

Indy Steam Academy and First Student, Inc., Under Fire for Forcing 5 and 10-Year-Old Girls Off Bus During Thunderstorm

Parents are outraged and calling for re-evaluation of policies and procedures to protect children.

INDIANAPOLIS, IN, USA, September 5, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A recent incident involving the Indy Steam Academy (ISA) and First Student, Inc., bus company has sparked outrage as two young girls, ages 5 and 10, were forced off the school bus at the wrong stop, almost 2 miles from their home in a high-crime area, during a severe thunderstorm. The incident has raised concerns about the safety and well-being of students under the care of Indy Steam Academy, a charter school in Indianapolis, and First Student, Inc., a student transportation company that boasts on their website they are the largest school transportation company in North America.

10-year-old, Brooklynn, emotionally recounted the traumatic experience that happened on Monday, August 14th: "I did not know where I was, and mommy and daddy were not there to meet me and my little sister." Brooklynn and her 5-year-old sister, Jemiah, were both new to taking the bus home from ISA.

"I told the bus driver that the place where she stopped was not our house, and then I started to cry because I was so scared," Brooklynn tearfully recounted.

This incident has ignited concerns among parents and community members regarding the safety protocols in place by both Indy Steam Academy and First Student, Inc., the independent transportation company contracted by ISA that provides bussing for their students. Parents are left questioning the decision-making process that led to young children being left stranded during adverse weather conditions.



Brooklynn and Jemiah Hornbuckle pictured outside ISA

"I am not only concerned that my children were forced to get off the bus in the middle of a storm, but I am also concerned that no one was there to meet my babies, and any stranger could have come along and abducted them," said Robert Hornbuckle. Statistics show that 71% of non-family abductions happen outdoors. According to the latest child abduction statistics, the most likely time of day for abductions is the afternoon or early in the morning, when children are walking to and from school and walking to catch the bus. These same statistics also reflect that when the perpetrators are strangers, in 40% of the cases the victims are killed.

A report from the Office of the Attorney General and Indiana Coalition to End Sexual Assault and Human Trafficking shows human trafficking in Indianapolis, the same city where Brooklynn and Jemiah attend school, is real and is something for parents to be concerned about. During an interview in March of this year, [IMPD Sgt. Genae Cook](#) said, "I think human trafficking is one of those silent crimes that's not only going on in foreign countries, but it's happening right here in Indianapolis."

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safe.

Jenisha Tate, the mother of Brooklynn and Jemiah, remarked, "The outcome could have been much worse, leading to an entirely different discussion today." She added, "Our girls made it home alive, but this could have been a different day for us. I don't even want to contemplate that; I simply want to take the necessary steps to prevent other parents from experiencing



Brooklynn and Jemiah with their parents

5 and 10-year-old little girls wandered in adverse weather for appx. 4.5 hours trying to find their way home.

According to Brooklynn, at one point a lady stopped to help them cross the street and a police officer also stopped to help them, yet this officer did not offer to help them get home safely.

There are multiple questions that have arisen from this incident, and one of those questions is whether or not the children will remain enrolled at ISA? Robert and Jenisha are exploring ways that they can effectuate change in policies and procedures to keep the children in their community

something like this or worse with their children."

Following their exposure to harsh weather conditions for more than 4 hours, Brooklynn was diagnosed with acute pneumonia, and Jemiah was diagnosed with a severe ear infection.

It is important to note that the parents of Brooklynn and Jemiah have removed their girls from ISA, but they were unable to successfully enroll them at a school together.

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For additional information or for interviews, contact Tanya Wiley-Brown at 310-924-1180 or Mariah Kador at 225-718-1542.

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Brooklynn and Jemiah_Jenisha and Robert Hornbuckle

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