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# Autistic boy allegedly injured at special-needs school

Coral Springs man says 6-year-old grandson was battered and bleeding

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By Karen Yi, Sun Sentinel 5:28 p.m. EDT, March 21, 2013

Grandparents of a 6-year-old autistic boy want to know what happened at a Pompano Beach school last week that left their child battered and bruised.

"It looked like he was beat, he was crying inconsolably," said grandparent Michael Oleksak, 53, of Coral Springs. He said Bright Horizons Center called him on a Thursday morning to pick up his injured grandson, Jackie Cecil, who had bruises and abrasions all over his face and was bleeding from the right side of his neck.

Jackie, who is nonverbal and suffers from epilepsy, started at the special-needs school this year.

But it's been a week since the incident and Oleksak said he still hasn't received any answers from the school. "The frustrating thing is, you want to know what happened to your child."

A call to the school was not immediately returned.

Tracy Clark, public information officer for the Broward County School District, said school police were working with the Broward Sheriff's Office to investigate the allegations.

"I can confirm that the school and the district received notice or outreach from parents regarding the student [last week]," she said, but did not disclose further details.

The Sheriff's Office is investigating the possibility of child abuse or neglect, according to the incident report.

Oleksak believes the incident happened sometime after Jackie exited the school bus and entered the school, where teachers said they could hear him crying down the hallway.

He says they put Jackie on the bus at 6:45 a.m. with no incident. And the bus' surveillance video shows nothing happened during the ride to school.

"It was a normal ride, nobody hit him, nobody approached him," he said. "I just want answers."

He's since removed Jackie from the school and doesn't

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plan on the boy returning.

And though many of his grandson's injuries have healed, "He's not the same, he's not Jackie anymore," Oleksak said.

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georgia1171 at 10:40 AM March 22, 2013

It is sad that this happened and it should not happen. I honestly believe that teachers, aides, and bus drivers for the disabled should have to have mandatory stress relief sessions at least 2 times a year and should be evaluated yearly to determine their stress levels. It is very stressful dealing with autistic kids, especially the ones who bite, kick, scream and have explosive personality issues. I hope these grandparents/parents will find a suitable, caring school for their grandchild/child. There aren't a lot of options in the way of schools and/or residential options for autistic children.

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