



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### FOREVERFAMILY-LOUISVILLE (KY) MEN'S PROGRAM MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN ONE YEAR

April 15, 2009 (Louisville, KY) – *Foreverfamily Louisville* will celebrate the first anniversary of their Men's Program on Saturday, April 25 2009 at the Dismas Transitional Center Portland. Only a year in operation, the program has graduated 50 men and reconnected over 150 children with their fathers through visitation. The Men's Program targets incarcerated fathers who have children 18 years of age and under; with 18 months or less to release. The intensive 10 week course features classes and workshops on developing an emotional connection with children, how to cultivate a parent-child relationship, and training for re-entry into the community.

According to Robert Lanning, Dismas Portland Director, it has been a positive experience for everyone. *"The residents want to attend these classes, in fact, they look forward to them. What sets the Men's Program apart is that it is interactive. The men actively participate in the classes. This transfers to other relationships as well. We see them becoming more open with their counselors and having more respect for others."*

James Leavell, program manager, says the program is a 'win' for the fathers, children and the community. *"This series of classes teaches them (the fathers) how to be a man and father. They find out that they have value, learn to believe in their abilities as a father and start taking responsibility for their family. The community gets productive new members of society. These fathers are ready for employment and ready to connect to their family. The kids get two parents. Parents that are active, healthy and engaged in the children's lives. This type of program is long overdue",* says Leavell. *"You don't find many programs that address the needs of men. We are breaking new ground."*

Having the Dismas Charities partner with Foreverfamily is one of the keys to the success of the program. Known as leaders in the community based re-entry programs, Lanning believes there is synergy between the two organizations. *"We are thrilled that Foreverfamily is funding this*

*program. As time goes on, more and more can benefit. Helping male inmates is not attractive, but we are helping kids as well. [We want the kids to know] although you have a Dad in prison, there are people that care about you and your father.”*

***Foreverfamily*** is a non-profit community based organization that assists inmates, their children and other family members in maintaining those critically important family ties that can become strained during a parent’s incarceration. ***Foreverfamily***’s efforts focus on children with an incarcerated parent or parents, caregivers and relatives as they strive to remain a family.

***Foreverfamily*** works to ensure that all children have the opportunity to be surrounded by the love of family.

***Dismas Charities*** is one of the nation’s largest not-for-profit providers specializing community-based re-entry programs. The goal of ***Dismas Charities, Inc.*** is to prepare individuals to lead lawful and productive lives upon their return to the community.

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