

Stand in the Gap Frequently Asked Questions

What is Stand In The Gap?

MISSION: We are a prayer-based, church-driven, small group movement, focused on helping a group member rise above overwhelming life challenges through a loving, spiritual family experience.

Stand In The Gap™ is a unique group-mentoring model developed for the Church to utilize members of their congregation to form a support group to serve those in need. Clients are prescreened and if qualified become a "neighbor" in a "spiritual family". Each participant signs a written covenant to meet together at least twice a month for at least one year. The essence of this mentoring model is Christian fellowship and prayer.

Our VISION is to facilitate 100,000 spiritual families who answer God's call to love their hurting neighbors and experience God's transforming love.

Stand in the Gap is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization and all donations are tax-deductible as charitable contributions. We are 100% donor funded from the private sector: individuals, private foundations, churches, businesses, etc.

What has SITG achieved in the past three years for persons in your programs?

The work of Stand in the Gap does not take a "broadcast" approach by spreading services across a large percentage of the population. Rather, our strategy is to serve a small number well and make a long term, lasting impact. The unique factor in Stand in the Gap is our commitment to surround our 'neighbors' (clients) with 4 or more trained volunteers who meet with them at least twice monthly and work with them for an average of 28 months. In most cases, the clients we have served experience a life transformation from their participation as this unique model allows the client the opportunity to create a healthy self-image, develop new coping behaviors, and learn different alternatives for living life.

From 2007 to 2009 approximately 411 clients were in some stage of being served in a training program, being mentored or in a spiritual family. In addition approximately 51,322 volunteer hours were contributed to SITG programs during this time, representing a value of \$923,796 if you applied an hourly volunteer rate of \$18/hour. We have also expanded our footprint by giving our model away to church/agency partners in five states and thirteen cities including Muskogee, Claremore, Oklahoma City, Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Austin, Houston, Springfield, etc. Additionally, in our Women in Transition program, fifty ex-prisoners have participated in our training program and then subsequently as clients in Stand in the Gap 'families' while completing the one-year commitment, and **NOT ONE** has returned to prison to date. Additionally, we have worked with 5 addicts in Tulsa in the last five years that have remained clean.

How can I help Stand in the Gap help the hurting find healing through God's love?

You can help Stand in the Gap through your financial support, you can volunteer to be a member of an SITG spiritual family (support group), and you can encourage your church to adopt Stand in the Gap.

How is my donation used?

The SITG ministry model is unique in that we give our methodology away at no cost to our partner churches and in turn each church recruits volunteers to form a family or support group around a neighbor in need. As a result, our volunteers deliver the majority of our "services". Our most significant out of pocket expense is for the small SITG staff in Tulsa that manages our programs, supports our partner churches and trains volunteers. In addition to managing programs like Women in Transition and DaySpring Villa, which require teaching our curriculum in correctional facilities and facilitating the placement of DaySpring clients with partner churches, the SITG staff manages our remaining programs and the general operation of the ministry.

What percent of any contribution will go to administrative costs?

Our administrative expense ratio is 10% or less. To accurately represent the effectiveness of our expenditures as it relates to the support of our programs we calculate this administrative ratio by incorporating the value of the time spent by our volunteers serving our clients/neighbors.

What is SITG's core strength - what makes its ministry unique?

Our core strength is our methodology, which is continuously improved and enhanced, based on years of experience and is proven to be highly effective. Although simple, our method can be utilized on a broad spectrum of life issues such as those recovering from substance and gambling addictions; experiencing health, financial, mental health issues or marital crises; raising families as a single person or fatherless children to name a few examples. Life issues vary across a wide spectrum and are less important to the process than our methodology, which provides the flexibility to address varying issues. Key agents for change in our method are the volunteers that form the family/support group and are trained to function as "wise counsel" as they surround and support the neighbor (client). This group will meet with the neighbor twice monthly for a year (lasting change isn't quick) and is comprised of 4+ adults who counsel, sympathize, empathize, advise, and model for the neighbor. This group provides a healthy "family" to the neighbor, perhaps for the first time. This allows the neighbor the opportunity to create a healthy self-image, develop new coping behaviors, and learn different alternatives to living life versus simply surviving. The neighbor receives significant practical, emotional, and spiritual help and in most cases, profound transformation occurs. Just as compelling, this is a life affirming, enriching process for volunteers and neighbors. More than 1,000 volunteers have participated, of those surveyed 95% said that they will do it again because they experienced God as never before and observed true life change.

Does SITG have any programs to address specific life issues?

Part of our strategy is to “incubate” several key programs that focus on national issues impacting our country. Our plans are to eventually identify partner organizations with a singular focus to deploy the following programs on a regional and/or national basis; 1) Women Impacted by Domestic Violence in partnership with the DaySpring Villa Women and Children’s Shelter (Tulsa), 2) Youth Aging Out of Foster Care and 3) Women Transitioning out of Prison for which we operate a program at the David L Moss Tulsa County jail teaching our women’s prison curriculum.

Is Stand in the Gap supported by any private Foundations?

We have a strong and loyal donor base comprising some of the key Foundations in Tulsa; Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation, George Kaiser Family Foundation, Hille Family Charitable Foundation, H. A. and Mary K. Chapman Trust, Helmerich and Payne, David & Cassie Temple Foundation, Hardesty Family Foundation, etc.

Does Stand in the Gap have or are you pursuing partnerships to serve those in need?

Our ministry model has received strong interest and traction in the “marketplace” as evidenced by program partnerships with the Catholic Diocese of Eastern Oklahoma, David L. Moss Tulsa County Jail, DaySpring Villa Shelter for battered and abused women, Boys and Girls Town of Missouri and the Missouri Baptist Children’s Home, the Tulsa Boys Home and the Bair Foundation. We are also in the midst of forming a strategic alliance with Prison Fellowship International to pilot our method to enhance the continuum of care that they provide their clients who are transitioning out of prison. Additionally, we are in current discussions with the Anglican Church of North America about a program partnership.

Does Stand in the Gap have an independent Board of Directors?

Yes, our Board of Directors is comprised of twelve or more individuals who represent a broad and diverse set of backgrounds, experiences, skills, abilities and ages. You can find a listing of board members and their backgrounds on our website at www.sitgm.org.

Is SITG a denominational ministry?

No we are not denominationally focused ministry. Our mission is to equip the church for this ministry across multiple denominations and to date we have worked with eleven different denomination.

What Churches in Tulsa has Stand in the Gap been involved with?

We have or have had in the past, programs with the following churches: Bread of Life, Southern Hills Baptist, Sanctuary Fellowship, Sanctuary Church, Faith United Methodist, Catholic Diocese of Eastern OK, Parish of Saint Bernard, Muskogee Church of Christ, First United Methodist Claremore, Church of the Holy Spirit, Harvard Avenue Christian, New Visions, New Heart Fellowship, St. Dunstan's Episcopal, St. John Episcopal, First Baptist/Muskogee, Abiding Harvest UMC, Believer, Fellowship Bible, Cornerstone Church, Liberty Church, Christian Chapel, Redeemer Covenant Church, First United Methodist Tulsa, Asbury United Methodist, Winnetka Baptist, Happy Hill Church (BA) and Saint Paul's AME Church.

Additionally, churches in five states and twelve cities use the SITG method to serve those in need.

PD Version Updated June 2010