps and/or retreats).
- Offer personal coaching via the phone or internet to individual families and intensive therapy to couples and families in need.

Ministry Endorsements

Here's what respected family experts and organizations around the country are saying about our ministry:

- *"Ron Deal is a true minister to stepfamilies. His professional expertise, love for the Lord, and his compassionate heart make for a perfect platform from which to teach remarried couples how they can successfully combine their families in healthy ways. It is no secret that these families face countless complications and with the help of Ron Deal, they will be better equipped to face them head on and be stronger because of it."*

Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott

Best selling authors of *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts* and *Love Talk*

- *"With Biblical wisdom, compassion, and understanding, Successful Stepfamilies is helping remarried couples build strong, functional blended families."*

TroubledWith.com

(A ministry of Focus on the Family)

- *"Listen to this guy. He knows what he's talking about."*

Dr. Kevin Leman
Best-selling Author
As heard on *Reality Talks*

- *"Ron is one of the foremost Christian authorities on stepfamilies."*

Dr. Bill Maier
Vice President, Resident Psychologist
Focus on the Family

- *"Ron Deal is the 'go-to' guy in America today for helping stepfamilies."*

Dr. Gary Rosberg
Co-Founder, America's Family Coaches
Co-author of the award winning book *Divorce-Proof Your Marriage*

- *"Ron Deal has, by far, the best material available on stepfamilies."*

Dr. H. Norman Wright
Author of more than 70 books on the family

How You Can Help

The unfortunate truth is that most stepfamilies disintegrate, but they don't have to. We can help them beat the odds. With your financial support we can provide resources and education to stepfamilies, and equip them for successful living which will stop the generational impact of divorce. And, we can equip the church to be more relevant to the stepfamilies in their community, giving them a better opportunity to expand the Kingdom of God.

To discuss your tax-deductible contribution to this ministry feel free to contact Ron Deal, President. If you are prepared to make a contribution now, feel free to use the form provided at the end of this document.

Just as individuals and corporations contribute funds to churches and non-profit organizations for the work of missionaries, your campaign contribution will be managed by a non-profit organization working in partnership with Successful Stepfamilies.



The non-profit 501(c) 3 Christian Leadership Foundation (CLF) in Kansas City, Missouri has agreed to be the recipient of your cash contributions. CLF currently supports a number of ministry efforts. They will appropriate the funds given and for contributions over \$250 will provide receipts for your tax-deductible donations.

To make a donation, please return the bottom portion of the next page with your check payable to the *Christian Leadership Foundation*. Please note that this is for the "Stepping Forward Campaign" in the memo of your check to ensure your funds are directed appropriately.

Partnering Together

We appreciate your prayerful consideration as you decide how to share in this ministry with us. Churches and stepfamilies across America and the world are beginning to see the need for Biblically-based, research-informed materials. We need to be ready to serve, equip, and inspire them. With your help, we can do just that.

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Return the bottom portion of this page with your contribution.

On behalf of stepfamilies throughout the world, we thank you.

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Thank you for supporting Successful Stepfamilies

Yes! I want to help strengthen stepfamilies through your Stepping Forward campaign. Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of:

Thank you for your support!

\$30 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$ _____ (as God leads)

Please make your check payable/mail to:

Christian Leadership Foundation
Attn: Kent McAllister / Stepping Forward Campaign
6175 NW White Oak Drive
Parkville, MO 64152

Mail this form with your check to the above address & note "Stepping Forward Campaign" in the memo of your check.

Your Name & Address:
Name: _____
Address: _____

Email: _____



Investing in lives and missions to enable Christian leaders to have the greatest impact possible for the Kingdom

Mr. Ron Deal
Successful Stepfamilies
1601 James Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Ron:

The Christian Leadership Foundation is pleased to support the ministry efforts of Successfully Stepfamilies in your recently announced “Stepping Forward” campaign. After observing your ministry for several years, and talking first-hand with individuals helped by your conferences and materials, we can partner with you in confidence that our resources will be well invested. You may find the following brief overview helpful as you seek to educate your sponsors and potential donors.

The Christian Leadership Foundation is a small organization that was started with an objective of addressing a number of needs that fell outside of the direct ministry services of the local churches of its founders. Specifically, over the past five years, CLF has sponsored abstinence seminars for teens in the North Kansas City area under the title “Worth the Wait.” This has been a major investment of time and resources of the Foundation since its inception. Additionally, multiple mission efforts in the Dominican Republic and Haiti have been sponsored. Finally, consistent with Successful Stepfamilies focus, CLF has sponsored a “HeartLinks” marriage enrichment evening over the past two years.

We look forward to working with you as you seek to expand the reach of Successful Stepfamilies.

May God bless your efforts.

Kent McAllister
Co-Founder, Christian Leadership Foundation
816-678-4879