

SMOC: Single Moms Oil Change Ministry

By David Jamieson

No one ever said that being a single mom was easy. In fact, if the truth were to be known, single moms have to be experts in almost every aspect of life!

However, their most prolific and proficient skill is juggling! Because the reality is that being a single mom means you are performing a dizzying, non-stop, 24-hour-a-day juggling act.

It means that they are fairly adept at juggling many aspects of life ... work, meetings, day care, school, orthodontist appointments, basketball games, birthday parties, and whatever else life throws their way.

But is being a qualified auto mechanic likely among the single mom's list of talents? Well, in most cases, the answer is a resounding no because that's asking a little too much, isn't it?

In fact, according to Jamie Gallagher in an article entitled, *Single Parenting Problems and Solutions* single-parent families saw their annual earnings plummet twenty percent between 2007 and 2010, compared to only 5 percent for two-parent families. Economic survival has gotten harder and harder for these families: the number of single-parent families in poverty reached 35.3 percent in 2010, up from 30.9 percent three years earlier. (Statistics quoted from an article by Jamie Gallagher entitled 'Single Parenting Problems And Solutions' – Statistics given by The Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution)

So recognizing the reality that single moms struggle financially and that they don't always have enough spare cash for the "luxuries" of life such as their vehicle oil changes, a team of volunteers in Aldergrove, British Columbia has been coming to their aid now for over a decade.

Through the Aldergrove Seventh-day Adventist Church's Acts of Kindness Ministry single moms receive twice a year, spring and fall, a free oil change for their vehicles.

Why do we do this ministry for single moms? We want to follow the example of Jesus who said "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28 NIV) So following the example of our Lord the SMOC team seeks to serve as many single moms in need as possible with no strings attached; to serve single moms with extreme generosity because that's exactly what Jesus would do; and to not be concerned about growing the church, but rather about growing God's kingdom, because if we focus on growing God's kingdom, He will take care of growing His church.

So how can a Single Moms Oil Change be conducted in your area? What are the nuts and bolts of this kind of a successful community outreach?

First of all a location must be selected to conduct the single Moms Oil Change. Finding a local auto mechanic in your area who wishes his garage to be of service to the community on a Sunday afternoon is a great place to start.

Secondly, recruit a qualified volunteer team from within and outside the church. Why? Because serving is simply contagious!

Thirdly, utilize every local media opportunity available in your area to advertise the program, the date, time and place.

Fourthly, ask single moms in need to call in for an appointment so they can provide their vehicle information including the year, make and model, engine size, and number of cylinders in their vehicle.

Finally, remember if there is anyone who needs a break today, it is single moms.

David Jamieson is the lead pastor for the Aldergrove Seventh-day Adventist Church in British Columbia

For more information or to purchase a *Single Moms Oil Change How to Manual* contact us at aldergrovesda@shaw.ca