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DOG ATTACK LEAVES GIRL SCARRED

Terror at friend's home for Jessica, 11

Alexandra Wood

A YOUNG girl may be scarred for life after she was savaged by a husky dog which tore at her face.

Jessica Hussey was in her friend's bedroom getting ready to go to a disco, and was stroking the dog when it suddenly went for her with teeth bared, leaving her horrifically injured.

Jessica, 11, who wants to be a model or a dancer, has had 200 stitches and plastic surgery but there are fears she may have suffered permanent scarring and nerve damage.

The dog, an Alaskan malamute husky which allegedly attacked another neighbour last October, was destroyed the following day.

Jessica's shocked parents Karen and Darren, of Woolam Hill, Burstwick, East Yorkshire, found the 11-year-old with blood pouring from her face.

Mr Hussey said: "It just turned on her for no reason. Jessica is an animal lover, she just loves them to death. She just stroked it and it went for her, full face.

"Jessica was in the living room. She had towels on her face stopping the blood. There was blood all over her face and I couldn't work out what was bleeding.

"I picked her up and took her straight to hospital.

"It had pulled part of her chin off, the skin was hanging down and you could see right into her mouth. It was quite horrific – to see your own daughter like that was shocking."

Yesterday Jessica, who faces further surgery, was recovering at home, clearly deeply traumatised. "She hasn't been talking at all," said Mr Hussey, who said she was being fed through a syringe. "She's sick, she's got a temperature and she's been up all night."

Mr Hussey, a joiner, said the dog's owners were "full of remorse", adding: "Jessica was like a daughter to them and she was always round there playing with the little girl."

He and his wife are now calling for a change in the law which would give the police powers to have dangerous dogs put down without having to go through the courts.

Neighbour Mike Smith said the dog, called Tojo, one of a pair kept by the family across the road, went for him last October when he intervened to stop them attacking his black labrador dog, Barney.

He was left on the ground covered in blood, and still bears a two-inch scar on his forehead. The police were seeking a control order to ensure the dog was muzzled when on the street.

He and his wife went to the police a fortnight ago to ask them to take action, after it allegedly attacked another dog in the village. But they were told that because of delay in obtaining medical records, the case had not yet made it to the courts.

Mr Smith said: "I don't blame the police in one way because it is the law. The police should have the right to get a dangerous dog and make their own decisions."

A police spokeswoman said that because of the way the legislation was written, there was nothing they could do about the attack on Jessica as it happened in the dog owners' home, although her parents could take civil action. She said the dog's owners were looking to rehome their other husky.

She added: "We send our thoughts to Jessica and her family and hope she makes a full recovery."

The dog's owners were too upset to comment yesterday.

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