MISSING

One day Emma woke up and said she wasn't well enough for school. She had a virus, she never recovered and she never made it back into school. She was 14.

Emma is now 16. She was in Year 9 when she became ill. Her friends are in now in Year 11, studying for GCSES, buying dresses for the prom, looking forward to starting college in September. But Emma isn't doing any of those things. Time stopped when she became ill.

Her illness is so debilitating she doesn't leave her home for days on end and when she does it's for medical appointments. She doesn't go out with her friends. She's not receiving an education. She is missing normal teenage experiences and learning independence.

Emma has been sick for over 2 years. Her childhood and her life are being lost. She used to love going to school, learning, and excelling. Now she can't even remember what that felt like. Instead she is excelling at coping with isolation and just getting through each day.

People don't understand how devastating this is for a child, how hard it is for her parents to have to stand by and watch this. Medical professionals can't help her because there hasn't been enough research, and the UK government isn't interested in changing that.

When did that become ok? Something to turn a blind eye to? To not care about? People, children, lying bedridden in their homes, missing from life and society.

Emma is one of the **#MillionsMissing**. She needs more funding and

more research into M.E. so she can **start to live** again and get her future back.

12 May 2018