



# Family dog mauls Phoenix girl

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A 4-year-old playing in her backyard was attacked and killed by her pet dog Monday afternoon. The attack occurred at the family's rural home near Central Avenue and Happy Valley Road.

A family friend, Dani During, says Tori Whitehurst loved the color blue and cowboy boots. She had won a Halloween contest last week for her cheerleader costume.

During tells 12 News both parents were at work at the time of the attack. A 59-year-old, live-in nanny was watching Tori and her older sister. The children were swinging in the backyard. During says the nanny went inside for a couple of minutes to get a camera when the dog attacked. The nanny reportedly tried to break up the attack by spraying the 80-pound American bulldog with a hose.

Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio says deputies arrived approximately 10 minutes after the 911 call. They saw the dog laying next to the fatally wounded child. When the dog became aggressive toward the deputies, the sheriff says they tased the animal, then shot it.

Authorities say the dog grabbed the girl's arm first, then bit her neck. She died in a medical helicopter on the way to the hospital.

During said that the dog seemed friendly and would jump on and lick visitors to the home. The family adopted the dog about a year ago. During contends the bulldog may have become jealous when he attacked because Tori was playing with other dogs the family was keeping temporarily.