

Dayton Daily News: Children's Services asked to investigate violent death of kitten

By Lucas Sullivan

October 13, 2009

DAYTON - Police have asked Montgomery County Children's Services to investigate why a boy allegedly beat a kitten to death with a brick Sunday, Oct. 11.

Officers were sent to the 3800 block of Lakebend Drive about 7 p.m. after a woman called to say a boy had smashed a kitten's head with a brick, according to police.

A handful of children said they saw the boy hit the kitten with the brick and another witness said the boy threw an adult cat off a balcony earlier in the day, according to police.

A parent tried to talk the boy's mother about the incident, but the boy's mother said she didn't care, witnesses told police. Officers did find the kitten dead in a pink box with a brick next to it, according to police.

The boy said he loves animals and would never harm them. Officers requested their report be sent to Children's Services for further investigation. The boy does not face any criminal charges at this time, according to police.

Children's Services spokeswoman Ann Stevens said her department is still awaiting the police report detailing the incident before proceeding. She said her investigators are aware of the situation.

"There are numerous studies that show children who are cruel to animals are more likely to be aggressive toward people and other living beings as they grow up," Stevens said. "But I also want to applaud the person who called police. This type of incident is very serious and should never be chalked up to boys being boys or girls being girls."

Columbus Dispatch: Judge orders runaway convert back to Ohio

By Meredith Heagney

October 13, 2009

A Florida judge has ordered Rifqa Bary back to Ohio.

Bary is the teenager who ran away from Ohio to Florida because she feared physical harm for converting from Islam to Christianity.

Orange County, Fla., Circuit Judge Daniel Dawson said today that Bary, 17, who has been staying in Orlando, should return to her family, who live outside Columbus. Franklin County Children Services has accepted the case and has a foster family for Bary.

Bary has been in foster care in Florida while her case was being reviewed. The judge says he will turn over the case to an Ohio court in the next few weeks, but no order has been signed yet. There are conditions. Dawson said Bary's online schooling must continue and that her parents must provide Bary's immigration documents to the Florida court.

Bary ran away from her parents' home in July, saying she feared being killed for changing religions. But a Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigation found no credible threats to Bary.

Dawson said he expects Bary to return to Ohio by Oct. 27.

Columbus Dispatch: Runaway who converted from Islam likely to return to Ohio; But the New Albany teenager would stay in foster home, not with Muslim parents

*By Meredith Heagney
October 14, 2009*

Fathima Rifqa Bary is likely coming home to Ohio, the state she fled nearly three months ago, saying she feared death for her conversion to Christianity.

But she'll be staying in a foster home, not her parents' Northeast Side apartment.

Jurisdiction in the 17-year-old's case should be transferred from Florida to Ohio, judges in both states decided via conference call yesterday.

Dependency cases were filed in both states to determine whether the girl should be returned to her parents, who she says would harm her for leaving Islam.

"I believe this is the home state and the most convenient forum with respect to the issues as I understand them," said Franklin County Juvenile Judge Elizabeth Gill.

Judge Daniel P. Dawson of the 9th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida agreed, but he required certain steps be taken before she is returned.

Rifqa ran away in July, saying her father threatened to kill her for becoming a Christian. Mohamed Bary denied her accusations, and a Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigation found no credible threats to her safety.

She could be back in Ohio by Oct. 27, when a hearing is scheduled in Franklin County Juvenile Court, said Dawson, speaking from Orlando.

But before ordering her into the care of Franklin County Children Services, Dawson wanted two issues settled.

He asked for documented assurance that Rifqa's online schooling can continue in Ohio. Dawson also asked that Rifqa's parents provide all paperwork related to her immigration status before she crosses state lines.

Rifqa, a native of Sri Lanka, is not a U.S. citizen.

It isn't yet clear exactly when Rifqa will return, or how she will be transported. She will receive a psychological evaluation when she gets here.

Dawson asked whether the Barys could simply dismiss the Ohio dependency case because they filed it themselves in an attempt to transfer jurisdiction.

Assistant Franklin County Prosecutor Chris Julian said they would not agree to dismiss the case. A Children Services official added that it would not be in Rifqa's or her family's best interest for her to live at home at this time.

In Gill's courtroom yesterday, Mohamed Bary and his wife, Aysha, sat calmly between their attorneys. They laughed when they heard Rifqa's Florida attorney, John Stemberger, say that she was in danger of being sent back to Sri Lanka where she could be killed or institutionalized.

Stemberger also said Rifqa wants to stay in Florida.

After the hearing, the Barys and their 18-year-old son, Rilvan, said they were told not to comment. Rifqa's Ohio attorney, Kort Gatterdam, cited a gag order in declining to comment.

Dawson expressed frustration during the hearing that the Barys had not provided Rifqa's immigration paperwork after repeated requests.

He gave them 10 business days to comply, under threat of being found in contempt of court.

He also ordered the release of the 110-page transcript of a nearly three-hour interview with Rifqa that was conducted by Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigators. But some information must be redacted first, he said, not specifying an exact release date.

AZCentral.com: Intoxicated parents get kids taken away again

By Sharon Coolidge (Cincinnati Enquirer)

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Social workers took custody of two young Deer Park children Tuesday for the second time this year after authorities say their parents were found drunk and unable to care for them.

The children had just been returned to the couple last week after the parents were convicted earlier this year on child endangering charges related to a similar incident where police found the couple too intoxicated to properly care for their sons, ages 4 and 7.

Travis Nabors, 61, and Mary Nabors, 39, are each facing two charges of child endangering, one charge related to each of their children, Deer Park police said.

The couple was convicted of child endangering charges in May after authorities found them intoxicated on March 22. The Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services took the children from the couple at that time, but a juvenile court magistrate returned the children last week after the couple successfully completed parenting programs.

A court officer who was assigned to check up on the children visited the family Tuesday and became alarmed, according to police reports. She called 911 at about 7 p.m.

Officers responded to the couple's and had to knock on the door for several minutes before the children finally answered, according to a report.

Once inside the home, the officers discovered Mary Nabors was so intoxicated she couldn't get off the couch and could barely talk. She was taken to Jewish Hospital where she was diagnosed with acute alcohol intoxication, police said.

Travis Nabors was upstairs in bed and also could not walk or talk, a report said.

The circumstances are eerily similar to the previous case in which Deer Park officers found Travis Nabors unresponsive on the front porch and Mary Nabors passed out inside while the kids were in their care.

Department of Job and Family Services Spokesman Brian Gregg said the agency will file a request to take permanent custody of the children.

For now the children are together, living in the same foster home where they had been previously placed, Gregg said.

"We will do everything we can to help them adjust," Gregg said.

The couple was sentenced to a year of probation in the earlier case and ordered to undergo drug and alcohol testing during that time, court records show. We've been working with family, providing services since then," said Gregg.

In general, parents in such circumstances are given parenting classes and drug and alcohol treatment, according to Gregg. Ohio law does not permit him to say specifically what services the Nabors got.

During the past seven months the couple had supervised visits with the kids.