

Mia Janin: Father wants cyber-bullying law after daughter's death

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**The father of a girl who took her own life says cyber-bullying should be made a specific crime to protect children.**

Mia Janin's parents had no idea she was being targeted on social media by pupils at her London school before [she died in March 2021, aged 14](#). Father Mariano Janin told the BBC's Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg programme new laws were needed to tackle the issue affecting young people globally. He said it was time to be "more alert and I would like the system to work". Mia was found dead at her Harrow family home a day after returning to Jewish Free School (JFS) following the lifting of Covid lockdown restrictions. After her death, her parents began to piece together evidence that she was being bullied by a group of male students on social media and in person. In a voice note sent to a friend the night before she died, Mia said: "Tomorrow's going to be a rough day, I'm taking deep breaths in and out. I'm currently mentally preparing myself to get bullied tomorrow."

In the UK, there is no specific law on bullying or cyber-bullying and the courts rely on other legislation around harassment and malicious communications.

- [Form tutor unaware girl was bullied before death, inquest told](#)
- [Mia Janin took own life after bullying - inquest](#)
- [What is the Online Safety Bill?](#)

Speaking to the programme, Mr Janin said: "I think we need to do something against bullying. We need to revise the existing legislation about bullying, try to understand and try to act, do something." He continued: "We need to transmit to our kids values, normal values, kindness, acceptance, understanding - then we need of course some kind of legal boundaries for social media." Mr. Janin has previously called for bereaved parents to be [allowed more access to their children's social media accounts](#) in order to aid efforts to trace how and why they died. He told the BBC: "I know there are still lots of young people suffering... in a good country, in a modern

Mariano Janin, whose daughter Mia took her own life, says new rules are needed to keep children safe

Last month, Esther Ghey - whose [daughter Brianna Ghey, 16, was murdered](#) in February 2023 - told the BBC [she believed social media on smartphones should be banned](#) for under-16s.

Asked about that proposal, Mr Janin said: "I understand her perfectly well because that was my feeling as well at the beginning - but it is like putting the genie inside the bottle again. "We need to learn to live with this technology. This is happening globally, it is not only in England. "I'm

sitting here in London, probably at the same time we have another parent doing the same in Milano, another one in San Francisco, in Buenos Aires." Mr Janin said he believed the new Online Safety Bill, which came into law in October 2023 and aims to improve child safety on the internet, could be a "first step in order to get real change". Four months after Mia's death, her mother Marisa died after suffering an aneurysm and contracting leukaemia. Asked how he had processed his loss, Mr Janin said: "I think I can accept what happened, I don't think I will understand. "I accept it has happened to me - I just live in an empty house with a small dog, I used to have a home with a wife and a daughter. "I accept that is my reality. I cannot escape from this." Mr Janin also told the BBC he had serious concerns about the way the investigation into the bullying of his daughter had been handled by the school after her death. In response, a JFS spokesperson said: "After Mia's tragic death, all information held by the school was handed to the Metropolitan Police to support their investigation. "Throughout the investigation, the school has given open access to all of its systems. Our thoughts remain, as they have always been, with the family."

Mia was described as "creative, kind, entrepreneurial and highly intelligent" during an inquest into her death. Earlier this week, the coroner for North London issued a report to JFS urging its leaders to take further action on bullying to prevent future deaths, particularly the targeting of female pupils by males. While it acknowledged school policies had been overhauled, it said new initiatives "do not appear to have gained the confidence of some JFS female students". In a later statement to the BBC, Mr Janin welcomed the coroner's intervention and said he remained "concerned that the school has not, and is not, doing enough". He continued: "The school, indeed all schools, need to take their responsibilities towards our children much more seriously. "One death is a death too much. This culture of wilful ignorance needs to change and it needs to change now." In response, a JFS spokesperson said the witness statements referred to by the coroner dated back as far as early 2021 and were "not a reflection of the school today". They added Ofsted found in April 2022 that pupils at the school felt confident to report bullying concerns to staff.