LAILA'S GIFT
Celebrating One Gift at a Time

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Maryland's LEAD Act took effect October 1, 2026

Follow our LEAD.

A national movement to bring the LEAD Act to **every state**, and four simple ways you can help make it happen.



WHAT IS THE LEAD ACT?

Prepared responders. Safer families.

The LEAD Act ensures first responders and law enforcement have standardized training to respond when people with autism, dementia, and intellectual and developmental disabilities go missing.

For children with autism, water is a serious danger, and drowning is a leading cause of death. First responders need to understand those risks before the call comes in.

49%
of children with autism are likely to wander, some as often as once a week.

6 in 10
people living with dementia will wander at least once.

91%
of autism wandering deaths were drownings (2024).

Sources: National Autism Association (2022, 2024); Alzheimer's Association.

MARYLAND TOOK THE LEAD. WHO'S NEXT?

4 ways you can help

In 2026, Maryland became the first state to pass the LEAD Act, but it shouldn't be the last! That's why Laila's Gift launched **Follow our LEAD**, a national movement to bring this work to every state. You don't have to know how to write legislation to become a changemaker.

1

UNDER 1 MINUTE

Sign the petition

Add your name to the petition calling for the LEAD Act to be introduced in every state. It takes less than a minute to sign!

Sign the petition →

2

Contact your lawmakers

Click your state on the map. You'll find a draft letter that will automatically go to your state lawmakers once you fill it out.

Find your state →

3

Share your story

If you've experienced elopement in your family, send us your story by email at **info@lailasgift.org** or a written letter to:

Laila's Gift Celebration & Advocacy Center
1040 Hardee Dr. Ste. F
Aberdeen, MD 21001

4

Donate to Laila's Gift

Fund the 50-state push

Help support the cause. Every dollar will make a difference, and no amount is too small.

Donate here →

Could your state be next to Follow our LEAD?

Share this toolkit with family, friends, and your community.