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## Battle Creek Man Gearing Up For Journey

July 15, 2007

BATTLE CREEK — A Battle Creek man is gearing up for a long journey, in hopes of raising awareness for parents and kids struggling with the aftermath of divorce.

Robert Pedersen has two little kids, but they don't live with him. After a divorce two and half years ago, Robert became a non-custodial father. He sees his kids about 130 days out of the year.

"It's still heart wrenching just to walk by their rooms when they aren't there, and to have it be empty is very difficult for me," he said.

For the last few years he has worked to turn his personal battle into a grassroots effort by trying to make sure kids in a divorced family don't spend all their time with just one parent.

"Really, we are just about advocating what's best for children and that is equal time with both fit and willing parents", said Pedersen.

Last year, he started a volunteer organization in Michigan called "A Child's Right."

Pedersen is also spreading awareness through a website called daddyblogger.com. The site allows other parents to chat about their own custody battles.

Pedersen said, "Even if my custody situation changes, never will I stop fighting for a child's fundamental right; and that's simply to be loved by both parents that are fit and well."

The next move is a 700 mile bike ride from Lansing to D.C. He'll make the trip with another dad from Michigan, and join thousands of volunteers from all over for a rally at the nation's capitol.

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"The point of that rally, it's a pro family rally, its about reducing divorce rates, and basic fundamental citizen rights, such as being a parents,"he adds.

His passion is attracting a lot of attention here at home.

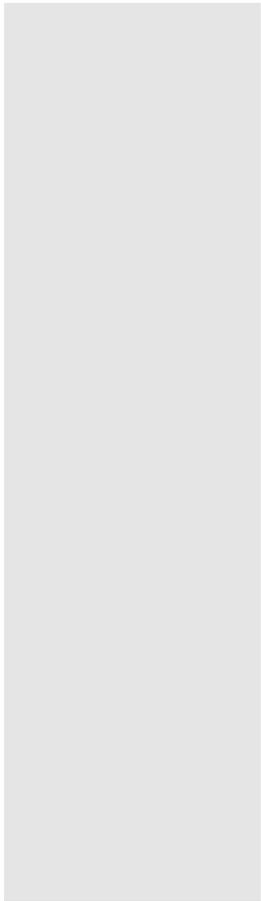
Pedersen was recently titled the runner up in a national search for the 'Hero Dad' by Men's Health Best Life Magazine.

It's an honor he says is helping change the stereotype of divorced parents. Robert adds, "To me, I'm happy to receive it, but I think it's a win for every non-custodial dad and mother because that says even a non-custodial parent can be a hero as well".

The cycling trip begins August 11th. The rally will be held on the 18th.

Pedersen is a big supporter of a Michigan bill that supports a child's fundamental rights for equal time with both parents. The Bill was introduced in April, but is currently held up in the House.

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