



Stand **by me**

Ending disability hate crime together Ending disability hate crime together

Join the campaign



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Kelly's story



For 20 years people have done horrible things to Kelly just because she has a learning disability.

They have called her names, spat at her, punched her and even thrown knives at her.

She asked the police to help but they just told her to ignore it and to walk away when it happens.

Kelly has had to move out of two different homes because people would not leave her alone.

She is often scared to go out because she knows kids are waiting near her house.

Things like this happen to so many people with a learning disability, but you can help to stop it.

What is a disability hate crime?



Disability hate crime is when a person has been a victim of crime because they have a disability.

Anyone can say if they think a crime is a disability hate crime.



The crime can be name calling, being pushed, kicked or punched. It can also be something much worse and some people have been killed.

Lots of people do not understand disability hate crime, many people do not think it happens.



Hate crime is a very bad problem and it happens a lot. This does not mean you should be afraid. But it does mean we should all make sure more is being done to stop it.

Why do we need to do something?



Mencap thinks almost 1 million people with a learning disability have been a victim of disability hate crime.

For Kelly this meant being scared to go out. Others have slept in a park because they were too scared to go home. Fiona Pilkington killed herself and her daughter. She did this to get away from kids who had been shouting at them, calling them names and throwing stones at them for a long time. She should have had another way to change things.



We must change how people think about disability hate crime. We also need to help people with a learning disability, so they do not have to suffer as a victim of hate crime.

What are the reasons for the problem?

Police



Often when people report hate crime the police do not deal with it in the best way. We want this to change.

The police do not always understand what a learning disability is or how to support someone with a learning disability.



Sometimes when a person calls to report something the police do not know if they have called before.



Police do not always treat disability hate crime the same as other hate crimes. For example hate crime that is about someone's skin colour is often seen as more important.

Police do not always make good enough notes about disability hate crime.



If people do not think the police will treat them well and take action, they may not report hate crime when it happens to them.

Courts



When someone is guilty of a hate crime, the way they are punished is important. Sometimes the judge does not send them to prison for long enough, or punish them in the right way. This makes it look like this type of crime does not matter.



Sometimes people with a learning disability are not given enough support in court. This can mean they have trouble explaining what has happened to them. This is important because what they say could make sure someone who is guilty of a hate crime is punished.

Local authorities, housing, social care and education



All these groups need to work together to stop disability hate crime. This does not always happen.

Government



The government does not think about disability hate crime in the same way as it thinks about other sorts of hate crime. This needs to change.



The government needs to tell the police that stopping disability hate crime is very important. They need to show the police what they can do to help.

How we can stop it



We want the police to promise to do more to stop disability hate crime. Here are some things we think the police should do.



1. Make sure it is easy to find out about reporting crime and that information is easy to understand.



2. Get better evidence (this is information that proves what is being said). Give more time for talking to victims. This can be important when victims find it hard to make themselves understood.



3. Learn how to tell if someone has a learning disability.



4. Listen to families, carers and support staff of disabled people. Show them respect and help them take part.



5. Do not accept wrong thinking and rude ways of talking about disability from other police officers.



6. Make sure that victims are told about what is happening with their case when they have reported a crime.



7. Accept that disability hate crime is as bad as other types of hate crime.



8. Do not call disability hate crime antisocial behaviour. (Antisocial behaviour means doing things that are bad. But it doesn't always mean crimes). Spot the crime and deal with it.



9. Hold regular beat meetings. Beat meetings give people a chance to talk to police near where they live. People can tell the police about what is happening. This helps people know the police can help them. Make sure disabled people can come along to the meetings.



10. Show the *Stand by me* promises where everyone can see them.

How you can help

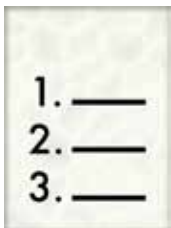
Making a petition



A **petition** is a list of people's signatures (a signature is what it is called when you sign your name). It allows people to show their support for stopping disability hate crime without giving money or giving their time.

If people sign your petition this will show the local police service that lots of people want them to promise to do more to stop disability hate crime.

How to write a petition



At the top of your piece of paper (or computer document) there must be a statement (this is something you write that explains what you want to change and why). It must be easy to read, short and easy to understand.



Leave space for each person to write their name and address under the statement. In a website petition you can also leave space for people to add their email address.



People do not have to give their address or email address. But if they do the people you are sending the petition to will be able to contact them. Let people know that this might happen.

Getting people to sign your petition



- You can print your petition or you can put it on a website. You can also send it out by email. Email makes it quick and easy for people to add their names. You may still want to have a paper petition because lots of people do not use websites and email.



- Email petitions have all the main points about the campaign and what you want to happen. People read this information and then add their names. Then they send it back to you. When the petition is finished you can email it to the people you want to see it.



Thank people who sign the petition and tell them how to get more information if they want it.



There is a petition you can use in this pack.

Other ways to tell people about Stand by me



- You could have an information stand in a public place. This can help you tell let lots of people about the campaign. You can get people who come by to sign your petition, so make sure you have it with you.



- **Leaflets** can also be used to tell people about your campaign. They can also tell people how they can support the campaign and where they can sign your petition.



- **Public meetings** are also a good way to let people know about *Stand by me*. Invite lots of different people and make sure you have the meeting somewhere that is easy for wheelchair users to get into. Don't forget to bring the petition along so people can sign it.



- You can write a **letter** to the person in charge of your local police service. This person is called the chief constable. You might want to ask somebody to help you write this. There is a letter here to help you.



[Chief constable]
[Name of local police service]
[Address]
Date

Dear [Insert name of chief constable]

Mencap’s *Stand by me* promises to stop disability hate crime



I am writing on behalf of [write the name of your group here] to ask you to promise to do more about hate crime against people with a learning disability.



Your service is doing some great work in this area but I am sure more can be done. I want you to agree to do things in the *Stand by me* promises.



Hate crime can have serious and even tragic effects. It stops people living normal lives and it shuts them away from the places and people where they live. This makes their local area worse off.



We all need look at how we think about disability hate crime, and how our actions have to change. I am asking you, as chief constable, to promise to take these steps to stop disability hate crime (you can do this online at www.mencap.org.uk/police).



1. Make sure information is ready and shown in a straight-forward form, using True Vision reporting booklets (these explain about disability hate crime and reporting it) other ways of reporting.



2. Get better evidence to make sure more people are punished. This can be done by giving more time for talking to people with a learning disability, as they may find it hard to make themselves understood.



3. Make sure police know how to tell if someone has a learning disability.



4. Listen to and respect families, carers and support staff of disabled people. Make sure they can also take part.



5. Do not accept wrong ways of thinking and talking about disability from other police.



6. Make sure that victims know what is happening with their case after they have reported a crime.



7. Accept and tell others that disability hate crime is as harmful as other types of hate crime.



8. Do not call disability hate crime antisocial behaviour – spot the crime and deal with it.



9. Hold regular beat meetings and make sure disabled people can come along.



10. Show the *Stand by me* promises where everyone can see them.

[If you have any local case studies or examples, add them here.]



Please could you let us know if you will stand by people with a learning disability by taking these steps.



Also please tell us what else you plan to do to stop disability hate crime.






Yours sincerely

[Write your name and your group here (if you are a member of a group).]




For more information or advice

 Find out more about the Stand by me campaign at www.mencap.org.uk/standbyme


If you live in England

-  Phone: **020 7696 5613**
-  Email: **campaigns@mencap.org.uk**
-  Write: Mencap, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT

If you live in Northern Ireland

-  Phone: **028 9069 1351**
-  Email: **mencapni@mencap.org.uk**
-  Write: Mencap, Segal House, 4 Annadale Avenue, Belfast BT7 3JH

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 To find out more about Mencap's campaigns go to www.mencap.org.uk/campaigns

 You can also read our reports about campaigning at www.mencap.org.uk/publications