



Awana  
**LIFELINE**

**PRISON MINISTRIES START-UP**  
Building a legacy of hope in Christ



**Malachi Dads**  
: for Men



**Hannah's Gift**  
: for Women

The **GOALS** of Awana Lifeline's **Malachi Dads** and **Hannah's Gift** programs are:

- To biblically present God and His plan for history.
- To show how a person becomes a follower of Jesus Christ.
- To provide practical biblical advice for life, marriage, and parenting.
- To give practice in developing godly habits: Bible study, prayer, Scripture memory, accountability, and to participate in sharing such with others.
- To teach the command for and the skill of Discipleship.
- To enable a person to actively disciple their own family and those of others.

## ■ AWANA LIFELINE RESOURCES

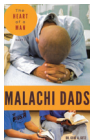
The foundation of Awana Lifeline curriculum is God's Word, the Bible. All materials point inmates in the direction of becoming godly, faith-focused parents.



*Psalm 1*  
3-6 week Bible Study  
(also available in Spanish)



*Malachi Dads: The Heart of a Father*  
12 week Bible Study  
(also available in Spanish)



*Malachi Dads: The Heart of a Man (Part One)*  
12 week Bible Study



*Malachi Dads: The Heart of a Man (Part Two)*  
12 week Bible Study



*Malachi Dads: Family Restoration*  
12 week Bible Study



*Psalm 23*  
3-6 week Bible Study



*Hannah's Gift: The Heart of a Mother*  
12 week Bible Study  
(also available in Spanish)



*Hannah's Gift: Family Restoration*  
12 week Bible Study

## Returning Hearts Celebration

Children of inmates are brought to the prison grounds for a single day of activities so their dads/moms can connect with them to further the process of reconciliation and restoration.



## ■ OUR BIBLICAL MANDATE

Throughout Scripture, God moves with compassion for those in society who are most often forgotten – the sick, marginalized, and imprisoned. While statistics of those incarcerated continues to increase, it is the Church that has been called to be a light of hope.

**James 1:27** *Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

**Hebrews 13:3** *Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.*

**Matthew 25:35-36, 40** *'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and*

*you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.”*

*And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'*

■ **OUR VISION:** that every child would have a godly parent who is building a legacy of faith in Christ.

■ **OUR MISSION:** to glorify God by inspiring and equipping men, women, families, churches, and communities to develop godly parents.

### ■ **AWANA LIFELINE HISTORY AND PURPOSE**

Located one-hour northwest of Baton Rouge, the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola is the largest maximum-security prison in the U.S. More than 6,000 inmates reside there. Many are fathers to a collective 20,000 children. Most are serving life sentences with virtually no hope of ever leaving prison. The good news is that more than 1,200 inmates are Christians.

For over a decade, former warden Burl Cain (who is also a Christian) strived to improve the conditions at Angola. Wardens from across the country now come to him for advice on how to change patterns of inmate violence and apathy. Cain believes that emphasizing faith in Christ helped to turn Angola around.

In October 2003, Warden Cain invited Awana Co-Founder Art Rorheim and President/CEO Jack Eggar to speak to the prison's fellowship of Christian men. What they found was inspiring. The



inmates recognized their role as spiritual leaders of their families and wanted an evangelism and discipleship program to reach their children. Awana Lifeline Ministries was born.

From the seed planted at Angola, Awana Lifeline Ministries has grown to include more prisons. And from those prisons, our programs have now expanded to impact local churches and community-based groups. Why? Because lives are being changed through Jesus Christ.

Children desperately need godly fathers and mothers. Awana Lifeline Ministries is inspiring and equipping men, women, families, churches and communities to develop godly fathers and godly mothers, regardless of their circumstances.

### **Current Awana Lifeline Ministries Statistics**

- Running in more than 25 USA States.
- More than 200 Malachi Dads and Hannah’s Gift programs are presently in operation worldwide.
- Operating in 7 international countries.
- Interest in the program continues to grow internationally.
- Several prisons have/are having Returning Hearts Celebrations each year.

### **■ THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION AND RECONCILIATION**

- 1) According to a report released in February, 2008, for the first time in history more than one in every 100 adults in America are in jail or prison.<sup>1</sup> This accounts for 2,319,258 adults held in American prisons or jails.
- 2) In 2008 alone, states spent more than \$49 billion on corrections, an increase from \$11 billion 20 years before. However, the national recidivism rate remains virtually unchanged, with about half of released inmates returning to jail or prison within three years.<sup>2</sup>
- 3) More than 1.5 million children in the U.S. under the age of 18 – approximately two percent of minor children – have a parent serving a sentence in a state or federal prison.<sup>3</sup> This number increases to 2.2 million if you include jail sentences.

- 4) Forty-six percent of all imprisoned parents lived with at least one of their minor children, prior to entry.<sup>4</sup>
- 5) The average age of children with an incarcerated parent is eight years old; 22 percent of the children are under the age of five.<sup>5</sup>
- 6) According to statistics from the Department of Justice, children of incarcerated parents are seven times more likely to wind up behind bars.<sup>6</sup>
- 7) Parental incarceration created additional challenges for children and families often resulting in:
  - Financial instability and material hardship, with financial problems the most severe for already vulnerable families.<sup>7</sup>
  - Instability in family relationships.<sup>8</sup>
  - School behavior and performance problems.<sup>9</sup>
  - Shame, social and institutional stigma.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Pew Charitable Trusts, "One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008," available online at [<http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/One%20in%20100.pdf>].

<sup>2</sup> C. J. Mumola, (August 2000), "Incarcerated parents and their children." U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Washington, DC, accessed 04/17/08 at [<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/iptc.pdf>].

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> C.F. Harrison, et. al, "Focus on Children with Incarcerated Parents," (2005).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, accessed 05/15/09 at [<http://www.ojp.gov/bjs/abstract/pptmc.htm>].

<sup>7</sup> I. Garfinkel, A. Geller, & C. Cooper, "Parental Incarceration in Fragile Families: Summary of Three Year Findings." An unpublished report to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> T.E. Hanlon, "Vulnerability of children of incarcerated addict mothers: Implications for preventive intervention." *Children and Youth Services Review*, 2005, Volume 27, 67– 84.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



## ■ BATTLING THE CYCLE OF CRIME

To combat this cycle of crime, prisons are joining efforts with Awana Lifeline Ministries to offer rehabilitated — yet still incarcerated — fathers and mothers a chance to have a positive impact on the next generation. This is accomplished primarily through three Awana Lifeline ministries.

The combination of **Malachi Dads**, **Hannah's Gift** and **Returning Hearts** programs has had the most effective results in the lives of inmates, their children and the guardian family to which they belong. For this we credit God and the faithful work of chaplains, wardens and church volunteers.

**Awana Lifeline Ministries equips churches and parents** to build a legacy of hope in Christ for children of inmates.

- We empower local churches with resources that build a life-changing prison ministry.
- Fathers and mothers are reunited with their children.
- We encourage an ongoing connection between fathers, mothers and children that results in better choices and futures for the children of inmates.

- We equip churches with biblically based, hands-on training.
- We provide gospel-centered products and event resources.
- We seek to connect churches with other compassion ministries that have a heart for inmates and their families.
- We seek to disciple inmates so they are empowered to spiritually lead their children and families.

## ■ **AWANA LIFELINE MINISTRY RESULTS AND GROWTH**

According to the caregivers of children who attended the Returning Hearts Celebration in 2007 at the Louisiana State Penitentiary, 67 percent have observed positive behavior changes in their children. For example, they have seen a greater interest in talking to or visiting the father and asking them questions about God. Also, an increase in academic improvement was observed by guardians.

Further evidence supports this on a broader scale. In addition to lowering the likelihood of recidivism among incarcerated parents, there is evidence that maintaining contact with one's incarcerated parent improves a child's emotional response to the incarceration and supports parent-child attachment. God is at work throughout the country with Awana Lifeline Ministries' message of biblical fathering, mothering, brokenness and reconciliation between an inmate father, mother and their children.





## ■ PROGRAM PLANNING PHASES

### for Malachi Dads and Hannah's Gift

PHASE 1 : Preparation

PHASE 2 : Investigation

PHASE 3 : Recruitment of Volunteers

PHASE 4 : Orientation

PHASE 5 : Selection and Training

PHASE 6 : Implementation

PHASE 7 : Evaluation and Restart

### PHASE 1 : Preparation

Checklist:

- ✓ Pray, Pray, Pray
- ✓ Read Burl Cain's book ***Cain's Redemption: A Story of Hope and Transformation in America's Bloodiest Prison*** by Dennis Shere
- ✓ Read ***Equip Leaders: Small Group Prison Ministry*** by Greg and Donna Carlson (optional)

### PHASE 2 : Investigation

Checklist:

- ✓ Have an informal conversation with the Prison Chaplain or Warden regarding their interest.
- ✓ Read over all the materials on the Awana Lifeline website at [www.awanalifeline.org](http://www.awanalifeline.org).
- ✓ Pray and ask others to pray.
- ✓ Decision Point: Determine whether to have the program or not.

### PHASE 3 : Recruitment of Volunteers

Checklist:

- ✓ Determine how many volunteers you will need:
  - Instructors (1 per class)
  - Facilitators (1 per 5-6 students)

- ✓ Establish criteria needed to have a successful program that is God centered and God honoring.
- ✓ Do the due-diligent background checks (prison's responsibility)

#### **PHASE 4 : Orientation**

Once a decision has been made to implement the program, consider the key stakeholders and consider dates to begin. Begin to form an advisory board that includes wardens, correctional officers, chaplains, ministry partners, and volunteers.

Checklist:

- ✓ Determine your stakeholders.
- ✓ Set time to meet with and explain the program to the stakeholder(s).
- ✓ Determine if you will hold a 3-, 12-, 24- or 36-week program.
- ✓ Get support from volunteers and ask them to play a role.
- ✓ Understand the cost of the program and where you will get the resources to pay for the program.
- ✓ Set a 1-4 hour training time using the Equip Leaders book.
- ✓ Decision Point: Determine an inmate orientation date for the Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift program, after having the needed number of volunteers.

#### **PHASE 5 : Selection and Training**

This is a critically important phase as the prison or ministry begins to select the inmates who will participate in the program. The Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift Leadership Team should be composed of inmate leaders (if the Prison will permit) as well as volunteers. There will be a training session (1 to 4 hours) for the volunteers before the program starts.

Checklist:

- ✓ Gather together the needed forms:
  - Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift Flyer (to announce the program to inmates and volunteers)
  - Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift Application Form (for signing up interested inmates).

- ✓ Determine how many Dads/Moms you want in the program.
- ✓ Schedule an Inmate Orientation (provide inmates with the application forms).
- ✓ Pray for and select the volunteers who will lead this program.
- ✓ Provide a training session for your volunteers using Equip Leaders book (1-4 hours). Include curriculum plan and all accountability forms.
- ✓ Pray for the men and women who will be in the program.
- ✓ Provide the training for the Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift Leadership Team.
- ✓ Decision Point: Have confident and committed volunteers who are well trained.

### **PHASE 6 : Implementation**

Checklist:

- ✓ Purchase the Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift materials. (see website book store: [www.awanalifeline.org](http://www.awanalifeline.org))
- ✓ Prepare, prepare, and prepare.
- ✓ Schedule and hold your first Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift week (introduce the Pledge).
- ✓ Determine bi-weekly meeting time with Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift volunteers and advisory team.
- ✓ Decision Point: Set a graduation/celebration date that is approved by the prison.

### **PHASE 7 : Evaluation and Restart**

Awana Lifeline headquarters wants to know you have implemented this important program.

Checklist:

- ✓ Print out certificates for all Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift graduates. (see website book store: [www.awanalifeline.org](http://www.awanalifeline.org))
- ✓ Prepare for graduation and celebrate the accomplishments of the men/women with their families, if possible. Provide the prison with an evaluation of the program.

- ✓ Determine if the prison or ministry wants to do another year of the Malachi Dads or Hannah's Gift Program.
- ✓ Gather your advisory team and volunteers to evaluate and determine a timeframe for the next start-up.
- ✓ Decision Point: Determine ways you will improve the program and thank God for how He worked.

## ■ OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Please be assured that you are not in this alone. Awana Lifeline Ministries stands with you in prayer. We would love to be a resource for you, so do not hesitate to let us know how we might be able to support you through this endeavor.

**Feedback:** Please fill us in on how it went.

**[www.awanalifeline.org](http://www.awanalifeline.org)**

**1-888-944-4292**

