

KIDS FOUND ALONE IN APARTMENT - 3 BOYS IN STATE CUSTODY INVESTIGATORS SEEK MOTHER

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Three young boys who were allegedly left alone by their **mother** in their **Detroit** apartment Saturday night spent Sunday night in a state office building and were **to be** placed Monday in a foster home, a state child abuse investigator said.

The boys, ages 3, 6 and 7, were found alone by police officers from **Detroit** 's 13th (Woodward) Precinct at about 9 p.m. Sunday in an apartment on Seward Street near Woodward and West Grand Boulevard.

A neighbor had called police saying the children in a first-floor apartment were alone and had been eating garbage, according **to** a police report filed in Wayne County Family Court.

According **to** the report, the children told police their **mother** had left them at about 7 p.m. Saturday while she went somewhere in Mt. Clemens. Officers said there was inadequate furniture and "sanitation needs" for the children in the apartment although those needs were not explained.

The **mother** , identified in court documents as Porshia Walker, was not home when police arrived Sunday and also failed **to** appear for a preliminary hearing in family court Monday morning.

Investigators with the **Detroit** police child abuse unit are investigating. The **mother** could **be charged** with contributing **to** the delinquency or neglect of a minor, a misdemeanor punishable by up **to** one year in jail.

Walker's cousin, Elaine Ellis of Clinton Township, said Monday that Walker had called her Sunday afternoon asking for a ride from Mt. Clemens. Ellis said she dropped Walker off at the Macomb Mall at about 4 p.m. and had not heard from Walker since.

"I don't know what **to** do," Ellis said. "My brother tried **to** get the kids from the police station but they wouldn't release them **to** him."

Walker moved **to Detroit** from Clinton Township about seven months ago, Ellis said, and had recently been laid off from her job in **Detroit** as a machine operator.

Ellis said she tried **to** reach the children's father by calling his grandmother in Nashville, Tenn. So far, she has had no luck.

Child Protective Services investigator Melonie Keeler of the state Family Independence Agency told family court referee Kathleen Walton on Monday that "the children said that they didn't know a correct address of where the **mother** is right now."

After police turned the children over **to** the FIA, the boys spent the night in the agency's office at 2929 Russell Street in **Detroit** 's Eastern Market area, Keeler said.

Keeler said the FIA would place the children in a foster home immediately.

"We still don't know where the **mother** is and it's almost two days since she left them," Walton said.

The referee set a Jan. 29 pre-trial hearing **to** decide whether the children should **be** made temporary wards of the court. The designation means that a judge or referee would decide all legal issues involving the children, including where they live.

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