

Help us grow *The* **POSITIVE**[Click Here](#)

The **POSITIVE**

[News & Politics](#)[Sport](#)[Business](#)[Entertainment](#)[Art & Design](#)[Food & Drink](#)[Health & Wellness](#)[Children](#)[Travel](#)[Science & Technology](#)

Search...

Search

Follow Us



Subscribe by email

[Sponsor The Positive](#)[Advertise with The Positive](#)

Savile scandal prompts thousands to come forward and face recovery

By [Annie Makoff](#) | [News & Politics](#)

Photo: © Grant Smith/Corbis

**A NEW ONLINE
MOTORBIKE
COMMUNITY
COMING SOON**



**CLICK HERE
FIND OUT MORE** **FOLLETT'S**

www.ljbeauty.com
01789786295



LA VIE JOLIE

The Jimmy Savile case has been a 'history-changing moment' which has empowered thousands of people to come forward with their stories for the first time, experts say.

Specialists believe that the wealth of media coverage following the growing number of

allegations of sexual abuse against the late television presenter, has triggered memories in many people. This has allowed them to speak out for the first time and take the initial step in seeking professional help and support.

Fourteen police forces across the UK are involved with the case, with over 400 lines of inquiry currently being investigated.

Savile's 40-year TV career — which included hosting programmes such as *Jimmy'll Fix It* and *Top of The Pops* — made him a fixture in British pop culture. He has been the subject of hundreds of sexual abuse allegations which emerged following an ITV documentary *Exposure: The Other Side of Jimmy Savile*, which aired a year after his death in 2011 at the age of 84.

Evidence has since come to light of several cover-ups from the BBC and various police forces who had largely ignored suggestions of sexual abuse by Savile and other well-known stars.

“These sexual assaults were happening at a time when abuse was very much a taboo subject,” says Dr. Elena Martellozzo, a senior lecturer in Criminology at Middlesex University who advises the Metropolitan Police in the Crime and Paedophile Units. “There was a lot of ignorance back then, compounded by the lack of decent sex education in schools and families. But the media coverage over the last month has shown that victims have a voice and there are people willing to listen,” she tells *The Positive*.

Peter Saunders, Chief Executive of the National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC) told *The Positive* that since the Jimmy Savile case hit the news, they've seen a massive increase in calls to helplines.

“We usually average around 200 to 300 calls a week but since the scandal broke, it's been more than 1,000,” he said. “The majority of calls are from people who have been triggered by the case.” Thirty-five of those are from individuals directly accusing Savile. “Many of the calls we've received are first disclosures – we've had people ring up in their 60s or 70s talking about their abuse for the first time. A lot of them just wanted to get it off their chest.”

Despite the influx of calls and the challenge of low resources at NAPAC, Saunders remains optimistic that the case has made a huge and positive impact on child abuse survivors and professionals alike.

“It's a history-changing moment. I've just attended a meeting in New Scotland Yard which involved child abuse charities, major broadcasting organisations, police and other child protection professionals all sitting around the table discussing what to do next and how to make the world a safer place. This has never happened before: people are starting to speak out about just how damaging this crime is.”

Dr. Martellozzo agrees. “Current research indicates that around one in five children suffer abuse, so it is massively important that this is discussed in public, because it brings to light not only those abused by Savile but those abused by others. It highlights that there is nothing to be ashamed of.”

Tracey Storey of Irwin Mitchell Solicitors, who has dealt with child abuse cases for over 20 years, described the scandal as “horrific but something that can be learnt from.”

She said: “We have experienced an upsurge of calls from people who have been affected by the story. Those seeking legal advice aren't necessarily looking for compensation but to hold the abuser to account. They want to be heard, to break the silence.”

Storey said the media coverage has been “overwhelming” for many, but it's been the push survivors have needed to take the first step in speaking out and reporting to the police.

“If any good has to come out of this awful scandal, it's that people are now listening. Professionals are revisiting child protection issues to make sure reports are taken seriously so future outcomes of other abuses can be dealt with differently and quickly.”

In the wake of the scandal, previously ignored allegations are being re-investigated. These include the Haut de la Garenne children's home in Jersey thought to have links with Savile, and a children's home in North West Wales allegedly involving a senior politician from a previous government.

“The media are reporting it, the police are investigating and organisations are learning from their

mistakes when they didn't take sexual abuse claims seriously," said Dr. Martellozzo. "It is our responsibility as a society to protect children and those who have suffered from abuse."

Saunders added: "There is definitely a silver lining in this awful case. Children will now be safer in the short and long term because we are finally starting to address the taboo. It's been a long time coming."

SHARE

-  Print this article
-  Email this article
-  Share this article

ARTICLE TAGS

[Jimmy Savile](#) [media news](#) [news features](#)

RELATED POSTS



Leveson: 'No state regulation of the press'



In Israel-Gaza conflict, a revolution brews in social media



Journalists, media experts seek way forward beyond BBC, Leveson



Obama's Time

COMMENTS

The Positive welcomes a lively and courteous discussion here, so we do not pre-screen comments before they post. Please note that anything you post may be used, along with your name and profile picture, in accordance with our Privacy Policy and the license you have granted pursuant to our Terms of Service.

Please enable JavaScript to view the comments powered by Disqus. comments powered by Disqus



Keith Nisbet • freelance photographer