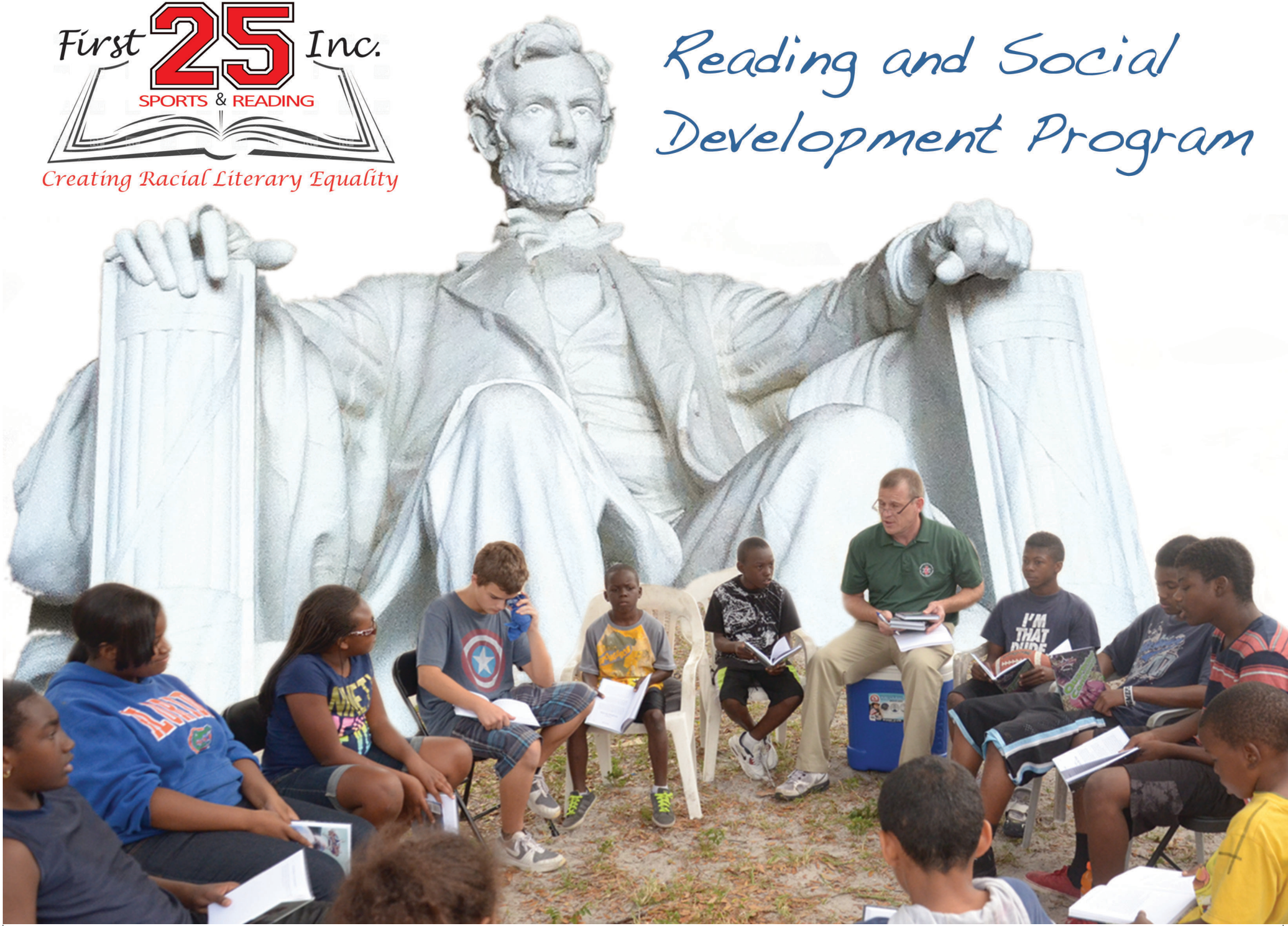
First 25 Inc.

SPORTS & READING

*Creating Racial Literary Equality*

# Reading and Social Development Program



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# The Plan (*3 stages*):

## Stage #1: Full -Time Pilot Program

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Action step #1A** | **7:15a.m. – 8:25a.m.** | **Before school Sports & Reading** | **(M-TH)** | **60 kids/year** |
| **Action step #1B** | **8:30a.m. – 9:15a.m.** | **Before school Reading** | **(M-TH)** | **80 kids/year** |

20 regularly attending students

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action step #2** | **9:30a.m – 10:55a.m.** | **Support Reading 180 teachers (Ms. Dillard & Ms. Bell)** | **13-15 kids/class** |

Notes: A *First 25* coach will support Ms. Dillard's and Ms. Bell's classes, two times each per week, as the independent reading component of the curriculum. Approximately 5 students at a time will read with a coach in open office space for 20 minutes.

20-24 regularly attending students

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action step #3** | **11:05a.m. – 11:30a.m.** | **Lunchroom Reading** | **25-35 kids/year** |

5-10 regularly attending students

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action step #4** | **11:35a.m. – 12:55p.m.** | **Support Low-Level Reading classes** | **13-15/ kids class** |

20-24 regularly attending students

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action step #5** | **1:00p.m. – 2:30p.m.** | **Support Low-Level Reading classes** | **13-15 kids/class** |

20-24 regularly attending students

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Action step #6** | **2:30p.m – 4:00p.m.** | **Support P.E. Classes (special appearances with EBD)** | **20-25 kids/class** |

Notes: A *First 25* coach will inspire and read with two P.E. classes, twice/week.

10-20 regularly attending students

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**TOTALS:** 95 - 122 students regularly reading with a *First 25* coach (Regular attendees will have data tracked and results analyzed.)

**Stage #2: 3 *First 25* Reading Coaches at JHOP**

**Stage #3: Spread the *First 25* program throughout Pinellas County**

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# Scientific Results:

**FCAT test score figures collected from participating students in the 2013-2014 First 25 Inc. Program**

| | 2013-2014 Grade level | 2013 FCAT score | 2014 FCAT score | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student #1 | 6 | 209 | 220 | +11 Learning Gain |
| Student #2 | 7 | 189 | 200 | +11 Learning Gain |
| Student #3 | 7 | 209 | 215 | +6 |
| Student #4 | 8 | 220 | 224 | +4 |
| Student #5 | 8 | 193 | 189 | -4 |
| Student #6 | 7 | 212 | 216 | +4 |
| Student #7 | 6 | 198 | 221 | +23 Learning Gain / Level Jump |
| Student #8 | 8 | 201 | 216 | +15 Learning Gain |
| Student #9 | 8 | 236 | 231 | -5 |
| Student #10 | 7 | 197 | 218 | +21 Learning Gain / Level Jump |
| Student #11 | 6 | 232 | 229 | -3 |
| Student #12 | 6 | 197 | 211 | +14 Learning Gain |
| Student #13 | 6 | 186 | 178 | -8 |
| Student #14 | 6 | 193 | 205 | +13 Learning Gain / Level Jump |
| Student #15 | 7 | 230 | 235 | +5 |
| Student #16 | 8 | 184 | 182 | -2 |
| Student #17 | 8 | 225 | 233 | +8 Learning Gain |
| Student #18 | 8 | 199 | 218 | +19 Learning Gain / Level Jump |
| Student #19 | 6 | 161 | 174 | +13 Learning Gain / Level Jump |
| Student #20 | 8 | 187 | 194 | +7 Learning Gain |

At least Learning Gains = 11 / 20 (55%)
Level Jumps = 5 / 20 (25%)
Improvement, Learning Gain or Level Jump = 15 / 20 (75%)
No Improvement = 5 / 20 (25%)

# Why Does It Work? (It's all psychological):

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## Inspiration + Encouragement + Respect > Defiance + Anger:

*First 25* coaches gain the kids' respect and admiration by empathizing with them and "building them up" to think they can be great. Every child needs someone they can count on to never let them down and Mr. Hoover's plan is to give each of these deserving kids at least one year of intense, positive reinforcement.

## Happiness and Hope:

*First 25* coaches bring happiness and hope into these childrens' lives in an emotional and animated style, while nurturing confidence in their reading at the same time. Two birds with one stone!

## Our Recipe:

### Ingredients:

- 1 enthusiastic, inspirational reading coach.
- 100 at-risk, underpriveledged, middle school students.
- 4 books written specifically to inspire middle school students.
- 1 rap poem exercise for practicing rhyming and reading with rhythym.
- 1 inspiring plan to change the country that will intrigue students and convince them to have ownership in it.

## Free Gatorade:

*First 25* coaches give out free Gatorade as a reward for kids reading out loud and paying attention. It works like a charm!

## A Tsunami of Positive Reinforcement:

*First 25* coaches continually give eye-to-eye compliments to the children on their future potential. A coach will shake their hand, look them in the eye and tell them to "Think big, be great and help change the country for the better." These kids truly need direct eye contact and passionate, animated encouragement.

## Detailed Tracking of Progress:

First 25 Inc. has developed an innovative, easy-to-use tracking chart to quickly assess each child's progress through the curriculum. The more kids read, the better they get. Keep it simple!

**John Hopkin's Reading and Social**

| First Name | Last Name | Contact | Type | Grade | 8/12/14 | 8/27/14 | 9/2/14 | 9/10/14 | 9/17/14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kennisyah | Baxter | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | |
| Frank | Bolden | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p2 | e20 |
| Kemonee | Collier | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | e20 |
| Jalen | Davis | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p2 | 20 |
| Oswelle | Denard | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | |
| Lucky | Eubanks | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p2 | 20 |
| Zacchaeus | Gilmore | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p3 | |
| Caleb | Grant | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | 20 |
| Travon | Holmes | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | |
| Libertee | Hood | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p4 | 20 |
| Krishani | James | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | |
| Tamyra | Jones | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p3,6 | 20 |
| Sterling | Knerwell | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | |
| Bruce | Li | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p6 | |
| Thomas | Monk | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p5 | 20 |
| Demario | Murphy | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p2,6 | 20 |
| Brandon | Pearson | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p5,7 | 20 |
| Kyrah | Pruitt | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p3 | 20 |
| Makaliah | Shakleford | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p4? | 20 |
| Haley | Shilstone | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | |
| Ja'Marcus | Williams | | Dillard | 6 | | | | | |
| Curtistine | Wilson | | Dillard | 6 | | | | p3 | |

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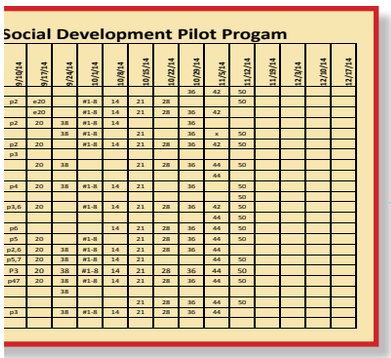
## Before School:

While having fun playing sports, we talk about being great and helping to fix the country. The psychological rehabilitation starts from the very beginning.

- 2 out-loud reading sessions per week.
- a large scoop of coach playing sports with the kids.
- sprinkle generous amounts of firm handshakes with eye contact.
- healthy pinches of mutual respect, self confidence and discipline as needed.

### Instructions:

Mix a reading coach with at-risk students before school to play sports and have fun. Upon introduction to each student, the coach will shake hands, and while doing so, impart the correct way to do so and encourage good eye-contact with a smile. Mix in a healthy pinch of mutual respect while doing the above. During this time, the coach will explain why he is there, what the plan is, and how the students can help change the country for the better. Coach will then support low-level reading classes throughout the day, keeping detailed notes on each student's progress.

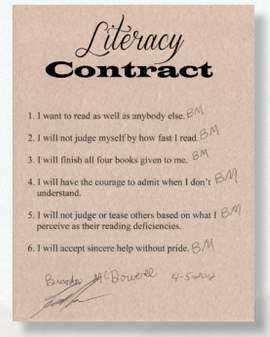


Social Development Pilot Progam

| 9/10/14 | 9/17/14 | 9/24/14 | 10/1/14 | 10/8/14 | 10/15/14 | 10/22/14 | 10/29/14 | 11/5/14 | 11/12/14 | 11/19/14 | 12/2/14 | 12/9/14 | 12/17/14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | 36 | 42 | 50 | | | | |
| p2 | e20 | | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | | | 50 | | | | |
| | e20 | | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 42 | | | | | |
| p2 | 20 | 38 | #1-8 | 14 | | | 36 | | | | | | |
| | | 38 | #1-8 | | 21 | | 36 | x | 50 | | | | |
| p2 | 20 | | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 42 | 50 | | | | |
| p3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 20 | 38 | | | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 44 | | | | | |
| p4 | 20 | 38 | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | | 36 | | 50 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | 50 | | | | |
| p3,6 | 20 | | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 42 | 50 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| p6 | | | | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| p5 | 20 | | #1-8 | | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| p2,6 | 20 | 38 | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | | | | | |
| p5,7 | 20 | 38 | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | | | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| p3 | 20 | 38 | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| p4? | 20 | 38 | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| | | 38 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | 50 | | | | |
| p3 | | 38 | #1-8 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 36 | 44 | | | | | |

## Before School Reading Group:

Introduce Literacy Contract and give first powerfully emotional speech to get the kids motivated for the common cause. Begin out-loud, round-robin reading.



Literacy Contract

1. I want to read as well as anybody else. B.M
2. I will not judge myself by how fast I read. B.M
3. I will finish all four books given to me. B.M
4. I will have the courage to admit when I don't understand. B.M
5. I will not judge or tease others based on what I perceive as their reading deficiencies. B.M
6. I will accept sincere help without pride. B.M

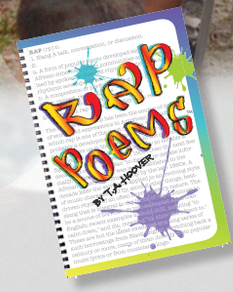
Brandon M. Bowers 4-5-2014

## In-Class Support:

*First 25* coaches support low-level reading classes with small group, 15-20 minute intensive reading sessions.

## Give Kids Books They Like:

Mr. Hoover will donate books he has written specifically for the at-risk kids of Pinellas County. *The Last Eagle* is a rhyming picture book Mr. Hoover has the children read first so to judge their reading level and to instill confidence. *Rap Poems* is a short book of tongue-twisting rhymes designed to get the kids smiling and reading with rhythm. The sports stories wrap subtle character education around exciting and inspiring plots.



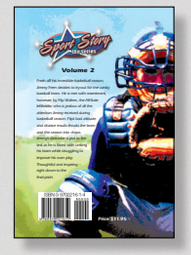
Rap Poems

BY T.A. HOOVER



The Last Eagle

Sport Story Volume 1



Sport Story Volume 2

Sport Story Volume 3

# Psychological Strategies and Effects:

1. Entice kids struggling with literacy into the program with enthusiastic encouragement, laughter and sports. Once students are at ease and feel unpressured, they can begin to read out-loud with confidence. Kids are easily drawn into the group reading sessions by other peer participants – just as Mark Twain's boy hero, Tom Sawyer, convinced his friends to join the fun with his fence painting project.

2. The quickest way to bring people – even kids – together in a common cause is to focus on a common challenge. From the onset of playing sports with the students, we build that common cause, which is to improve our complacent society. We stress that our complacent society allows their younger brothers, sisters and cousins not to read as well as they should, but that together "we" are going to fix it. Kids like this because they can dream about being heroes who are helping fix the country.

3. Kids voluntarily join this program by signing a literacy contract. The contract builds confidence and inspires kids to not tease each other over something so important as reading. *First 25* coaches utilize a passionate, energetic approach to "shock and awe" students into believing in the program and strategy...an approach they rarely experience.

4. *First 25* coaches stress eye-contact when shaking hands and giving compliments. First 25 Inc. understands most at-risk kids are despeate for positive reinforcement and coaches give it to them in abundance. Eye contact is critical in this process. When students finally "see" somebody who sincerely takes an interest in them and encourages them, it builds character, trust and respect.

5. *First 25* coaches always give simple, supportive compliments such as, "Well done, young man," and "Young lady, that is fantastic!" Kids thrive when they hear words of encouragement.

6. *First 25* coaches openly express empathy in order to nurture respect and a good rapore with the students. When students are disruptive or distracted the coach calmly diffuses the situation by relating his personal experiences to students so they understand they are "not alone" and that their feelings are valid. This approach helps reduce the defensive barrier kids erect when they are corrected and directed by parents, teachers and other adults advising them. Students quickly learn and appreciate that the *First 25* coach has "been there" and understands their frustrations and feelings, and ultimately is there to give them support and guidance, not judge them.

7. Everybody wants to feel important. Coaches make all of the kids feel they are part of a larger movement that will help save the country. They believe they can become heroes. This is the strategy we use to inspire older students to return to their elementary schools to tutor and mentor the younger ones. When the older kids start teaching the younger ones to read, we have basically solved the problem. In the future, they will know how to teach their own kids to read.

8. The *First 25* program gives each child a "father-type" role model who they believe will never let them down. This is powerful psychologically because the kids feel they must be valuable if someone cares so much.

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# "Testimonials":

**Sophia Forte' – Teacher (21 years)**

**John Hopkins Middle School – St. Petersburg**

"I've never seen anything close to Todd Hoover's program. I've never seen anyone so interested in helping, especially our population here in John Hopkins. Most of the time they are eager to help all of the good little children but he came right into the real deal. He comes with energy."

**Anan Smith – Social Worker**

**John Hopkins Middle School**

"With his approach, it eliminated all of the behavior problems. These kids, who won't pay attention to a teacher, they're on it, they're focused. They are reading. It's amazing to see."

**Barry Brown – Principal**

**John Hopkins Middle School**

"Kids show up at 7:30 a.m., they shoot a little basketball, hit some baseballs and then come in for 45 minutes and read – uninterrupted. I don't have to say anything else. Where else do they do that?"

**Alonzo Sullivan**

**Cofounder – First25 Inc.**

"To see the transformation of these kids is amazing. Their self-confidence grows as they begin to read better. Todd's strategy of eye-to-eye compliments and enthusiastic, positive reinforcement gives hope and inspiration to these kids, who so desperately need it.

**Danielle Troupe – Teacher**

**John Hopkins Middle School**

"These kids are so used to a different kind of vibe and what he brings in is something new, something different, and it's almost like they want to know more. "Why are you so excited? Why are you so happy about reading?" they ask, and he tells them and it makes them want to show that same attitude as well."

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