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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mr Samuel Narrowway
General Manager of Second Chances Inc.
Friday, 14 August 2026

VULNERABLE CHILDREN, PRISONERS AND FAMILIES LEFT WITHOUT SUPPORT; SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT THROWS 147 CHILDREN OUT IN THE DARK AND COLD.

It is with great sadness that I am releasing this statement to confirm that on the 6th of August 2026, Second Chances Incorporated Chairman, Mr G Hennessy, attended a meeting at the request of A/Director Narelle Jenke, from the Department of Human Services SA, to be told that due to “budget constraints”, the contract to run Second Chances Family Support is to cease and will not receive any further funding as of 31 December 2026.

Second Chances is a non-profit volunteer organisation supporting people **affected by the justice system** that are **in prison**, the **families and children of parents that are in prison**, **victims of Domestic and Family Violence**, and people affected by **homelessness**. We help and advocate for these cohorts with a range of custom-designed programs to create brighter, better futures. We are committed to restoring hope in lives and communities across South Australia. Established in 2015 by co-founders Helen (*retired*) and the late Geoff Glanville, Second Chances Inc. is founded on Christian values of respect, understanding, compassion, commitment, and integrity. We are an incorporated association under the Associations Act and as a Public Benevolent Institution with the Australian Tax Office, we have Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. We are also registered with [the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission \(ACNC\)](http://the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)).

Second Chances is the **ONLY** organisation in South Australia that specialises with the minority cohort of “Children of Prisoners”. No other service like ours assists these “invisible victims of crime”.

Funding being cut from this service will have a detrimental effect on the community, the children and families, the parents in prison, and the charity. If we cannot replace \$300,000.00 per year to run the program and pay for operational expenses that the program needs to run, the Charity may be wound up from liquidation.

We are seeking the support of the generous and supportive community.



Formerly Prison Fellowship SA for twenty years. Now Second Chances Inc since 1 February 2015



2021

restoring hope

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Second Chances warns that the closure or forced withdrawal of its services would leave some of South Australia's most vulnerable people without a critical support network — and could ultimately cost taxpayers far more than continuing the organisation's work.

South Australia — Second Chances is warning that the consequences of the organisation being forced to cease operating would extend far beyond the loss of a charity.

It would mean vulnerable children losing support, families affected by incarceration losing practical assistance, prisoners losing access to services that help them maintain connections with their families, and government agencies losing an organisation that has spent almost two decades working with people affected by the justice system.

The organisation says the current situation raises serious questions about what happens to vulnerable clients if Second Chances can no longer provide these services — and whether government agencies have considered the social and financial consequences of allowing that to occur.

Second Chances Inc. Chairman Gary Hennessy has written to the Minister for Human Services, Katrine Hildyard, and Minister for Correctional Services, Michael Brown, outlining what he describes as two serious threats to the organisation's ability to continue its work. The first concerns the withdrawal of funding for services supporting children of incarcerated parents.

The second concerns the suspension of engagement between Second Chances and the Department for Correctional Services.

According to the organisation, these two decisions have placed significant pressure on its ability to continue supporting people affected by incarceration across South Australia.

CHILDREN COULD PAY THE HIGHEST PRICE

One of the most serious concerns raised by Second Chances is the impact that the loss of services could have on children whose parents are incarcerated or otherwise involved with the justice system. Second Chances has been providing assistance to children of incarcerated parents for nearly two decades.

The organisation says it was recently informed by Acting Director Narelle Jenke from DHS Child & Family Support that, despite signing a new three-year contract to continue providing social work and youth support services to children of prisoners, funding would cease after only six months.

The organisation was advised that the decision was the result of budget constraints rather than performance concerns. Second Chances argues that withdrawing preventative support from these children could have consequences that extend well into their adult lives. Research cited in the organisation's correspondence highlights the significantly elevated risk of children of offenders becoming involved in the justice system themselves.

The letter states that general population estimates place formal justice-system contact by late adolescence at approximately 13–15%, while rates for children of chronic or organised crime offenders have been reported at around 44%.

For Second Chances, these figures demonstrate why early intervention matters.

The organisation's position is simple:

- If a child is already living with the consequences of a parent's imprisonment, removing a service specifically designed to support that child risks allowing the cycle of disadvantage and offending to continue.
- These children are not responsible for their parent's offending.
- They should not be treated as collateral damage of the justice system.
- They are children who may already be experiencing disruption to their family life, financial hardship, emotional distress and social isolation.

Removing targeted support can mean removing one of the few opportunities available to intervene before those circumstances become entrenched.

A SMALL INVESTMENT COULD PREVENT A MUCH LARGER COST

Second Chances says the financial argument for withdrawing the service also deserves scrutiny. The organisation's current contract is worth just over \$200,000 per year. The letter compares that investment with the cost of keeping even one young person out of the justice system.

The correspondence cites Productivity Commission data indicating that youth detention can cost approximately \$1.12 million to \$1.21 million per young offender per year, reflecting the intensive supervision and specialised care involved.

That creates a stark question for government:

What is the cost of not intervening?

If targeted support costing approximately \$200,000 a year helps prevent even a small number of young people from entering the justice system, the potential social and financial return could be substantial.

The consequences of youth involvement in the justice system do not necessarily end when a sentence ends.

They can include further offending, disrupted education, unemployment, homelessness, substance misuse, damaged family relationships and ongoing contact with government and justice services.

Preventative support therefore has the potential to be considerably cheaper than responding after a young person has already entered the justice system. Second Chances believes government should consider these longer-term consequences when making funding decisions.

“TRANSITIONING” CLIENTS IS NOT THE SAME AS SUPPORTING THEM

The Department for Human Services offered assistance to Second Chances to transition the children currently being supported to other services.

Second Chances declined that offer.

The reason is fundamental: according to the organisation, it is currently the only organisation working specifically with this cohort. The organisation argues that simply transferring children elsewhere would not necessarily constitute continuity of care. It could instead mean that children who have developed relationships with trusted workers suddenly lose those relationships. For children affected by parental incarceration, trust and consistency can be particularly important.

These are young people whose lives may already be characterised by disruption. Second Chances says that handing them over without a suitable equivalent service would amount, in its view, to abandoning them rather than providing a genuine transition.

THE IMPACT WOULD EXTEND TO FAMILIES

The consequences would not be confined to individual children. When a parent is imprisoned, the impact can extend across the entire family. Children may need assistance understanding what is happening to their parent. Parents and caregivers may need help maintaining appropriate relationships between children and incarcerated family members. Families can also face practical difficulties associated with incarceration.

Second Chances's work has included practical assistance to prisoners, including help with banking, storing belongings, and organising birthday and Christmas presents for their children. Those services may appear simple. But for someone entering or leaving prison, they can be enormously important.

For a child, receiving a birthday present from an incarcerated parent can be a tangible reminder that their parent has not forgotten them. For a prisoner, maintaining a connection with their children can provide motivation to make positive changes. For families, practical assistance can reduce some of the chaos created by incarceration.

When those services disappear, the consequences are felt by multiple people.

PRISONERS COULD ALSO LOSE AN IMPORTANT LINK TO THEIR FAMILIES

Second Chances says its volunteers have provided assistance to prisoners for years. Some volunteers have been involved for many years and have developed extensive knowledge of the practical difficulties faced by prisoners and their families.

The organisation says this assistance has included:

- Banking support;
- Assistance with storing personal belongings;
- Organising birthday presents for prisoners' children;
- Organising Christmas presents for prisoners' children;
- Helping maintain family connections; and
- Providing practical support to people navigating the consequences of incarceration.

The Department for Correctional Services suspended engagement between the Department and Second Chances following an investigation into the lived experience of a Director and subsequent loss of confidence in the governance of the charity, in February 2026. The organisation was subsequently advised that the issue related to an alleged security breach at Yatala Labour Prison.

Six months later, Second Chances says the matter remains unresolved.

The organisation's concern is that the actions of one individual have effectively resulted in the exclusion of the broader organisation and its volunteers from every prison in South Australia. Second Chances says its volunteers were not involved in the alleged incident.

THE BIGGEST LOSERS COULD BE THE PEOPLE THE SYSTEM IS SUPPOSED TO HELP

Second Chances says one of the most troubling aspects of the situation is the apparent contradiction between being excluded from the correctional system while Departmental social workers continue to seek assistance from the organisation. According to the letter, despite the exclusion, DCS social workers have continued reaching out to Second Chances for assistance. The organisation says it has also received multiple referrals from other organisations seeking help for children of prisoners.

That creates an important question:

- If government services continue to identify a need for Second Chances's assistance, why is the organisation being prevented from working directly with the system?

The organisation says the contradiction demonstrates that there remains an unmet need.

- People are still requiring assistance.
- Children are still affected by parental incarceration.
- Prisoners still need practical support.
- Families still need help maintaining relationships.

Yet the organisation providing that assistance has effectively been locked out.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF SECOND CHANCES CLOSED?

Second Chances believes the consequences would be felt throughout the community.

A closure would potentially result in:

1. Children losing specialised support. Children affected by parental incarceration could lose access to social work and youth support specifically designed around their circumstances.
2. Increased risk of intergenerational offending. Without early intervention, vulnerable children could face increased exposure to the factors associated with later justice-system involvement.
3. Families becoming more isolated. Families may have fewer organisations able to help them navigate the practical and emotional consequences of incarceration.
4. Prisoners losing practical assistance. People entering or leaving prison could lose access to assistance with banking, belongings and other practical issues.
5. Children losing opportunities to maintain relationships with incarcerated parents. Birthday and Christmas programs and other family connection initiatives could disappear.
6. Greater pressure on government services. Work currently performed by volunteers and community workers could ultimately fall back onto government agencies.
7. Increased pressure on other community organisations. Other charities and community organisations could be forced to absorb clients without necessarily having the specialist capacity or resources to support them.
8. Vulnerable people falling through the gaps. People who do not fit neatly into existing service categories could find themselves without anyone to turn to.
9. Reduced early intervention. Government could be left responding to problems after they escalate rather than investing in preventative support.
10. Potentially greater long-term costs to taxpayers. The cost of incarceration, youth detention, homelessness, crisis intervention and repeated justice-system involvement can vastly exceed the cost of early intervention.

THIS IS ABOUT MORE THAN ONE ORGANISATION

Second Chances says this should not be viewed simply as a dispute between a charity and government departments. It is fundamentally about what happens to vulnerable South Australians when community services disappear. The organisation's concern is that the people who will ultimately experience the greatest consequences are not the decision-makers.

They are the children.

The families.

The prisoners attempting to maintain relationships with their children.

The people trying to rebuild their lives after incarceration.

And the communities that bear the consequences when people are unable to successfully transition away from the justice system.

Second Chances has spent almost two decades working with people affected by incarceration.

Its work has been based on the principle that people can change, families can be strengthened and cycles of disadvantage can be interrupted.

The organisation argues that closing services designed to achieve those outcomes risks undermining the very objectives of rehabilitation, crime prevention and community safety.

A WARNING FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The organisation is now asking South Australians to consider what happens when preventative community services are removed. When a child loses a support worker, there may be no immediate headline. When a family loses access to a volunteer, there may be no immediate crisis. When a prisoner can no longer send a birthday present to their child, there may be no government statistic capturing the emotional impact. But collectively, these seemingly small losses can have significant consequences.

They can mean a child becoming more disconnected.

A family becoming more fractured.

A prisoner losing motivation to maintain positive relationships.

A vulnerable young person becoming more exposed to the circumstances that can lead to justice-system involvement.

And eventually, a problem that could have been prevented becoming a much more expensive problem for government and the community.

SECOND CHANCES CALLS FOR ACTION

Second Chances is calling for the South Australian Government to urgently reconsider the decisions affecting the organisation's ability to provide services.

The organisation is specifically calling for:

1. The decision to cease funding for its children's social work and youth support services after six months to be reviewed and reversed.
2. A clear resolution to the suspension of engagement between DCS and Second Chances.
3. Recognition of the specialist role community organisations play in supporting prisoners, children and families.
4. A proper assessment of what will happen to existing clients if services are withdrawn.
5. An assessment of the long-term financial consequences of withdrawing preventative services.
6. A transparent process for addressing any legitimate security concerns without unnecessarily excluding unrelated volunteers and services.
7. Assurance that children currently receiving support will not simply be transferred elsewhere without equivalent, specialised and continuous support.

THE QUESTION GOVERNMENT MUST ANSWER

Second Chances says the central question is not simply: "Can government afford to continue funding this service?"

The more important question is: "Can South Australia afford not to?"

A relatively modest investment in early intervention may help prevent far greater expenditure later. The organisation says that if even one young person is prevented from entering youth detention, the potential financial saving could exceed the entire annual cost of its current children's service many times over. But the financial argument is only one part of the story.

Behind every statistic is a child.

Behind every prison number is a family.

Behind every prisoner is a person who may still have children waiting for them.

And behind every child affected by parental incarceration is an opportunity to intervene before the cycle repeats itself.

SECOND CHANCES: KEEPING FAMILIES CONNECTED, SUPPORTING PEOPLE TO CHANGE AND BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES

Second Chances believes rehabilitation is not simply about what happens inside a prison. It is also about what happens outside the prison walls. It is about whether a prisoner can maintain a relationship with their children.

Whether a child can receive appropriate support.

Whether a family can survive the disruption caused by incarceration.

Whether someone leaving prison has people and services around them to help rebuild their life.

And whether communities invest in people before their circumstances deteriorate to the point where government intervention becomes unavoidable.

The organisation says closing or effectively disabling those services would not make the underlying problems disappear. It would simply move those problems elsewhere — into families, schools, emergency services, homelessness services, the justice system and ultimately the broader community.

Second Chances is asking the South Australian Government to ensure that vulnerable children and families are not the ones who pay the price for budget constraints or administrative decisions.

THE SOLUTION

Second Chances asks that the Department for Human Services review and reverse its position immediately or we seek the assistance of the community with a generous officer from the private sector to fund the program at \$300,000.00 per year.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Narrowway', written over the 'Kind Regards' text.

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