We didn't learn about it until after he passed and we cracked his phone. We were able to crack his phone and some of the text messaging in there were disgusting. It was hurtful. It was horrible stuff. Horrible stuff. It was from three varsity football players and a varsity lacrosse player. And Jack was, they were grooming him, but he was an underclassman. And what we found out was these same kids were predatory in nature. Their older brothers had done it, and they would pick up the behavior. They would go find kids and pick on them. For example, what we did learn is one time the four of them did surround Jack and one of his friends – and these were big kids – Jack was my size, lighter. They surrounded him, pushed Jack to the ground. They spit on him. They sat on him.

But Jack never told anybody. He always internalized stuff. And we learned about this afterwards. And of course, the school's response was, 'Why wasn't it reported?' Well, maybe a little out of touch, but in high school, kids don't tell. They don't. They get called snitches and they get labeled and they get bullied some more. So they internalize it. It's just very different.

The other side of it is the cyber bullying stuff. Some of the stuff that we read, I think today unlike years ago, it's 24/7. The anonymity behind it as well. Somebody puts something out there through Snapchat or Instagram under some alias and other kids just feed in on it.

They don’t see the impact it’s having on the child that’s receiving that information. And again, Jack never shared any of that. And we always checked his phone and did that, but Snapchat goes away immediately. Instagram, they put together fake Instagram accounts. So you don’t even know who it is. Am I saying that was why Jack did that? I think it was a contributing factor.

We went to the Greenwood Village Police Department and demanded a criminal investigation, which they undertook and they didn't find any criminal culpability. They sent the case to the 18th Judicial District DA's office, who we met with two Fridays ago. And they said that under the current statute, it's not criminal in nature, first of all. And so we can't find anything enough to charge these kids with, even though we know they've done this before. And a couple of these kids had been arrested for doing this before, but they couldn't criminally charge them. The DA was very empathetic. I have to give him credit for that. I mean, he got emotional too. He has 15- and 18-year-old sons, and he got emotional about it. He says, 'I really wish I had something, but I don’t.'

So fast forward what I have done, and I mentioned I had two lawyers in the office and one on the phone and this woman who's an international educator around bullying and parenting, they are looking at the New Jersey statute [as a model], and they're going to revise it [for Colorado], and we're going to get it to a lawmaker. A lawmaker has agreed to sponsor that so we can make [the behavior] criminal.

I'm not out to ruin any child's life. There's a restorative justice part that they're going to build into that, meaning you get convicted and we're going to defer it for six months, but you're going to have to have certain types of classes around bullying and training and empathy that you're gonna have to go to. And if your parents don't take you to that, your parents are going to be fined $100 for the first offense and so on. Because these kids are learning this stuff somewhere. I know they learned it from their peers, but they also learned it somewhere.

We always imparted values, and they always were be kind to other people, treat people like you want to be treated, love your brother and always remember who your family is. Values like that, that we wanted to instill in our kids.
These kids are learning some of the behavior. They learned somewhere. I'm hoping other families are having conversations like that around their coffee, their dinner table.