

2013 TEAMDAD Military Fatherhood Essay Contest

“What My Father Means To Me”



OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide Students with an opportunity to develop their writing skills with an important topic,
2. Provide Dads with a heartfelt essay and keepsake,
3. Provide schools with an opportunity to engage more dads in the educational lives of their children, and
4. Help strengthen families through stronger child-father relationships and encourage great father involvement.

The U.S. Department of Education did some very thorough research in 1997 and determined the best predictor of student achievement is the involvement of both parents. In other words:

GREATER FATHER INVOLVEMENT = GREATER STUDENT ACHEIVEMENT

OVERVIEW:

1. All students submitting an essay through their school will receive a **Certificate of Participation**.
2. 24 **Local Essay Finalists** (2 per grade, grades 1-12) per school will also receive a TEAMDAD Great Dads Coin to present to their dad.
3. Each school will submit the 24 Local Essay Finalist essays to be entered into the TEAMDAD Military Father-of-the-Year Contest, where six (6) men (one from each branch of the military and an “other” category) will be recognized as Military Fathers of the Year prior to Father’s Day 2013.

NEXT STEPS:

1. Select a Contact Person. This person will be responsible for collecting all of the essays from your school, overseeing the selection of the 24 Local Essay Finalists, filling out the School Submission Form and shipping the essays postmarked by March 15, 2013. **Please have this contact person e-mail to**

militarydad@teamdad.com the following information immediately so we can establish communication throughout the contest period: contact person's name, their e-mail address, school name, address, phone and fax number.

2. Photocopy and distribute **Note for Teachers (item #4)** and **Official Essay Contest Entry Forms (Item #5)** to all 1-12 grade level teachers.
3. Allow ample time after the essays are written, prior to the contest deadline (March 15, 2013) for the father/father figure to respond and return completed Entry Form to each teacher.
4. Ask each teacher to make complete copies of the Entry Forms with essays prior to submitting. Due to the volume TEAMDAD is not able to return essays once they are submitted. Remember originals are to be given to the fathers.
5. Mail the 24 Local Essay Finalist essays to: TEAMDAD Military Fatherhood Essay Contest, 1515 S. Grove Avenue, #3667, Barrington, IL 60010. Deadline for the postmark is March 15, 2013. (Please use only the US Postal Service). Please be sure to place the completed School Submission Form on the top of the 24 essays.
6. Announcements for the six (6) TEAMDAD Military Fathers-of-the-Year will be made on May 15, 2013 at www.teamdad.com.
7. Please make plans to hold your local Fatherhood Essay Contest Award presentations at an existing event or hold a special event sometime before the end of the school year.

THANKS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION. ALL DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION RELATING TO THE ESSAY CONTEST CAN BE FOUND ON THE TEAMDAD WEBSITE:
www.teamdad.com

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#2 Fact Sheet

Each student is asked to write a 250 word (or less) essay on the theme “What My Father Means to Me,” describing their relationship and with their father or father figure. They should share their true feelings. Provide examples of joys, frustrations or special memories they have as well as commenting about what they would most like to see in their relationship. Father figures can include: uncles, brothers, coaches, or other persons of influence to the student.

Please suggest to students who might be uncomfortable with this type of exercise, that they write an essay on “What My Ideal Father Would Be Like.”

HERE ARE SOME CRITERIA FOR JUDGING THE ESSAYS:

Please stress to all students that all submissions will be evaluated according to grade level. Judging criteria will consist of:

1. How the essay describes the relationship.
2. Specific detail and stories that demonstrate Father’s/Father-Figure’s character.
3. Honesty, clarity, simplicity of writing.
4. Overall grade level appropriate writing skill.
5. The response of the Father/Father figure or other involved adult.

Rules:

1. One entry per person. All essays must be original and created by the student.
2. All entries become the property of TEAMDAD.
3. Entry into the contest transfers copyright of both parts of the essays and submittal to TEAMDAD and grants TEAMDAD permission to reproduce without compensation all or any portion of the essay and response on an unlimited, worldwide basis in its publications. When appropriate TEAMDAD may cite the name of the author(s) if significant portions of a positive essay/response are used. TEAMDAD will also change or conceal names to maintain confidentiality where necessary.
4. Contest is open to all students of the 194 Department of Defense schools. By entering, participants agree to the use of name, photograph, or likeness for advertising and similar promotions of TEAMDAD.

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#3 School Submission Form

CONTACT PERSON: For your school/students to be considered for additional recognition for the 2013 Essay Contest, you must fill out this form and mail it in with the 24 Local Essay Finalists essays from your school. If this sheet is not turned in, your school will forfeit its chance for your students to receive additional recognition.

School's Full Name: _____

School Address: _____

City/State/Country/ZIP: _____

School Phone: (____) _____ School Fax: (____) _____

Contact Name: _____ Email: _____

Principal Name: _____ Email: _____

Total Number of Essays Collected: ** _____ Official 2012-13 School Total Enrollment: _____

Percentage of Enrollment Participating: _____ % Number of Teachers Participating: _____

We are submitting essays for the following students (last name only):

1 st Grade: _____, _____	7 th Grade: _____, _____
2 nd Grade: _____, _____	8 th Grade: _____, _____
3 rd Grade: _____, _____	9 th Grade: _____, _____
4 th Grade: _____, _____	10 th Grade: _____, _____
5 th Grade: _____, _____	11 th Grade: _____, _____
6 th Grade: _____, _____	12 th Grade: _____, _____

You may also list the 24 Local Essay Finalists and their grades on a separate sheet attached to this form.

The information provided above is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that for our school to be eligible for the essay contest awards, all of the essays from our school must be submitted together with this School Submission Form. I will serve as the contact for my school and be responsible for distribution of student awards and recognitions.

Name _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit your essays to: TEAMDAD Military Fatherhood Essay Contest, 1515 S. Grove Avenue, #3667, Barrington, IL 60010. Deadline for the postmark is March 15, 2013. (Please use only the US Postal Service)

Please be sure to place this completed form on the top of the 24 essays.

**** Note, this is the number of Certificates of Participation you will receive.**

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#4 Teacher & Classroom Form

Dear Teacher:

To have your class participate in the essay contest and ensure your students receive their Certificates of Participation please fill out this form and follow the easy to follow checklist below. *Thanks for your help – we could **not** do this without you!*

Fill out the following information:

Teacher Name: _____ School: _____

Your E-mail: _____

School Address: _____

City/State/Country/ZIP: _____ School Phone: (____) _____

Number of participating student essays from your class included here: _____ Total in Class: _____

Checklist:

1. Please read this “Check List” and the accompanying “Notes for Teacher’s.”
2. Photocopy the blank Essay Entry Form (#5) and give to students to use to write their essays. Students may use another piece of paper or type their essays only if stapled to the Official Entry Form or if they **include the contact information that is listed at the top of the Official Essay Entry Form. Please staple sheets together with the #5 Official Essay Contest Entry Form on top. Please check to see if the student’s name, school name, and grade are included.**
3. After the essays are written please make sure that **every student has a photocopy of their essay to take to their father/father figure to complete.** This step is important to fulfill a primary goal of the essay contest, which is to ensure the essays are shared with their father and families.
4. Set a deadline for your students to return the essays with their father’s response to you, that gives you plenty of time to comply with the March 15th deadline to submit the 24 Local Essay Finalists from your school.
5. When all the essays are completed, **place this sheet** on the top of the essays from your class.
6. Give the completed packet of essays **to your school’s Contact Person who will be responsible for collecting the essays from your school.**
7. When the certificates of participation arrive, please distribute one to each student who from your classroom.
8. If you would like to **help TEAMDAD evaluate and improve the essay contest**, please send your comments via email to militarydad@teamdad.com. We would like your help and appreciate your input!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION – There is more information for you on #4 Continuation of Teacher & Classroom Form.

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#4 Continuation of Teacher & Classroom Form

Notes for Teachers:

This writing assignment is designed to help your efforts in teaching students writing skills. Each student will receive a Certificate of Participation. Each student will also have a chance to receive one of the 24 Great Dads Coins being provided to your school. Of course, we recognize some children have little or no contact with their biological fathers, either as a result of death, divorce, or abandonment. Consequently, you may encourage some of these children to write about their father-figure – those men who are not their biological fathers but, nonetheless, have fathered them. Perhaps he is an uncle, brother, or other male role model.

In a special effort to be more inclusive, we have also created a separate category – for students who do not have a father or do not want to write about their father - they may submit an essay on “My Ideal Dad.” Some students may choose this category if they wish. *****However, please use this category only as the last option – we would prefer to have most essays written about a real person.

Still, we’d like to see the vast majority of students encouraged to write about their own fathers, even if their experience with them has been unsatisfactory. In light of this, please emphasize that you really want the student to be honest in articulating their feelings about their relationship with their father, even if the relationship is not an entirely positive one. All essays will be judged and treated with the same respect.

1. The deadline for submitting the essays is March 15, 2013. Each school can submit only one (1) package with its 24 Local Finalist Essays. The package must be post marked by March 15, 2013.
2. Your Contact Person will receive your requested allotment of Certificates of Participation. You will distribute one to each student in your class who wrote an essay. NOTE: It is very important you complete the “Teacher & Classroom Form.”
3. Judging Process. A local group of volunteers will be responsible for selecting the 24 Local Essay Finalist essays from your school, optimally two per grade (grades 1-12) and a young boy and young girl in each grade. As an additional recognition for their accomplishment, these 24 students will be presented with a Great Dads Coin to present to their father at a local ceremony at a date and location to be determined locally.
4. The procedure for choosing the 2013 TEAMDAD Military Fathers of the Year are as follows: Each of the 24 Local Essay Finalist essays submitted from each of the participation Department of Defense schools will be divided into six categories: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Navy and Other. No more than 120 of the fathers written about, will receive a TEAMDAD Military Father-of-the-Year Questionnaire. No more than 30 of those who submit completed questionnaires will be interviewed by phone. No more than 18 men (three per category) will be recognized as 2013 TEAMDAD Military Fathers of the Year.
5. A scoring system which includes the child’s essay (20%), the returned questionnaire (40%), and the interview (40%) will determine the 2013 TEAMDAD Military (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine, Navy & Other) Fathers of the Year.
6. One father in each of the six categories will be named as the 2013 TEAMDAD Father of the Year. Each of these six men will be notified at the beginning of June 2013 and receive additional recognition in advance of Father’s Day.

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#5 Official Essay Contest Entry Form

(There are 3 pages for this form: 1- this page; 2- essay page; 3- cont. essay page and father response)

(Please Print Carefully)

Student's Full Name _____ Grade _____ Teacher _____

School Name _____

School Address: _____

Student's Home Address: _____ City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Student Home Phone Number: (_____) _____ Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Email Address _____

(Important Note: Student does not need to provide home information if school policy does not allow for it. Information allows TEAMDAD to alert winners and their families in time to participate in celebrations. Please provide information if at all possible. Thank you.)

My father is a member of (Choose One):

___ AIR FORCE ___ ARMY ___ COAST GUARD ___ MARINES ___ NAVY ___ OTHER

Father's Name: _____

Address if different from above:
_____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ Email Address _____

****OR****

If you do not want to write about your father or if he is not alive, don't feel bad! Instead, tell TEAMDAD what qualities would make "My Ideal Dad." Put an "X" here _____ if you are writing about "My Ideal Dad." (Please note: If you choose this option, you will still receive a certificate of participation and be eligible for local recognition, but will not be entered into the Father of the Year Contest.

In < 250 words please write an essay to the theme “What My Father Means To Me”

Please staple all pages of your essay with this entry form on top.

