



House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

**Press Release – Immediate Release**

**Sarah Champion**  
**Member of Parliament for Rotherham**  
**Shadow Minister for Preventing Abuse and Domestic Violence**  
**Monday 05<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

**Sarah Champion MP challenges the Government to act urgently to prevent online child abuse.**

Sarah Champion, Shadow Minister for Preventing Abuse and Domestic Violence and MP for Rotherham, today challenged the Government on its record of preventing online child abuse.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Sarah asked Home Office Minister Ben Wallace MP:

*“The Minister will know that online child abuse has reached unprecedented levels and is increasing.*

*The Internet Watch Foundation states that there has been a 417% increase in reports of child sexual abuse images and video since 2013. With CEOP stating 50,000 people in the UK downloaded or shared child abuse images in 2012.*

*However, children and parents are woefully underprepared to recognise or prevent abuse and exploitation online, despite the fact that 65% of 12 to 15 year olds own a smart phone.*

*What does the Minister plan to do to address and prevent online child abuse?”*

Sarah Champion MP has consistently campaigned for the Government to ‘get a grip’ on the hidden danger of online child abuse.

Statistics prove that the danger faced by children online is overwhelming, with abusers targeting and grooming children through apps and games. Yet many parents are often unaware of those dangers, with almost half of young people living at home reporting that their parents only know some of what they are doing online.

Sarah Champion MP is campaigning for the Government to do more to prevent on- and offline child abuse through her Dare2Care campaign. With over half of pupils not learning how to recognise grooming or sexual exploitation, Ms Champion is calling for:

- The introduction of compulsory, age-appropriate resilience and relationships education in schools to teach children how to recognise abuse
- Face-to-face, online and written support for parents and professionals to give them the tools, knowledge and confidence they need to keep their children safe online

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

1. Sarah Champion is the Labour MP for Rotherham. Since her election in 2012 she has led the campaign to prevent child sexual exploitation and child abuse. She launched the Dare2Care

campaign in January 2016 to bring together different strands of the campaign against child abuse and violence in young people's relationships and to focus on prevention. On November 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, she will be publishing a national strategy for preventing child abuse and relationship violence:  
[www.dare2care.org.uk](http://www.dare2care.org.uk)

2. The full transcript from today's Home Office questions can be found on Hansard:  
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/search/MemberContributions?memberId=4267&type=Spoken>
3. The Internet Watch Foundation, there has been a 417% increase in reports of child sexual abuse images and video since 2013. More information here:  
<https://www.iwf.org.uk/assets/media/annual-reports/IWF%202015%20Annual%20Report%20Final%20for%20web.pdf>
4. CEOP reports that around 50,000 people in the UK downloaded or shared online images of child abuse in 2012. More information here:  
[https://ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/CEOP\\_TACSEA2013\\_240613%20FINAL.pdf](https://ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/CEOP_TACSEA2013_240613%20FINAL.pdf)
5. Barnardo's reports that almost half of young people living at home report that their parents only know some of what they are doing online. More information here:  
[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/news/press\\_releases.htm?ref=110689](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/news/press_releases.htm?ref=110689)
6. Barnardo's reports that 78% of 12 to 15 year olds own a mobile phone. More information here:  
[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/onlineshop/pdf/digital\\_dangers\\_report.pdf](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/onlineshop/pdf/digital_dangers_report.pdf)
7. The Sex Ed Forum reports that 53% of pupils have not learned how to recognise grooming or sexual exploitation. More information here:  
<http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/media/34250/Head-or-tails-SRE-2016.pdf>
8. It was reported in February that David Cameron had personally blocked plans for compulsory relationships education in schools. Reports at the time suggested that both Theresa May, the new Prime Minister, and Justine Greening, the new Education Secretary, had been in favour:  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/david-cameron-just-blocked-compulsory-sex-education---and-the-wo/>