

Junee inmates hear Angry's tales



AFTER years of rock 'n' roll excess, it took the birth of his first daughter for Angry Anderson to make a positive change in his life.

"The birth of my daughter gave me a reason to stop poisoning myself and hurting people around me," he said to a captivated audience at Junee Correctional Centre's (JCC) cultural centre.

"I made a conscious decision to no longer be part of the problem and instead be part of the solution."

Angry shared the motivation to change in an interview which has become part of a virtual mentoring program, What Makes a Man a Man in Contemporary Australia.

He's joined by 15 other well-known Australian men, including former High Court judge Michael Kirby, Peter Fitzsimmons, actor and former inmate Dean Daley-Jones and former Wagga policeman Terry O'Connell.

"It's a great opportunity for a group of committed people to help others make a change in their lives," Mr O'Connell said.

The new mentoring program was launched at Junee Correctional Centre, after the business which operates the centre, the GEO Group, contributed funding to create the program.

Issues covered include anger management, relationships, role models, fear, loss, indigenous issues, violence, strategies, discrimination, respect, gambling, alcohol and responsibility.

What Makes a Man a Man is the brainchild of psychologist Agi O'Hara.

Ms O'Hara said she had approached several organisations who had all believed the program was a good idea and then met GEO's health promotion officer at JCC Matthew Canny, who helped make it a reality.

For many inmates at JCC a lack of a supportive family environment has contributed to their incarceration and Angry Anderson said he saw many of the same "ingredients" in his life before he made changes as some inmates.

"If I didn't do this I'm not living up to the promise I made my daughter," he said.

"This virtual mentoring helps people realise there are people out there who care people who give a s---."

While the program has been launched at Junee Correctional Centre, Ms O'Hara was confident it would be able to be used by not just inmates but by young and old men from high school age to men in their 50s.

The website www.what-makes-a-man.org.au contains not only parts of the interviews, but can be used as an online resource and discussion place for men.