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Amarpreet Sivia's family wants wrongful death law changed

By Belle Puri (CBC News – BC)

Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/amarpreet-sivia-s-family-wants-wrongful-death-law-changed-1.2573298>

16-year-old was hit by a motorcycle and died, family says B.C. law does not put enough value on life

A Surrey family just back from scattering their 16-year-old daughter's ashes in India is seeking changes to B.C.'s wrongful death legislation.

Amarpreet Sivia was [one of three Princess Margaret Secondary school students hit by a speeding motorcycle](#) last September while crossing the street in front of the school, just days into the new school year.

Two of the students survived, but Amarpreet did not.

Surrey teen dies, 2 friends hurt after being hit by motorcycle

Amarpreet's family is now part of an ongoing lobby to change B.C.'s wrongful death legislation — legislation that is based on a 168-year-old act — which they say puts the emphasis on wage earners and awards very little for the loss of a child.

Photo of Princess Margaret accident scene

The accident scene outside Princess Margaret Secondary school Sept. 2013 that claimed Amarpreet's life at 16 years of age. (CBC)

Amarpreet's older sister Baldeep says a change in the law won't benefit them, but it might help others.

"It's a change for those families who go through the same kind of incident," she said.

"It's for their financial aid, for their counselling support. It's not just about the money. It's about the support that a family needs when they lose a child."

Baby of the family

Amarpreet was the baby of the family who left India just as she was about to start school. Six months after her death, the teenager's bedroom is still full of her poetry and art.

Baldeep says it is hard for the family to let her go.

Amarpreet's older sister Baldeep says the family wants her death to have meaning. They've already successfully lobbied for lights and a crosswalk to make the school safer for students to cross.

"She would actually purposely leave something in the middle of it and come back to it and finish it off with totally different results than she expected," Baldeep said looking around at her late sister's unfinished work.

The family says a change to the law would give Amarpreet's death some meaning.

"Even after she passed away, she's doing something for the society," Baldeep said.

Pedestrian safety measures installed near school

The family also fought to make the street outside Amarpreet's school safer for students to cross.

A \$500,000 City of Surrey project to install a light, a crosswalk and signage was completed two weeks ago.

Photo of Amarpreet's sketch

Six months after her death, Amarpreet's bedroom is still full of her unfinished poetry and art. (CBC)

Taranjit Takhar, a student at Princess Margaret Secondary, says the safety measures are working.

"It does direct everyone to the lights. Usually kids would cross the road, but now everyone comes to the lights."

Still, the family is frustrated. Six months after the accident, RCMP have yet to lay charges against the motorcyclist.

With files from the CBC's Belle Puri