

### **Third-grader attacked by Golden Retriever**

Reported by [Kristin Anderson](#)

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WESTLAKE -- A third grader in Westlake is recovering from surgery after a Golden Retriever attacked her on the way home from school. The little girl had to get 68-stitches to close her wounds and neighbors can't believe such a kind dog could turn so vicious.

For more than a decade, crossing guard Jo Gibbons has stationed herself outside Hilliard Elementary.

Her dedication to the children is as well known in the neighborhood as her Golden Retriever who is usually outside greeting the students.

"She's a nice lady ... I've known her for years," said neighbor Rich Najjar. "I've never had any problems with her since we moved here."

But Thursday afternoon, while Gibbons was pushing the button to the crosswalk, police say her dog knocked down a 9-year-old and attacked her head.

A neighbor took the girl to Fairview Hospital where she underwent surgery to close the wounds.

Those who know Gibbons and the dog can't believe it.

"It's always been friendly with everybody," another said. "I've never seen it do anything like that before."

Gibbons reported the attack to Westlake police.

The dog is now under a 10-day quarantine inside the house. Gibbons didn't want to talk on camera, but says the attack was out of her dog's character and she's very concerned about the little girl.

Witnesses say the little girl did not provoke the dog in any way.

Her family says she's doing well considering what happened. They hope she can come home soon.

Police say they are reviewing the case with prosecutors to see if any charges will be filed.

We checked with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health and they do not have any record of this dog biting anyone.

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