



ALPHA

IN PRISONS

‘Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison’

Hebrews 13 | Alpha in Prisons

Alpha in Prisons **provides churches with a well-established and professional tool to reach out to those in prison or youth detention centres**, offering them the opportunity to explore the Christian faith, ask questions and share their point of view in an informal, friendly and open environment.

Our vision is that Alpha would help to **bridge the gap** between the church and prisons, extending the opportunity for **ALL** people to **explore faith, life and meaning**.

Our prayer is that Alpha would be run frequently in a prison, **enabling relationships** to be established and providing greater opportunities for prison leavers to **connect into community post-release**.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN PRISONS ACROSS AUSTRALIA?



As of 2021, there are a total of 42,970 adults imprisoned across our nation. An increase of 5% since 2020*. We also have 819 youth (10-17) in detention on an average night across Australia**.



The message of hope is needed at a time when all hope seems to be lost. 40% of the adult population in prisons are prisoners without prior adult imprisonment*.



The number of women in prison has been increasing and at a faster rate than the number of men in prison***.

35

The median age for all prisoners is around 35years old. *

“Many people in prison feel a desperate sense of loss and have a deep hunger for meaning and purpose in life. We believe that Jesus Christ is the only one who can satisfy this hunger.”

– Revd. Paul Cowley, MBE | Pioneer of Alpha Prisons

WHAT DOES AN ALPHA SESSION IN PRISON LOOK LIKE?

Alpha is a series of interactive in person group sessions, typically run over several weeks, and can be adapted to fit within the timescale available in prisons. This can also be done in an online space where technology is available within the prisons.

No two Alpha's look the same but they all have 3 main elements:

Connection

Whether in person or virtually all sessions start with a time to connect which is a great way to build community and get to know each other in prison.

Content

The talks are designed to engage and inspire conversation on big issues around faith. Usually around twenty to thirty minutes long for adults, and with a different format for youth, they can be played as a video or given as a live talk.

Conversation

At Alpha the goal is to love people well. It's all about a space to be real, open and authentic, where questions are encouraged and friendships are built.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF ALPHA IN PRISONS?

"I was a bit sceptical about starting Alpha cause I've never really believed in anything other than what is right in front of me. I have now let the Holy Spirit into my life and if it wasn't for Alpha I never would have considered it. I am wanting to change my life and Alpha has given me the motivation to do so!"

- Alpha guest, Women's prison (Bre-Ann)

"I've learned how to be more patient, more kind, more loving and humble. All this is due to the fact that I participated in Alpha".

- Alpha guest, Women's prison (Koko)

"At this moment I'm a prisoner. But this does not define me. Being a prisoner, I still got the opportunity to open my doors for God to show me that he is unjudging, kind and most of all, forgiving. It's because of Alpha that I am willing to pursue my faith in God further."

- Alpha guest, Women's prison (Cherise)

"I have found ways of coping with my past and finding buried issues that have driven me in negative ways."

- Alpha guest, Men's prison (Calem)



“The fruitfulness and blessing that we have seen from running Alpha in prisons is significant for Kingdom expansion.

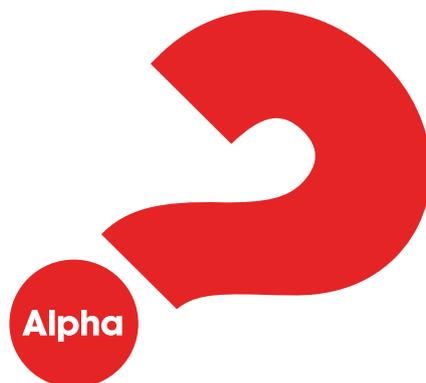
I would highly recommend local churches getting engaged in such a ministry.”

- Tim (Senior Pastor, Dreambuilders)

If you're interested in knowing more we'd love to hear from you!

Connect with our National Prisons Director to discuss getting started; for any current opportunities and for training information. For security and best practice, it's vital that context training is undertaken. Contact Liza at liza.kelder@alpha.org.au or 0404 133 863

To find out more information about Alpha visit us at alpha.org.au



REFERENCES

*<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/prisoners-australia/latest-release>

**<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/youth-justice/youth-detention-population-in-australia-2021/contents/summary>

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