

new start for single moms

facilitator's guide

about the author

An effective speaker, writer, and teacher, **Diane Strack** has been involved in various aspects of women's ministry for thirty years. She is the founder and author of *New Start for Single Moms*, a highly successful mentoring and Bible study program. With her husband of thirty-five years, Dr. Jay Strack, she co-founded Student Leadership University, a global, comprehensive leadership training program for students. Diane is the coauthor of *Good Kids Who Do Bad Things* and the *Experience Scripture* study guides, including *Worship in the Storm*. She is also the contributing editor of the *IMPACT Student Bible*. Utilizing her background as an author, teacher, and life management facilitator, Diane has the ability to present both the practical and inspirational in a unique way that impacts lives. She is the proud mom of two daughters, Missy and Christina, who both serve in ministry, mother-in-law of Reverend Brent Crowe, and grandmother to Charis Rose and Gabriel Joseph Crowe.

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DIANE STRACK



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

NASHVILLE DALLAS MEXICO CITY RIO DE JANEIRO BEIJING

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New Start for Single Moms Facilitator's Guide

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special thanks

Heartfelt love and thanks to the many friends and staff of First Baptist Orlando who joined me in the call to minister to single-parent families, and whose dedication in time and love has made *New Start for Single Moms* a success.

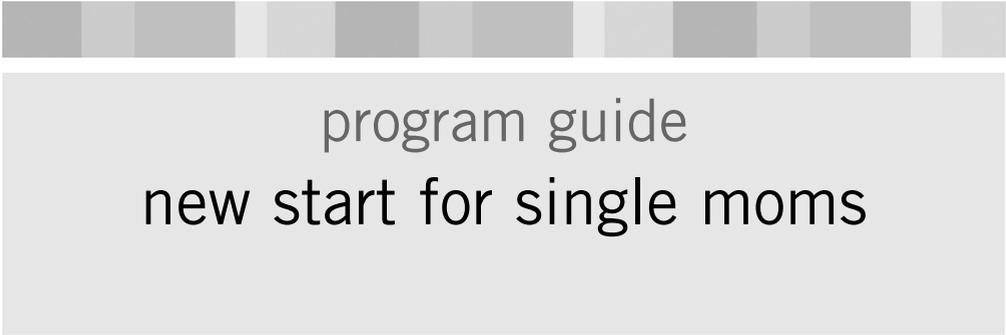
Special gratitude to Dr. David Ferguson who gave me an understanding of relational Christianity in its purest form.

Thank you to my husband of thirty-five years, Jay, and my daughters, Missy and Chris, my greatest encouragers and the joys of my life.



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program guide

new start for single moms

What is involved in being a part of the *New Start for Single Moms* program? More joy than you can imagine! The mission is to come alongside single moms and their children in direct response to the mandate of James 1:27: that “pure religion” is to care for those families who have no husband or father in the home.

First, please don’t be concerned about getting every detail done or every task perfect. The success of this program is based on Romans 12:15: “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.” To be loved, listened to, and believed in is to find hope, healing, and encouragement. That is the catalyst of the program, not the paperwork.

New Start for Single Moms is *not* a crisis-oriented program. It is a practical tool designed to take the single mom into a personal, step-by-step healing of the pain of the past; a practical plan for the present; and a confident walk into a hopeful future. Our *New Start* kit is comprehensive and easy to use. All it takes to get started is one woman in a community or church who believes in the power of women helping other women.

Over and over we have seen families heal, strengthen, and move forward

new start for single moms

with confidence as the cycle of pain is broken. You will be amazed at the transformations that occur in the lives of women as you lead others to listen and love single moms and teach them to have peaceful homes.

As the Lord calls you to lead the *New Start* program, He will prepare your heart and also call those who will come alongside as co-laborers. I have seen Him do it over and over for those who answer His call to serve by faith.

A *New Start* team needs a:

Program Director—One who leads the program and recruits the team.

Facilitator (facilitator and program director can be the same person)—One who uses personal experiences, wisdom, and Scripture to lead group discussions, keep time in the class, facilitate exercises, and assist the ladies in applying the lessons personally.

Hostess (This can be the program director, but not the facilitator)—One or more women who greet the moms and put out refreshments, name badges, etc.

Mentors—Those who come alongside the single moms and work through the program with them, one on one.

program director

Begin by asking the Lord for co-laborers. They will work alongside you as your prayer and accountability partners, organizing paperwork and sending out letters. You also will need someone who can act as a hostess during the weeks. You can choose what tasks you would like to be responsible for and assign others. (For example: hostess, facilitator of the lessons, paperwork, setting up the meeting room, mail-outs, etc.)

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Never be afraid to ask for help. Remember that God prepares the hearts of those He calls to help you. When I began the first *New Start*, I prayed for a list of women to ask, and 97 percent of those women said yes.

Next, take your kit and your plan to your pastor, singles' minister, or women's ministry director for their blessing and cooperation. Come prepared to introduce the kit and a list of equipment you need. Once you have their support, they will show you how to integrate into the church publicity program and calendar so that you can reach the most people and be successful in your endeavor. Being a part of an existing women's, single-adult, or other church ministry will aid you in publicity, child care, administration, and finances. You do not want to be a stand-alone ministry. Instead, focus on being part of the church body. The church staff person you are under will be your friend, encourager, and facilitator in church policy, equipment, space, and communication.

Together, set a start date. Because single moms need child care, select an evening when it is available church-wide.

Ask for an assigned room and request equipment from the church. You will need a DVD player and a TV (as large as possible). DVD players and TVs have become very inexpensive. Set up the room so that a mom and a mentor sit together with shared table space. This can be done with individual tables, or they can share a round or long table with others. Just be sure there is enough space to allow some privacy. If your church doesn't have these items, begin asking the Lord to provide them. He will!

Now that the date is set, you can begin.

SIX WEEKS BEFORE:

Recruit encourager-mentors. I cannot stress enough how important prayer is to this ministry. It has been our experience that as we pray, the Lord provides the

new start for single moms

helpers. Many women are prayerfully seeking a place to serve, and *New Start* may be just the ministry they are looking for.

Note: An * indicates samples can be found on the CD-ROM.

There are three steps for recruitment we recommend:

1. Send a *Bible Study Teacher Letter to Bible study teachers and other leadership in your church, and ask them to recommend names of godly women they think would be competent as mentors. This is essential.
2. Adapt the letter and send it to women you know personally.
3. Ask friends to recommend and send you lists of women they have been in Bible study with. Adapt the letter and send it. I have two or three friends I count on to be my “recruiters.” They send me names from time to time as they meet people.

Regardless of how you recruit, personal experience has shown us that most women are waiting for a personal invitation. Some may need that little bit of encouragement or more information, others are not sure where to give their energy and time. A personal touch makes the difference.

Before you begin, pray with your assistant and other prayer warriors for godly women who have a deep, personal walk with the Lord, are students of the Word, have an intimate prayer life, and are healthy emotionally. All of these are necessary for a mentor.

As you receive names, send each potential mentor a *Mentor Invitation Letter, *Mentor Application, *Mentor Weekly Duties Form, and *Mentor Recommendation Form. Each person should fill out the application and return it along with a recommendation form filled out by a Bible study teacher in the church. This is essential because sometimes women feel they would enjoy being mentors but, in reality, they are not qualified. The recommendation gives you the information you

program guide

need as you pray about qualified mentors. The form should be mailed directly to you so that the teacher can answer without fear of the applicant seeing it.

- The first step in screening an effective mentor is the personal referral. The letter indicates the importance of choosing women you have known and fellowshiped with for some time and who have a reputation for their faithfulness.
- The second layer of screening occurs through the recommendation form that every mentor should submit. This is optional if you have great confidence in the person making the recommendation and the mentor application proves to be strong.

You may have to “encourage” a few of the women to get their applications in so that you have enough time to pray over them as you read each one. Once you have received these recommendations and applications, read through each one and pray over each as you ask the Lord for wisdom. If you find a red flag on a recommendation or mentor application, make a notation of the concern and place those applications aside.

- The third layer of screening is the personal interview by phone or in person. You can do this yourself or assign it to a volunteer who has experience as a counselor. At this time, answer questions and confirm commitment. Do not be discouraged if some turn you down. It simply means the Lord hasn’t called them to it. But remember that there are many, many others who will say yes! These mentors will become your dear friends and partners in ministry. As you read over the details and tasks of the next ten weeks, know that these women will be walking alongside you and will assist in any way you ask them to. You are not alone in this endeavor.

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Turn in your information to the publicity department of your church and begin your publicity plan. Find out what is available through the church. Do they have a weekly or monthly newsletter or magazine? How do you advertise weekly in the bulletin? What other possibilities are open to you? Ask where and when you can place flyers and posters and if you can do any type of bulletin insert or church handout.

New Start is a wonderful outreach. Before you decide to open this program to the community, be sure you have adequate experience in understanding the pieces and that you have enough mentors. Because of the personal, one-on-one relationships and the intensity of the weeks on healing, it is best to keep the class as a small-group setting.

Set the group size. The number of people you accept into the program is dependent on two things: the number of mentors you can recruit and the amount of time you as a facilitator can commit to overseeing the individual goals of the moms as described above.

Begin publicity. Specifically, target single-adult Bible study classes by making personal announcements or putting posters in that room. Use word of mouth to get the word out by asking friends to tell single moms they know. Think outside the church by going to the local pregnancy center or any community-support group for single parents.

As moms call in, **send out *Mom Applications.**

ONE MONTH BEFORE:

Invite mentors to a training session to be held the week before *New Start* begins. Send an invitation by mail and/or e-mail. Ask for an RSVP by a certain date.

Contact the church child-care director and explain the length of your program and the expected group size. They will be grateful for the communication.

Optional: Think about what resources might be available such as food

program guide

banks, legal aid, etc. Make a list of volunteers such as professional counselors, financial planners, accountants or Crown Ministry teachers, career counselors, or a human resources director. These can give practical advice and work one on one with moms who need specific help. Because the program does not require them to serve on a continuing basis, it is an easy ministry to fit into their schedule. Be creative as you think of those who can come and share their talents. We find people are willing to help single moms if only they are asked. We have used real-estate agents to explain first-time home buying, professional organizers, time-management seminar scholarships, and more. For clothing help, check out the Dress for Success organization for a chapter in your area (see www.dressforsuccess.org). Also, our *Organize or Agonize* organizing seminar is available free of charge at www.newstart4moms.org. These make excellent resources for the moms to use during the week.

ONE WEEK BEFORE: Mentor Training and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES:

DVD player and Mentor Training DVD

Name tags, pens or pencils, markers

Facilitator/Mentor Guide for each mentor

- **Try to match up moms and mentors through the applications so that you can give the mentors the names of the ladies with whom they will be working.** Encourage them to call each mom and introduce herself by phone and to make sure that she understands the time, place, and where to take her children. Often, moms don't send the applications, but just walk in the door the first or second week. Don't be concerned about this. The Holy Spirit will lead you as you assign moms and

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mentors. If you need to make a change the next week, do so gently and without a lot of explanation.

Note: We do not recommend taking new moms after Week 2. They have simply missed too much of the material. Do encourage them to come to the next class and be sure to get their name to a Bible study leader for follow-up so that they are included in some ministry of the church.

- **Open the meeting with a personal welcome and introduce yourself.**
Give a brief testimony about why you chose *New Start* and what you believe will happen through the program. Express your gratitude for the women's involvement and commitment (**10 minutes or less**).
- **Ask each mentor to introduce herself (5 minutes total).**
- **Show the DVD (55 minutes).**
- **Turn to the commitment page and read it with the mentors.** Explain that many of these moms have been abandoned emotionally, and that their friendship and weekly presence will be a very important factor in their healing. It is imperative that they attend all weeks of the program. If a situation arises, the mentor should contact the facilitator with as much notice as possible. Sometimes a mentor knows ahead of time that she will be absent for one week. It is up to you to accept or reject her for that session. In cases like this you can double-up two moms with a mentor (this actually can be a nice way to assist relationships), use a rotating substitute, or allow the facilitator or counselor to sit in.
- **Take 15 minutes to:**
 - **Read the *Mentor Weekly Duties Form.**
 - Encourage the mentors to **read ahead each week's lesson** and mentor time.

program guide

- Familiarize everyone with the *Mentor Weekly Intake Form, the file box, and any resources you have available.
- Turn to the Dream Worksheet in Week 1 of the Participant's Guide and **discuss the Sample Dream Worksheet** (see page 10 of the Participant's Guide).
- **Give an overview of the lessons**, briefly touching on graduation for Week 10.
- **Answer questions.**
- **Read the *Mentor Commitment Form** at the end of the mentor training and duties pages together and allow time to sign (see page 23).
- **Spend the remainder of your time in prayer** for the moms who will come and for one another. Break into groups of two to four.
- **End the meeting** with enthusiasm for the next ten weeks and a reminder that mentors should arrive at least 15 minutes before class for prayer and preparation every week.

program director and/or facilitator

WEEKLY DUTIES:

- **Week 1:** Be sure that every mom has filled out an application and left it with you before the end of the night.
- Arrive 30 minutes before class starts. Check each mom's progress against file notes and/or with her mentor. Look for specific needs such as counseling, budget help, résumé assistance, a job, or immediate physical needs. Using the information you have gathered, make suggestions for goals and assist the mentor in meeting any immediate needs such as food, furniture, or counseling. Check periodically during the mom-mentor time on the progress of the goals. **You are both the cheerleader and monitor!**

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- Encourage the mentors personally and keep up with their involvement either before or after class on a rotating basis.
- On a rotating basis, contact each mom during the week to discuss progress. This can be done by phone, an individual meeting, or during the *New Start* mom-mentor time.
- Keep a calendar with you at each meeting so that moms can schedule appointments with you or any volunteers who make themselves available.

assistant program director and/or hostess

WEEKLY DUTIES:

- Set out files, check equipment, and pray over each mom as you review her file. (This can be assigned to the hostess or a mentor as well.)
- Optional: Set out refreshments or assign each week to a different mentor. Many moms come straight from work and have no time for dinner so a light sandwich, fruit, chips, or any snack may be much appreciated.

facilitator

WEEKLY DUTIES:

- You will present the lesson via DVD but also facilitate the discussions and make some presentations. This is clearly explained for each week, but our support desk is always available (www.newstart4moms.org).
- Always begin on time regardless of how many are late. If you are consistent with the start time, the moms will follow your example.

program guide

Find out why some are tardy—do they need food, or is it traffic or child care that is a problem?

- Facilitate the program in the classroom according to the instructions. Teach where noted or recruit an excellent volunteer teacher. Be careful to stay within your time restraints. You don't want to leave out process time as it is an essential part of healing.
- Keep control of the class always, particularly during group discussion. Do not allow one person to dominate or become emotionally out of control. Simply begin speaking a word of encouragement as you move to another point, ask that the group take a moment to pray for the woman. If she continues weekly to disrupt, have a private word with her or her mentor or both.
- Allow as much time as possible at the beginning and end of the sessions for the mentors and moms to talk about the lesson and process feelings. This is more important than any other part of the class.

You can adjust the times to fit your available time if necessary. The program works because women feel loved and encouraged. Don't let the details overwhelm you. They are simply here for your benefit. If an instruction is not beneficial or confusing, leave it out. No one will know but you! **Focus on compassion and healing and your program will be a huge success!**

Child care should be by reservation only. The moms need to be aware of this and must take careful note to pick up children on time. Fellowship sessions tend to run over, particularly as the moms get to know one another, but strong encouragement should be given to pick up children at child care so as not to abuse the generosity of the church program.



mentor training

Rejoice with those who rejoice,
and weep with those who weep. (Romans 12:15)

Use the following outline to follow along in the video and take notes. This excellent video will answer many of your questions and give you the wisdom you need to be a successful mentor.

BEFORE A SESSION:

Pray for:

Understanding

Curiosity

Compassion

Presence: God's, Mine, Mentee's

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Ask yourself: *Am I willing to cry for her and will I pray for her?* Only then am I ready and worthy to speak into her life.

THE MENTORING PROCESS:

Identify the problem. Gently encourage your mom to share what is burdening her heart or a situation that she is having trouble with right now.

Listen effectively. The way in which you listen can make all the difference in your sessions with your mom.

- Your body language plays a big role in listening:
Remember: **S O L E R**
 - Face the client **S**quarely.
 - Maintain an **O**pen posture (non-defensive stance)
 - Lean forward/toward (communicates attentiveness)
 - Maintain **E**ye contact (communicates interest, being engaged)
 - Remain **R**elaxed (communicates confidence)
- Listening in this way will assist you in building rapport, interest, and trust in the relationship. It also will help your mom to evaluate her own thoughts and to express her emotions.
- Remain focused on what your mom is saying, instead of your response. If you are thinking about the next “good” question that you want to ask her, you will miss what she is saying right now. This requires discipline and concentration on your part. You must be committed to staying in the “here and now.” This is a time for you to forget about your own problems. Don’t think about what you’re going to get at the grocery store on your way home tonight. If necessary, pray and ask God to take unrelated thoughts from your mind. He will.

mentor training

- Develop helpful responses (such as “I see,” “um-hmm,” and so on) that show your mom that you are tracking with her and that you are understanding what she is saying. Use reflective statements such as, “It sounds like . . . ” or “What I hear you saying is . . .”.
- Remember that silence is golden. If you are unsure what to say next, take a breath and say nothing for a moment. More than likely, your mom will continue to speak and the silence will have helped her to continue in her sharing. Even if it seems uncomfortable to you, your silence (combined with your attentiveness) is a gift.
- Pay attention to your mom’s non-verbal communication.
 - **Eye contact** (Is she looking down, away, etc.?)
 - **Eye energy** (Is there a sparkle in her eyes, tears, etc.?)
 - **Posture** (Is she slouching, is her posture defensive, etc.?)
 - **Facial expressions** (Is she smiling, laughing, frowning, etc.?)
 - **Signs of nervousness** (Is she fidgeting, playing with her fingernails, etc.?)
 - **Clothing** (Is it old, neat, sexy, disheveled, etc.?)
- Challenge the emotional inconsistencies that you might see as you listen. When your mom is talking about a painful experience but keeping a smile on her face, point out that discrepancy. She might not even be aware of it.
- Remember to watch for changes in your mom’s expressions or feelings through her eyes, face, or body.

Ask questions. Your goal here is to ask questions that will cause your mom to think and to focus on the key issues. Ask questions to clarify what she has said or how she is feeling if you are unsure. Even if you have a pretty good idea of what she has described, ask her if you are understanding her correctly. Encourage her to be honest with you if you have misunderstood. Feel free to go back and clarify things that you may have missed from your mom.

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- Ask open-ended questions (questions that cannot be answered by a simple yes or no). These questions often involve issues of *what*, *when*, *where*, and *how*.
- Try to avoid asking *Why*. This question tends to cause someone to feel attacked and might put your mom on the defensive. Instead, ask something like, “I wonder what has happened to make you feel that way,” or “I wonder what might have caused you to learn that,” etc.
- Bring the general to the specific. Encourage your mom to use “I” statements—speaking in the first person instead of in general. (For example: “What did you mean by ‘everyone?’” or “What worries you the most about this?”)
- Keep in mind that the problem your mom presented may not be the real problem. As you ask questions, you might discover that there is a deeper issue than the one she initially offered.

Encourage the expression of feelings. After sharing her hurts and her heart with you, your mom might need to mourn some of the losses in the past or those she is currently experiencing. Encourage her to express and to feel these deep feelings. Feel free to express them with her. Your own tears over the suffering of your mom might have the deepest impact on her life. They can be more powerful than anything you ever say to her. Let her know that you love her and care about her and that you are a safe place where she can truly feel these deep and painful emotions. Be careful not to minimize her pain. Validate her feelings and try to empathize with her. Remember that feelings are supposed to tell you what’s going on in the heart. If you allow your mom to push her emotions away, you will miss the reason that they are there.

mentor training

- If she is **sad**, there is probably something to **grieve**.
- If she is **angry**, there is probably something that she is **disappointed** in.
- If she is **anxious**, there is probably something she is trying to **control**.

Introduce personal responsibility. Part of your goal as a mentor is to elevate your mom by holding her accountable to the standards of Christ. Do not allow her to blame someone else for her own choices and her behavior. Openly call her on this action if you see her engaging in it. Remember the importance of this moment. Help her to think about ways in which she can change her life circumstances (or the way that she responds to them) right now.

Maintain guarded openness. Remember that you can build up your mom's confidence as you model some of the things that you are discussing with her. If she sees you doing what you are talking about, she will be more likely to believe that she can try it herself.

Brainstorm. What are some alternatives? Ask questions like "What could you do about this?" and "What else could you do?" Then explore some of the outcomes of your combined thoughts and suggestions. What might some of the consequences/rewards be for each of these possible alternatives?

Offer additional information. If appropriate, assist your mom in finding other resources or books that might be helpful in working through this situation.

Bring closure to your time together. Summarize the things that you have discussed together as well as the things that your mom has committed to do in the next week. Pray together and let your mom see how deeply you care about her, regardless of the ways in which she may have disappointed God or you in the past. Although you may not agree with some of her choices, let her see that you still care about her and that you love her unconditionally.

Keep in mind:

- **You are not a professional counselor, nor are you expected to be.**
Check with your facilitator for the name of one or two professional Christian counselors. If your mom begins to share things with you that seem to be more than you can handle, refer her to a trusted Christian counselor. Explain that you feel that your time together will be more productive if she is also working with a person more qualified than yourself.
- **Don't worry about saying the "wrong" thing.** If you have truly offered up your own life (as well as the life of your mom) up to the Lord, then you will be committed to loving your mom well. And loving her well means walking beside her (not carrying her through) this painful journey that she is on. It means filling her with words of encouragement and holding her accountable to the standards of Christ to which she has committed herself. It means being willing to say, "I really don't know what to say, but I'm committed to sitting here with you, crying with you, and caring for you in this process."
- **Don't say, "I know how you feel."** You don't know how she feels. You have no idea what it's like to be her. Your mom is an expert on her own experiences. Ask her to teach you what life has been like for her.
- **You cannot change your mom's feelings or her circumstances.** Take the pressure off yourself to try to solve all of her problems and to instantly make her life easier. That is not your job and that would be doing your mom a disservice. If you reduce yourself to a problem-solver or an advice-giver, you won't be helping your mom. God doesn't want to just solve our problems. His purpose is to have our problems bring us to Him. Your task as a mentor, then, is to help your mom fall more in

mentor training

love with Christ. You have the opportunity to call her to life, to help her see herself as God sees her—as His beautiful Beloved. Your mom is not a mechanical creature to be fixed. She is a relational creature to be loved. You are not here to solve her problems. You are here to help her to process through her feelings and frustrations.

- **Be willing to (briefly) share your own experiences, but only if they are for the good of the mom.** Sharing stories of ways in which you have stumbled along the path of life might serve as an encouragement to your mom. It also might allow your mom to begin to see you as the imperfect person that you are. But resist the temptation to tell your own story, and leave out unnecessary details!
- **Establish and maintain boundaries.** You are not here to make decisions for your Mom or to take responsibility for decisions made in the past. Resist the temptation to do so. Refuse to make decisions for her. Do not say things like, “If I were you . . .”. Also, stay within the allotted time frame. Show your mom how much you respect her time (as well as your own) by starting and finishing on time.
- **Establish appropriate expectations.** The goal is for the mom to become more self-aware and self-oriented, and not dependent on you. If necessary, explain this difference to your mom.
- **Release the mom to God each week.** Remember that you are here to encourage her to successful dependence on God and independence from fear. You are not to mother her or do for her. Do not lecture or argue with her.
- **You are not here to judge.** You are to be open and accepting of who she is and of the woman she is becoming. You are not to be retaliatory in your conversations with her. Remind her that she can say anything with you. Encourage her to be honest with you and assure her of the fact

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that you will maintain confidentiality (within the circle of leadership of *New Start*) with the things that she shares with you.

- **Maintain personal confidentiality:**

Never take process notes home.

Never discuss her with friends or your spouse.

Avoid social involvement (outside of the *New Start* program).

Note: It is best not to give out your phone number to your mom. Instead, instruct her to call the church and leave a message for you if she is unable to attend a meeting. The majority of our mentors tend to ignore this rule, and it is a personal choice. Perhaps give a cell phone number rather than a home number if you feel led to give a contact number. This will keep your family time from being interrupted.

None of us are perfect, nor do we have life figured out. However, before you begin the mentoring process, do the hard work of looking at your own life. Be open to all that God wants to teach you and to the ways in which He wants to change you through your interaction with your mom. One of the great joys of helping others is the change that occurs in your own life as you grow, learn, and are blessed.

Pray that God will make you curious and humble as you trust Him to use you for His glory. Be full of faith and prayer as you embark on an adventure of purpose and joy, and thank Him often for the privilege of serving.

WEEKLY DUTIES OF THE MENTOR:

- The first week you should **study your assigned mom's Confidential Application.** This will tell you a great deal about her.

mentor training

- Make careful notes each week on the ***Mentor Intake Form** about her progress, any needs, and her goals. Place this in her file for review with the facilitator.
- **Focus** on connecting a trust relationship, praying for her, and working through short- and long-term goals.
- **Spend time in prayer** for healing and a hopeful heart.
- **Call** her once a week or send a note of encouragement.
- **Prepare** by reading the next week's lesson and mentor notes.
- **Read the goals** for the week.
- **Speak with the facilitator** any time you need help or have a question.
- **Enjoy** the blessing that the Lord has called you to.



The *New Start for Single Moms* Mentor Training was provided by Debra Griswold and Sarah Kamienski. This mother-daughter team of mental health professionals is passionate about strengthening families and relationships through Christ-centered teaching.



mentor commitment form

*I pledge to model the behavior of a Proverbs 31 woman in my daily life.
I accept the call of God in James 1:27 to care for single moms and their children as a mentor.*

I agree to keep all conversations confidential and never to remove a file from the mentoring area.

I will become familiar with all materials given to me during the training.

I will pray for my assigned partner during our ten weeks together and for the next two months.

I will arrive on time each week and commit to attend all ten weeks unless prior arrangements are made.

I will make at least one phone call per week to my assigned mentee and make two follow-up calls: one at four weeks and one at two months after the ten-week program ends.

I agree to support the teachings of the program, including moral purity, the sanctity of life, tithing, and the absolute need of every person to accept Christ as their personal Savior.

Signature

Date

***What a joy to make a difference in the life of a
mother and her children! You are going to love it!***



facilitator/mentor guide



one

let go of the past:
take hold of the future

 FACILITATOR: *Note: Italicized words indicate your personal teaching throughout the guide.*

SUPPLIES FOR THIS SESSION:

Bible

DVD player/DVD kit

Name tags

*Forms: Mom Applications, Mentor Weekly Intake Form, Sign-In Sheet

Files with labels

Extra pens and pencils

Dry-erase or chalk board

Dream Worksheet (in Participant's Guide)

new start for single moms

Verse of the week on the board:

Look at the new thing I am going to do. It is already happening. Don't you see it? I will make a road in the desert and rivers in the dry land (Isaiah 43:19 NLT).

Board question: What do you hope to gain through this class?

HOUSEKEEPING FOR WEEK 1:

- **Each mom needs to fill out a *Confidential Application.** If anyone has not already filled out an application, hand one to her as she enters the room. Sometimes single moms are overwhelmed and just show up without a reservation or a completed application. Welcome each warmly, but be sure the application is completed for her first week and a mentor is assigned.
- **Use a *Sign-In Sheet each week.** Collect phone numbers and e-mail addresses on one sheet for easy reference.
- **Match moms and mentors** as they come in, if you have not already done so. Sometimes the match is easy; for example, if their careers are the same. Try to match professional women together; however, a mentor who is a homemaker can be just as effective. Sometimes you won't be able to match until after the first session, particularly if you don't receive the application until that week. Watch personalities—who is shy, who is a talker, who needs a prayer warrior? Don't worry about matching, the Lord will lead you! Occasionally, I have had to make a match change, moving a mentor and mom around. I let everyone know during the first session that this might happen and make it a positive change for both. In more than three years of *New*

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Start, we continue to see that listening, encouraging, prayer, and love make the match work.

Once you have made the match, make a label with the names of each mom and the assigned mentor. Place a *Mentor Intake Form in the file, and have blank files available for new moms who show up.

goals for week 1

- Establish trust between the mentors and the moms.
- Teach the provision, protection, and personal care of God.
- Inspire each to work toward personal, life-changing goals by identifying two to three life areas to improve.
- Teach the Dream Worksheet. Take some time to think about the four sections of the worksheet and fill it in yourself. Use this sample to show your mom to give her an idea of how to start. Don't worry about being right or wrong—this is about hope! Whether the goal is small or large, make it reachable and reasonable, but one of faith.

 MENTOR TIP: Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Your relationship with this single mom has the potential to be the most powerful part of this program. God created us as relational beings, and He often chooses to bind up our wounds through our relationships with others. Therefore, one of the greatest gifts you have to offer is your heart—a heart that is willing to listen and to share, to challenge and encourage, and, most importantly, a heart that is passionate about Christ and willing to let a hurting single see what it means to walk day to day by faith with almighty God.

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2. During your first few minutes together, your mentee will try to understand you—who you are, why you would care about her, whether you will listen, and if she feels you can understand her and be her friend. Don't be afraid of this because it is an important bonding moment for you. Remember that you want her to see Christ in you; His compassion and mercy, so that while she may be thinking that she is evaluating you, what she is really looking for is a genuine spirit. You have that because Christ lives within you. This point is offered not to scare you but rather to alert you to possible nervousness. If a mom has been hurt deeply, she may appear cold emotionally or very shy. At your first meeting, listen sincerely and respond tenderly and lovingly toward her regardless of her reactions.
3. When you begin to feel overwhelmed or you don't know what to say, offer a brief, silent prayer and ask God to help you to love your mom well. You are not expected to “say the right thing,” but only to love her genuinely. If you are simply willing to faithfully walk through the next ten weeks with her and to offer her glimpses of what it means to live in intimacy with the Lover of Our Soul, then you will love her well.
4. The quotes or questions offered throughout the Facilitator's Guide are simply that—suggestions. Please do not think that they are the “right things” to say. They are simply offered to help get your mind going. The questions that arise from your heart for your mom will probably be much more effective. Feel free to use them word for word, but allow the Lord to speak through you.
5. Read through the lesson each week before the session, and spend about 20 minutes in preparation and prayer. Begin thinking about ways that you would answer the questions that are offered.

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Thank you for your willingness to serve in this program. May God bless you as you “offer a cold cup of water in His Name.”

MENTORS

What might come up: Resistance, shyness, and embarrassment

If you begin to feel some resistance from your mom when you ask her personal questions, say something like, “I know that we have just met, that we are operating under a limited time schedule, and that there is a great deal more to your story than what I’ve heard, etc. I look forward to the day when you feel comfortable enough/you trust me enough/we have the relationship/we have the opportunity for you to tell me more about _____.”

Be careful to keep yourself from shaming the mom if she is hesitant in sharing her heart with you during this first session. Be patient with her. Continue to love her and to gently pursue her. Keep quietly knocking on the door of her heart and asking for a little bit more.

If she expresses frustration with the limited amount of time, you might say something like, “Yes, the time limit frustrates me sometimes too. I look forward to maximizing our moments together.”

As we begin our first class of this program session, your main goal is to connect with the women and with your designated mentee in particular. Be sure that everyone has a name tag before you begin and that you have met each personally.

Begin by explaining:

1. This whole program exists because others care.
2. Everyone in the room is a volunteer who has come because she has a love for single moms and has already been praying for each woman who would come.

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Ask about their children; their job; how they spend their time; their family; any hobbies or interesting facts; and then what they hope to gain from the class. Use this information to later introduce your assigned mom to the class.

 **MENTOR TIP:** When seeking more information about your mom, be sure that you are asking questions that display your own humble curiosity. It is much more inviting to share your own story with someone who is humble and curious than with someone who asks questions like an interviewer. (For example: “I would love to hear a little bit about your children.” “What lovely names! How did you choose them?”)

before the session

 **FACILITATOR QUESTION (10 MINUTES):** Write this question on the board and discuss. *What do you hope to gain through this class?*

The purpose of the board question is to assist in stimulating meaningful conversation between yourself and your mom during the first few minutes of the session. Eventually it will lead to a regular conversation in which you mourn and rejoice over the events of the week together. Enjoy this interaction, but be aware of the time. Be flexible if necessary, but try to stay on task.

 **FACILITATOR (10 MINUTES):** Ask each mentor to introduce her mom to the group, including her name and any personal information such as where she works, the number and ages of children, a hobby, etc. Allow 5 to 10 minutes, depending on the number in the group, to openly share the answer to the board question. Watch your time and do not be afraid to cut in gracefully if one person starts to control the time. Smile and say, “Thank you for sharing. I wish we had more time, but we all look forward to learning more about you in the next

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few weeks.” Then turn to the group and ask for other volunteers or go directly to opening with prayer.

■ **OPEN IN PRAYER**

■ **START THE DVD**

 **FACILITATOR:** *Work through these exercises with your partner. Compare your present situation to Hagar’s. What emotions do you share with her? (These emotions might include bitterness, anger, loneliness, lack of understanding, lack of faith, rejection, hurt feelings, fear of the future, and more).*

 **MOM & MENTOR TIME** for role play and discussion (15 MINUTES)

 **MENTOR TIP:** Encourage your mom to be honest about her emotions—even the unpleasant or shameful ones. Remind her that God longs for us to be honest with Him about our feelings and that He is big enough to handle each one. If she seems hesitant, offer your own thoughts. (For example: “If I were in a situation like Hagar’s, I would probably feel overwhelmed by the sudden loneliness and somewhat paralyzed by my bitterness. How about you?”, etc.)

discuss

Who do you think Hagar is directing her anger toward, and who does she blame for her situation? If you were in her shoes, what would you say to her at this point?

- Who in your life is involved in the emotional struggles you just identified?
 - Who do you find yourself directing your anger toward right now?
 - Who do you blame?
 - Take a few minutes to summarize the role this person plays in your life.
-
-
-
-

- Role play for 3 minutes. God is asking you tonight: “Where have you come from and where are you going?” Talk about where your actions and reactions might take you. What would you like to say to this person if you could?

 MENTOR TIP: This exercise can be very powerful . . . if you take it seriously and are willing to fully immerse yourself in your mom’s story for a few minutes. Take what she has told you about this person and act out the role in ways that seem appropriate. Let her do most of the talking. Encourage her to continue if necessary.

 FACILITATOR (10 MINUTES): *What a wonderful time we have had so far getting to know one another and learning how much God loves us. Now let’s look at a tool that will help you to move forward with confidence.*

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moving forward with confidence

(Read)

“Being proactive means more than taking initiative. It means that we take responsibility for our lives. Instead of blaming circumstances, conditions, or chance for our behavior, we choose our own responses and make our own decisions.”

—STEPHEN COVEY

Let’s draw an imaginary line down the middle of the room. Those of you on the left, please answer: What circumstances in life are beyond our control? Allow time for sharing (for example: weather, other people’s attitudes, traffic, the national economy, etc.). Some moms might suggest that they can control others or make them change. Challenge this thought. We can train our kids to act in a certain way, but ultimately, who will control how they act? Only they can. This point is vitally important.

Now those of you on the right side of the room, please share what we CAN control in life. (Answer—only ourselves, our attitudes, choices.)

This class is about making the choice to work on what we can and finding the strength through Christ to adapt to what we cannot control.

 **MOM & MENTOR TIME (5 MINUTES): Turn to the LIFE AREAS** selection. Ask the mentee to circle two or three words from the life areas below that she would like to make changes in. **Encourage her to use “blue sky” thinking—what if anything was possible? How would she like to grow in the next year, the next ten weeks, and the next week?**

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If time permits, allow moms to share openly what areas they have chosen to change.

💖 MENTOR TIP: During this time, ask what areas in her life seem to feel the most overwhelming, non-existent, or unmanageable right now. What would she like to see changed (that she can control)?

📖 FACILITATOR (10 MINUTES): *Turn in your workbooks now to your Dream Worksheet, the tool that can take you from wishing to doing. We all have choices to make, and we make them. You can only be a **Victim** once; after that you are a **Volunteer**! Ask yourself, What if time and money were not an obstacle—what would I do? What one step can I take in a life area that would change my circumstances, bless my children, give me peace and confidence, and work to increase the security of my family? As you dream, keep in mind that the Lord wants to bless you greatly.*

Let's make good choices by breaking down steps that will take us to the next level in areas of our life. Let's look at your Sample Dream Worksheet and the four key questions (WHY, WHAT, WHEN, HOW) that will help you make your dreams come true.

to achieve goals, ask:

WHY do I want to do this? *Select one of the Life Areas and write two or three sentences that describe what you want to change about this area of your life.*

WHAT do I want to do? *Get very specific about the goal and describe it in a few sentences for your own understanding. Refer to the sample page for help.*

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***WHEN should the goal be completed?** A goal must have detailed direction and a deadline to remove it from the pile of “someday.”*

***HOW will I do this?** By breaking down the goal into small steps, you can assign an order of 1, 2, 3, etc., and assign a date to each step. Our sample shows that any goal can be achieved one step at a time.*

Step by step, you will gain confidence and make your way to a new level of life.

Let’s begin with the end in mind by focusing on the WHY of your goals. Use the Dream Worksheet by writing the life area you want to improve in the WHY section and write two or three sentences explaining WHY. Then move to the WHAT; that is, exactly what you want to do that will move you forward in that area. From there you can work with your mentor to write HOW and WHEN steps.

You may only be able to get started today, but make a commitment to yourself to complete at least two sheets during the week. Beginning is the most important step—are you ready?

Take the next 20 minutes to begin working on your goal worksheets with your mentor. If you have a question, just let me know and I will come to you.

 **MOM & MENTOR TIME (20 MINUTES):** Work together to begin two of the goal sheets.

 **MENTOR TIP:** Emphasize the idea of setting goals as if *anything* is possible. More than likely, your mom has put dreaming aside to fight the daily stresses of reality. Encourage her in this.

Work with your mom to be as specific as possible here and to speak in “I”

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statements when talking about her goals. Help her to think through reasonable steps to accomplish each goal.

Make sure that some aspect of the goal is reachable within the next ten weeks.

 MENTOR TIP: Use the following questions to get started.

1. What changes would you begin to make if you could?
2. What immediate needs do you have: emotional, physical, financial, spiritual, relational, or parental?

 FACILITATOR (5 MINUTES): *I hope that this was a productive time together. You will want to continue to work on your dreams each week, and you and your mentor will be able to discuss your progress and pray over them each week. Let's review the Commitment Sheet on the page 19 of your workbook and read it together.*

This is an important part of coming to the class. God has already made a commitment to you, and this page is a symbol of your commitment to move forward into the wonderful new plans He has for you.

Have everyone read the commitment sheet together. Then allow time for mom and mentor to pray and sign together before they close. Emphasize the need to finish in time for child-care restrictions.

Congratulations! You have successfully begun the opportunity for hope and healing for single moms.

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 for next week

Work on at least one personal goal so that you can share in this with your mom.
Be sure to collect the information you need to communicate with her this week.
Make the facilitator aware of any immediate needs.