

Tyler Morning Telegraph

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5-year-old shooting victim released from ICU

FROM STAFF REPORTS

A 5-year-old Tyler boy injured in an apartment complex shooting has been released from the intensive care unit, his mother said in a social media update Tuesday.

Josiah Williams, 5, was critically injured during a shooting at Victory Park Apartments on May 29. He was taken to a local hospital and later flown to Dallas for further treatment.

Ashley Williams, the boy's mother, said "Jojo" is leaving the ICU as he continues to heal from the shooting.

"This is not the end of his story," Williams said in a previous interview with our news partners at CBS19. "This is just another chapter in his



Josiah Williams

journey."

The family was sitting inside their apartment when Josiah was struck in the head by a bullet from gunfire that came through the window.

Police recovered multiple shell casings at the scene and confirmed numerous rounds were fired. No other injuries were reported.

The suspect has not been identified or arrested.

RECOVERY >> PAGE 3A



Ashley Williams, center, said her 5-year-old son Josiah Williams, left, is leaving the ICU after he was critically injured during a shooting last month. (Contributed Photo)



NATION/WORLD

U.S. hails deal that defers goals

The Trump administration hailed its interim peace deal with Iran that's meant to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, even as hawks in the U.S. pointed to the billions of dollars of economic gains set to come Tehran's way. **Page 2A**




SPORTS

Getting in 'The Zone' at annual photo shoot

It may be June, but football is always on the minds of East Texans. On Tuesday, one of two "The Zone" photo shoots took place inside Bill Waters Gymnasium on the campus of Gladewater High School. **Page 6A**

Today's weather

Partly sunny, hot and humid. High of 97.  **THREE-DAY FORECAST, PAGE 3A**

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Bible verse

"Sing to God, sing praise to his name, extol him who rides on the clouds — his name is the Lord — and rejoice before him. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling." (Psalm 68:4-5)

Need assistance?

Editorial/newsroom
Managing Editor Santana Wood (903) 237-7749
santana.wood@tylerpaper.com
Circulation customer service
(903) 597-1121
csr@tylerpaper.com

Want to subscribe? Have delivery questions?

Call 903-597-1121 or visit tylerpaper.com

Corrections

It is the policy of the Tyler Morning Telegraph to correct errors. Direct requests for corrections or clarifications to Managing Editor Santana Wood at (903) 237-7749.

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Leaders of Unbound Now pose for a photo. The local nonprofit aims to end human trafficking by identifying victims, supporting survivors, seeking justice, and leading system change. (Unbound Now/Contributed Photo)

'Know What to Look For'

Smith County organizations partner for human trafficking training

LEEZA MEYER

Law enforcement officers, therapists, professionals and residents participated in a human trafficking training at the Children's Advocacy Center in Smith County last week to help recognize life-saving signs.

The Unbound Now Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY), Smith County District Attorney's (DA) Office, and Children's Advocacy Center of Smith County (CACSC) hosted the first-ever public training from 8 a.m. to noon on June 11, during which time 45 participants learned basic warning signs, risk factors, example scenarios and how to respond and listened to a presentation by the DA's office about what minor situations look like specifically in Smith County.

The training is vital for victims to receive immediate help, said Maria Villarreal, advocacy coordinator for Unbound Now CSEY, a nonprofit organization that assists with human trafficking victim identification, survivor advocacy and justice system support.

"It is super important for



In Smith County, there are four corners Unbound Now keeps an eye on due to a heavy accumulation of hotels next to Interstate 20. "... Smith County is considered a hub of human trafficking in East Texas," said Maria Villarreal, advocacy coordinator for Unbound Now CSEY.

people to know what to look for," Villarreal said. "You can't recognize what you don't know."

The U.S. Department of Justice defines human trafficking as a crime that involves compelling or coercing an adult or minor to provide labor and services or engage in commercial sex acts.

In 2025, Smith County had a range of 1 to 5 female minors who were reported

to be human trafficked and Texas overall had 89 confirmed trafficked minors with Bexar County around San Antonio having the most with 12 confirmed female minors, according to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

"We decided to host this training because we've had a lot of requests from the community for us to do human trafficking training,"

Villarreal said. "We talked about the victimology of the issue, CAC talked about the trauma of the issue and the district attorney's office talked about the persecution as well as the law enforcement aspect of this issue."

Villarreal said some indicators the training covered included if a minor is constantly running away, talking with someone much older, if they are meeting people online, if they have a

history of abuse, a criminal record or drug history or seeming to be controlled.

"For example if I had somebody here with me and I was asking them questions and the adult is the only one answering the questions, that could be a red flag because maybe that adult doesn't want them to tell me or you exactly what is happening and they are talking for them to prevent the truth from coming out," Villarreal said.

In Smith County, there are four corners Unbound Now keeps an eye on due to a heavy accumulation of hotels next to Interstate 20, Villarreal said.

"Traffickers are coming through I-20 with the victim, selling them here and then moving along the way," Villarreal said. "Smith County is considered a hub of human trafficking in East Texas."

Villarreal said law enforcement perform operations in the county where they attempt to make contact with a victim, meet them in a safe environment and then refer them to local **TRAFFICKING >> PAGE 3A**

Regulators explore new way of vetting data center requests

PAUL COBLER
The Texas Tribune

If you look at recent forecasts for future demand on Texas's energy grid, the state must find a way to more than quadruple its energy production in the next six years or risk high energy prices and blackouts.

However, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, the energy grid operator that produces the forecasts, says they are wrong thanks to a

massive influx of data centers prematurely requesting connection to the grid.

"Our existing process really was not designed for the volume of large load interconnection requests that we have been experiencing," Jeff Billo, ERCOT's vice president of interconnection and grid analysis, said at the organization's June 2 board meeting.

Interconnection requests from "large loads" like data centers, cryptocurrency mines and industrial fa-

cilities that use significant amounts of energy have forced ERCOT to revise its planning and approval process to keep pace with a changing world and economy. ERCOT now wants to evaluate data centers in batches, voting June 2 to proceed with its first combined study, or batch, of such facilities, known as "Batch Zero."

That new process for vetting energization requests **REQUESTS >> PAGE 3A**



The ERCOT board of directors meet at the organization's Austin headquarters on Dec. 3, 2024. (Noah Devereaux for the Texas Tribune)

