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## Dog attacks 4-year-old Child airlifted to Vandy with deep puncture wounds on sides of face

By HEATHER DONAHOE  
The Leaf-Chronicle

A toddler was wounded badly Saturday morning when she was attacked by a neighbor's yellow Labrador retriever.

Four-year-old Abby Marie Bent was in neighbors' back yard with some friends on Brook Mead Drive, when the 8-year-old dog, Dyson, bit her face and chest multiple times, said Clarksville Police Sgt. Daryl Brewer.



Abby was taken by ambulance to Outlaw Field, where a LifeFlight medical helicopter was waiting.

Abby was airlifted to Vanderbilt University Medical Center in stable condition with non-life-threatening injuries.

"She was actually just as calm as could be," said Montgomery County Emergency Medical Service Capt. Gerry Pulley.

The little girl suffered deep puncture wounds on both sides of her face and above her nose, Pulley said, adding the chest wounds were less severe.

Dyson was attached to a 15-foot cable, secured to a deck, when the attack happened near a swing set at about 10:45 a.m., police said.

"Because no adults were around, we really aren't sure exactly why the dog attacked — we don't know if the child provoked it or what," Brewer said. "The lady who owns the dog said she came outside when she heard him growling and saw (Abby) running toward her house. She said the other little kids were running around upset."

The dog's owners, Reinaldo and Cynthia Lopez of 330 Brook Mead Drive, told police Dyson's vaccinations were all current and that he had not previously shown signs of aggression.

The Lopezes were instructed by CPD Officer Scott Kirkman to quarantine the dog until Montgomery County Animal Control officers can investigate further.

No charges against the Lopezes are expected, Brewer said.

Animal Control Director David Selby said numerous factors could have precipitated the attack.

"Obviously, this is not too common for a yellow Lab, but even the most gentle family dog can get really territorial," Selby said. "If someone comes around they're not familiar with, that dog's first reaction is to protect itself and its owners. That's why families like them — because they're so loyal."

Determining whether the dog is a mixed breed and if he is, in fact, current on vaccinations could be part of Animal Control's investigation

"It's just really hard to say what may have happened," Selby said. "We'll have to look at the whole

situation."

Abby's condition was unavailable from hospital officials Saturday night.

**Heather Donahoe covers crime and safety and can be reached by telephone at 245-0236 or through e-mail at [heatherdonahoe@theleafchronicle.com](mailto:heatherdonahoe@theleafchronicle.com).**

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