



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT  
OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

AVERY D. NILES, COMMISSIONER

A MESSAGE FROM THE  
**OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS**

Avery D. Niles, Commissioner

Jim Shuler, Director  
Office of Communications



**DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE**

3408 Covington Highway ▪ Decatur, Georgia ▪ 30032-1513  
Telephone: (404) 508-7147 ▪ Fax: (404) 508-7341

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:**

**Jim Shuler, Director  
DJJ Communications  
(404) 508-7238**

**[JimShuler@djj.state.ga.us](mailto:JimShuler@djj.state.ga.us)**

**INJURED YOUTH RELEASED FROM AUGUSTA HOSPITAL  
DJJ COMMISSIONER ASKS GBI TO WIDEN INVESTIGATION AT YDC**

**(Augusta YDC)** The juvenile offender injured in a fight at the Augusta YDC last Sunday night has been released from a local Augusta hospital. The Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice announced today that the 15-year-old youth, who was released from treatment mid-week, is now described as recovering well from cuts and bruises sustained during the assault.

DJJ reported Monday that the youth received first aid treatment on-scene and was transported to a local hospital after Augusta YDC supervisors received a report of youth-on-youth violence in a residence unit at the Augusta Youth Development Campus.

Juvenile Corrections Officers reported the fight at the YDC involved two male offenders and no other youth assigned in the living unit were involved in the assault and no one else was injured.

DJJ Commissioner Avery D. Niles made an official request Sunday for assistance from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to conduct the criminal investigation on-site. From the first night, a team of GBI agents has been assigned to the case.

Later this week, Commissioner Niles made another formal request to GBI Headquarters asking for the same team of investigators "...to be assigned to look at all matters of a criminal nature they may uncover during their interrogations at Augusta YDC." Commissioner Niles said, "DJJ made this request as part of this department's ongoing pursuit of justice and agency transparency in Augusta."

Agents from the DJJ Internal Investigations Unit continue to conduct this agency's administrative investigation and share their findings with the GBI. "We appreciate this assistance from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to develop the case for successful prosecution," said Commissioner Niles.

Commissioner Niles reported the Augusta Youth Development Campus was removed from lockdown status earlier this week, but some changes he ordered in security staffing will remain in effect due to the continuing security problems at the in Augusta facility.

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Commissioner Niles said he will take whatever additional precautions are needed during this investigation and will continue to enforce the necessary measures when it's over to ensure the safety and security of the youth in our custody at Augusta YDC. The Commissioner has publicly announced plans to name a new full time Director for the YDC before the end of this month to change directions and achieve new safety and security goals at the challenged facility.

DJJ will recommend that felony charges should be filed against the perpetrator who injured the 15-year-old on campus Sunday. Neither youth involved in the incident will be returned to Augusta YDC. The two youth are being moved to separate DJJ facilities. The widening joint DJJ – GBI investigation is expected to continue at the Augusta YDC for several weeks.

**(END RELEASE)**