**Disability hate crimes and incidents:***“A disability hate incident is any incident, which may or may not amount to a criminal offence, that the victim or anyone else thinks was motivated because of hostility or prejudice based on disability.”*

The **Criminal Justice Act 2003** defines disability as any physical or mental impairment. This includes people with physical and learning disabilities.

A person can be the victim of a disability hate crime if someone **believes they are disabled** even though they’re not, or because of their association with someone who is disabled - for example, if someone is targeted because they have a disabled child.

When someone is charged with a disability hate crime, the judge imposes a tougher sentence on the perpetrator.

We have worked with the Disability Hate Crime Network to raise awareness of this issue amongst our supporters and encourage increased reporting of crimes against disabled people. Together we prepared a toolkit (see below) for Neighbourhood Watch groups to share information and improve awareness of disability hate crime.

Jayne Pascoe, Neighbourhood Watch Network’s Strategic Partnerships Director, said: *“Targeting people because of their disability is completely unacceptable and we’re working hard to do our bit and encourage Neighbourhood Watch supporters to help stop it.”*

The Disability Hate Crime Network works with other disabled people’s organisations, charities, academic establishments and a range of official and non-official bodies including the police and CPS representatives to achieve positive action and outcomes for disabled people.

**Further information**

* True Vision has created an easy-read [Disability Hate Crime Book](https://www.report-it.org.uk/files/true_vision_dhc_final_book_secure.pdf) – and how to report it
* If you’re interested in the research read Victim Support’s Insight Report – [An Easy Target?](https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/documents/files/VS%20Insight%20Report%20-%20An%20easy%20target.pdf), the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s [Hidden in Plain Sight](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/hidden-plain-sight-inquiry-disability-related-harassment)
* You can watch Gloucestershire Constabulary’s YouTube video on Disability Hate Crime [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKhtzjbntU8).
* Disability Rights UK has more information on disability hate incidents on their [website](http://disabilityrightsuk.org/)
* Call the Stop Learning Disability Hate Crime helpline on **0808 802 1155** for support and information on learning disability hate incidents. The helpline is open 24 hours a day.
* Go to the [Mencap website](http://www.mencap.org.uk/campaigns/take-action/stand-me) for information about disability hate incidents including information about [mate and hate crime](https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/bullying-and-discrimination/mate-and-hate-crime) and an [easy read guide](https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/bullying-and-discrimination/bullying-easy-read-information) to bullying.