

# Child sex abuse gangs could have assaulted ONE MILLION youngsters in the UK

Lucy Thornton | 5 February 2015

Rotherham's Labour MP Sarah Champion describes it as a "national disaster" and is demanding a taskforce to fight the "horror"

There could be up to a million victims of child sexual exploitation in the UK, it is feared.

[Rotherham's Labour MP Sarah Champion](#) describes it as a "national disaster" and is demanding a taskforce to fight the "horror."

In an exclusive interview with the Daily Mirror the shaken MP has told how she 'nearly lost her mind' after victims turned to her for help - unable to trust the police or local council.

She is currently getting an average of 10 victims a week coming to her for help.

Fighting back tears she told how she feared having a nervous breakdown worried about failing the "amazing women" and her horror after finding out a manual for grooming existed for paedophiles.

The MP was speaking after the Government announced they were [taking over Rotherham Council](#) for a "fresh start" and sending five commissioners to run the troubled authority.

Inspectors were called in after the Jay Report last August [revealed the borough had let down](#) 1,400 victims of child sexual exploitation.

"The day after the first report broke the victims started coming to me. They couldn't go to the police, they couldn't go to the council. So who do you go to?"

"For the first three weeks I generally thought I was losing my mind. I nearly lost my mind because of the level of depravity and horror.

"Listening to what these, now women, had gone through and how they were just left discarded, to flounder on their own.

"It was utterly mind-blowing and then the problem I had was that I was getting new cases coming to me, ones that hadn't been reported which they wanted me to report. But I didn't know who I could trust in the police to report it.

"There was this parallel universe going on and it is mindblowing.

"I generally thought I was getting close to having a nervous breakdown because I couldn't process these two worlds going on and that anybody in a professional capacity would not have acted about what was going on. It's obscene."

Talking about her concerns of corruption within the [police force](#) she pointed out the IPCC started their investigation within a month they had suspended 14 police officers.

And she said one senior police officer told her they didn't know why she was so surprised, telling Sarah: 'Paedophiles become teachers and people that prey on the vulnerable go into the police.'

Talking of the cases she has encountered, she told of one horrific case when a girl from Rotherham was traced to a terraced street in Blackpool by youth worker Jane Senior who she employs.

"She knew where the girl was because of the queue of men down the street and up the stairs," The MP said.

She said she turned to the Government five months ago to ask for emergency funding for her town's victims to help the rebuild their lives.

"I went to see [David Cameron](#) this week and he said he would look into it.

"It feels like the Government is leaving Rotherham to die. It feels like we're not on their doorstep so it doesn't matter."

She welcomed experts coming into Rotherham to help them but said the Government should have stepped in after the Jay Report, six months ago.

"We would have been able to move forward as a town much quicker," she said.

"There are hundreds of thousands and I think there could be up to a million victims of exploitation nationwide, including right now. Girls in the process of being groomed," she said.

"I have met people from all over the country.

"If you just think we know at least four big cases each with a couple of thousand each in smallest towns. It's extraordinary.

"I was talking to sixth formers on Monday and all of the girls there had either personal or direct experience of people trying to manipulate them through sexting. You have online grooming.

"It's seriously a nationwide issue.

This week she met David Cameron to ask for funds to help support Rotherham's victims and plead for a taskforce.

"I want a national taskforce because unless we get that, what's happened in Rochdale, what's happened here, will just go on. The nightmare will go on.

Sarah Champion became Rotherham MP in 2012 after facing a protest walkout by members furious an Asian councillor had not been selected.

She says that attitude was indicative of the problems in the town.

Sending a message to the victims of abuse, she is trying to help, she said: "I'm here for you and you are amazing for what you have done to help save this town.

"I think we need to remember there are victims across all the different communities.

"It is the most hideous form of abuse because victims generally believe the person loves them - then it's like a double abuse."

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/child-sex-abuse-gangs-could-5114029>