

What do I do if this happens in my community?

1. Get the language right

Change the conversation: challenge poisonous ideas and help prevent copycat crimes. Read “How do we talk about this?” for more.

2. Hold a vigil

Mourn the victim and call for justice. See our vigil guidebook at the end of this toolkit for more.

3. Watch the media

Encourage journalists to speak to disabled people, follow best practices for preventing copycat crimes, center the victim, and treat this filicide like all other filicides. Refer them to this toolkit. Push back when they make mistakes.

4. Push back

If someone attempts to justify, minimize, or normalize the murder, challenge them. Don't let them interpret your silence as agreement.

5. Sentencing

Call for the harshest possible sentence under the law. Emphasize that people with disabilities have a right to expect full and equal protection under the law.

6. Call for hate crimes legislation

As appropriate, advocate for expanding state and federal hate crimes legislation to include disability and filicide against disabled victims.

7. Hold the justice system accountable

Contact your local protection and advocacy agency, your local FBI field office, and your district attorney. Let them know that the disability community is watching. Let them know that we are outraged. Tell them to do their jobs.