



The New Jersey
Statewide
Self-Advocacy
Network
is a member
organization of
the New Jersey
Self-Advocacy Project

Ellen Moskowitz,
President

Barbara Coppens,
Immediate Past President

**The New Jersey
Statewide
Self-Advocacy Network**

985 Livingston Avenue
North Brunswick, NJ
08902

Phone: 732-246-2525
ext. 22

Fax: 732-749-8514

www.njselfadvocacyproject.org

Email:
NJSSAN@ArcNJ.org

The New Jersey Statewide Self-Advocacy Network

*An Alliance for Change to Support the Rights of
People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*

January 6, 2017

To the Editor:

Last week, news media began reporting about a terrible incident in Chicago where a teenager with special needs was held captive and brutally beaten, all recorded on Facebook Live. As an organization that advocates and supports people with developmental disabilities, the NJ Statewide Self-Advocacy Network is heartbroken and appalled by this incident.

Unfortunately, the victim's disability played a significant role in his being targeted for this crime. Study after study has shown that people with disabilities are three times more likely to be the victim of violent crime than people without disabilities. The victim has a cognitive disability which made him more vulnerable and marked him as an easy target.

The alleged attackers are classmates of the victim, people that he knew and thought were his friends. It is shocking that people would commit such a horrific crime against anyone but especially someone they know and who has a disability. We urge swift action to investigate this crime and prosecute the alleged attackers to the fullest extent of the law.

We applaud the work of The Arc of the US and The Arc of NJ in supporting people with developmental disabilities and their strong stand on this issue. Everyone should be outraged by this horrible incident and pledge to do more to stand up for the rights of people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Ellen Moskowitz
President
NJSSAN Advisory Board