

Trail Life's Godly Mission Makes Huge Impact on Fathers and Sons Nationwide

A recent nationwide study has suggested that the alleged decline of Christianity in America over the past 40 years can be attributed to the disintegration of the family unit, especially the absence of fathers in the home.

The American First Policy Institute indeed has reported that the brokenness of families, fatherlessness and the government stepping in to take over traditional parenting duties—like instilling values in children—have increasingly become common fact in America. Data from 2022 suggests there are approximately 18.3 million children across America who live without a father in the home, comprising about 1 in 4 children.

With an important day of celebration—Father's Day—coming up Sunday, that's simply unacceptable to Christian organizations like Trail Life USA, which encourages men to prioritize being a dad or a dad-like figure and make a difference by entering a boy's life.

"A great deal of attention has been given to the epidemic of absent or disengaged fathers," says Trail Life CEO Mark Hancock. "But a remnant is rising. In Trail Life USA, nearly 15,000 men across the country are standing in the gap and utilizing outdoor adventure as a tool to lead men and boys into a life of adventure, character development and leadership.

"Boys will follow a man who dares to enter their world and helps them celebrate what makes a boy unique."

Trail Life reports that thousands of men and dads are involved

in the lives of boys and making a difference through its “unique” program. Instead of relegating boys to lives of playing video games and watching television, which has proven detrimental to the spiritual growth of these young men, Trail Life gets them involved in outdoor activities, including outings that will challenge their coping skills.

Hancock cites an example of a Trail Life event where one group of 22 boys and dads made an eight-hour hike with 3,500 feet of incline through snowfields to set up a base camp and get in position to summit an 11,000-foot mountain.

Despite disastrous weather and flagging spirits, the boys and their fathers leaned on Romans 5 and the power of perseverance and defied the odds—they made it to the summit! What inspired most of the boys to continue was the strength, stamina and support of the fathers in the group, giving them the courage to continue up the mountain and reach the top of the peak.

Romans 5:3-6 reads: “Not only so, but we also boast in tribulation, knowing that tribulation produces patience, patience produces character, and character produces hope. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. While we were yet weak, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

“In the outdoors, the experience of adults is never obsolete,” Hancock says. “Here, boys find mentors, fathers and sons connect, important relationships are fostered, and boys find opportunities to achieve significant accomplishments. I believe God created nature with all its inherent challenge and adventure as a place for boys to mature, learn responsibility, forge leadership, understand masculinity, and become biblically bold and courageous men as they live in community with godly men.

“Boys are searching for godly, masculine, adventurous men who

are willing to lead them on the difficult journey into manhood,” Hancock continues. “Our future requires that men step up for the sake of not only their sons, but boys in their community. I believe that any legitimate call to manhood MUST involve being a dad or dad-like to boys. When a man takes time out of his schedule to engage with a boy and speak encouragement, he creates a golden opportunity to reflect Christ and speak truth and meaning into his life.”

Trail Life continues to grow as an organization and is spreading rapidly across America. It recently celebrated its 1,000th troop, with tens of thousands of boys and their families positively impacted by the Trail Life message.

Through tried-and-true methodology, *Trail Life* offers boy-focused, adventure-driven solutions delivered in the context of a Christian worldview that encourage boys to embrace what makes them unique and build strong relationships with other boys, mentors and most importantly, Christ.

Kingdom leaders such as Focus on the Family, Franklin Graham, James Dobson, Mike Huckabee, Alex and Stephen Kendrick, Family Life, Promise Keepers and the American Family Association have all shown their support for the work Trail Life has done.

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