

Stanford University shocking response to tragic suicide of soccer star Katie Meyer piles more 'hurt' on mourning family

By [DANIEL MATTHEWS](#)

[The family of Katie Meyer - a Stanford soccer star who committed suicide in 2022 - have detailed their renewed 'hurt' over the school's response to her tragic death, which appears to point the finger in the direction of her parents.](#)

Meyer, a captain and goalkeeper for the Cardinal, took her own life in March 2022 - hours after discovering that she could be expelled for spilling hot coffee on a Stanford football player.

'I miss her every second of every day,' her father Steven says in a new ESPN documentary, 'Save: The Katie Meyer Story', which sheds light on her life and her heartbreaking death.

It features poignant interviews with Meyer's family and explores the fallout from her suicide.

Meyer's parents are suing Stanford in a wrongful death lawsuit, accusing the [California](#) school of 'systematic failures' and dealing with her disciplinary case 'negligently and recklessly'.

Towards the end of her fifth and final year, the goalkeeper was charged by the university over the coffee spill. Meyer said it was an accident. The football player - who had been accused of making 'an unwanted sexual advance' on one of Meyer's teammates - said otherwise.



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Katie Meyer, a captain and goalkeeper for the Stanford Cardinal, took her own life in 2022

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Meyer's parents Steven (L) and Gina (R) are suing Stanford in a wrongful death lawsuit



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new ESPN documentary 'Save: The Katie Meyer Story', sheds light on her life and death

But, as the documentary explains, the football star did not make a formal complaint and insisted he 'did not want any punishment that impacts (Meyer's) life'.

But the school nevertheless investigated Meyer over six months and on the evening of February 28, 2022, the 22-year-old was told her degree was being put on hold and she could be kicked out of school.

That night, Meyer began 'frantically searching' online about how to defend herself at trial. The following morning she was found dead in her dorm.

According to the family complaint, Meyer had been meeting with sports psychologists and was 'experiencing increased depression symptoms associated with perceived failure and endorsed suicidal ideations'.

She also told the school that she had been 'stressed out for months' revealing: '(I am) terrified that an accident will destroy my future.'

But court filings show that, in one of their defenses in the lawsuit, Stanford pointed out that - shortly before her death - 'Katie chose to make her final oral presentation about her years before Stanford and growing up with controlling parents and pressure to succeed.'

That twisted the knife for a family already in mourning. 'It hurts my heart... that they're marching down this road when we've lost our daughter,' Meyer's father says.

'I don't quite know what they're getting at here, to be honest.'



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The family accuses Stanford of 'systematic failures' and dealing with her case 'negligently and recklessly'

Stanford also argued that 'any reasonable person would consider Katie's suicide a highly unusual, extraordinary response to the situation', adding: 'The Stanford defendants did not know and had no reason to expect that Katie would act in this manner.'

But the Meyer's lawyer insists: 'There is no denying they knew that their process could cause distress (and) harm.'

She claimed that Stanford had long been 'on notice' after previous, 'serious concern' about the school's disciplinary and judicial processes.

The family had no idea about their daughter's fight with school officials and her mother Gina told ESPN: 'It just breaks my heart that we didn't know. It breaks my heart. It will always be broken...'

Meyer had spoken to her family around 5pm on February 28, which was the final day she could be charged by the school. She was excited about spring break and, according to her mother, 'it was very normal, normal, wonderful conversation.'

'She seemed great,' he dad says. The next day, however, Steven Meyer received a call. 'She's gone,' he was told. He speculated that she must have had in an accident. 'It didn't seem possible with her that it would be suicide,' he tells ESPN.

He then rang his wife, 'wailing'. 'It was the worst phone call in your life you could ever imagine. It's every parents' nightmare,' Gina says.

But when looked inside Katie's dorm room, there was no evidence of 'darkness'. 'Nothing,' her dad says. 'Just like it always was. Just like it was on the FaceTime the night before. Nothing at all.'

Gina says: 'Never in a million years would this kid take her own life. We were like "How? Why? What happened?"

Katie left a note in which she confessed to being 'so, so scared' but her parents' confusion lingered until they looked at her laptop and found the five-page charging letter.

'I felt like it was a process of picking up the breadcrumbs along the way to find out what happened, and how this happened, and how did we not know,' Gina tells ESPN.

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Meyer was the goalkeeper on the national champion Stanford Cardinal in 2019

The family later set up a foundation, Katie's Save, to 'fight for systemic changes at colleges and universities to promote mental health, protect students and prevent suicide.'

They then worked with politicians to create a new law that means any student going through disciplinary processes is allowed an advisor to support them.

California governor Gavin Newsom signed Katie Meyer's Law in September 2024 but, as a private university, Stanford is not required to adopt it. The lawsuit is set to go to trial in 2026.

'Katie's death was a tragedy' a Stanford official said in a statement to USA Today. 'It was heartbreaking for her family, for everyone who knew her, and for our entire community. Though we continue to respond to the litigation brought by the family, that fact does not diminish our deep sympathy for her loss and our continuing support for everyone impacted in our community.'

