

Nearly 600 volunteer to be absent father

10th January, 2018



A junior high school in Texas, USA was pleasantly surprised after being swamped by volunteers to stand in for absent fathers. Billy Earl Dade Middle School, in the city of Dallas, posted on Facebook asking for 50 male volunteers to substitute for absent

fathers in an event called "Breakfast with Dads". Event organizers were inundated with replies. They said they were astounded after nearly 600 men responded to the request and turned up at the event. The school's inaugural "Breakfast with Dads" event was to enhance community spirit. Around 90 per cent of the children come from low-income families. Many of the students did not have a father who was able to participate in the event.

The school said the "Breakfast with Dads" event was part of an overall plan to improve its academic position. Community leaders, mentors and local organizations have combined to implement various projects to increase test scores. There has been some academic improvement at the school as a result of their efforts. A local pastor, the Reverend Donald Parish Jr, said: "When a young person sees someone other than their teacher take interest in them, it inspires them." A school liaison officer, Ellyn Favors, commented on the success of the event. She said: "The look of awe, even disbelief, in students' eyes as they made their way through the crowd of "Dads" was astonishing."

Sources: independent.co.uk / dallasnews.com / sltrib.com

Writing

What are the pros and cons of a volunteer father program for fatherless children?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

junior high school / surprised / swamped / volunteers / absent / father / community / plan / mentors / projects / improvement / interest / success / disbelief / students

True / False

- A junior high school wasn't surprised at getting so many volunteers. T / F
- The junior high school asked for 50 male volunteers. T / F
- The junior high school held it's third "Breakfast with Dads" event. T / F
- About 90% of the school's children are from poorer families. T / F
- The school's event was part of bettering its academic position. T / F
- The school's test scores have been going down. T / F
- A pastor said the event would not inspire students. T / F
- A school liaison officer said the students had a bored look in their eyes. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. swamped | a. first |
| 2. substitute | b. amazing |
| 3. astounded | c. take part |
| 4. inaugural | d. flooded |
| 5. participate | e. joined |
| 6. overall | f. amazed |
| 7. combined | g. wonder |
| 8. efforts | h. stand in |
| 9. awe | i. endeavors |
| 10. astonishing | j. all-inclusiv |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- How can schools improve their academic position?
- Have you ever been a mentor for someone?
- Would you be a good mentor?
- How important is it for a teacher to take an interest in students?
- How do you think the students felt about the event?
- What is the most important duty of a father?
- What questions would you like to ask the event organizers?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

1. pleasantly
 2. Event organizers were inundated
 3. nearly 600 men responded
 4. come from low-
 5. a father who was able to participate
 6. part of an overall
 7. implement various
 8. as a result
 9. disbelief in
 10. they made their way
- a. of their efforts
 - b. in the event
 - c. plan
 - d. surprised
 - e. to the request
 - f. students' eyes
 - g. income families
 - h. through the crowd
 - i. with replies
 - j. projects

Discussion – Student B

- a) What have you been pleasantly surprised about?
- b) Have you ever volunteered for anything?
- c) What do you think of the 'Breakfast with Dads' idea?
- d) How important is having breakfast with your family?
- e) What is community spirit like where you live?
- f) What problems do low-income families have?
- g) What other things could the men volunteer for?
- h) What happens to families without a father?

Spelling

1. laepnaylts surprised
2. mesawpd by volunteers
3. steutbsuit for absent fathers
4. They said they were teunsoadd
5. enhance iuonytcmm spirit
6. cpaptiriaet in the event
7. improve its dacmaice position
8. pemleimtn various projects
9. nrsetmo and local organizations
10. rpmeoteimvn at the school
11. A school niaiosl officer
12. The look of awe, even eieblsdfi

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. h	3. f	4. a	5. c
6. j	7. e	8. i	9. g	10. b

Role Play

Role A – Hero

You think it is most important for a father to be a hero. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): disciplinarian, protector or teacher.

Role B – Disciplinarian

You think it is most important for a father to be a disciplinarian. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): hero, protector or teacher.

Role C – Protector

You think it is most important for a father to be a protector. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): disciplinarian, hero or teacher.

Role D – Teacher

You think it is most important for a father to be a teacher. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): disciplinarian, protector or hero.

Speaking – Father

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important attributes for a father at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- hero
- disciplinarian
- role model
- guide
- protector
- teacher
- supporter
- friend

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.