

Springfield toddler Kyaun Jackson, 2, killed by SUV in driveway of grandmother's East Hartford home

By [Conor Berry, The Republican](#) on [October 23, 2013](#) at 5:10 AM, updated at 8:39 AM



Kyaun Jackson, 2, of Springfield, was killed Saturday at his grandmother's East Hartford home after the woman's boyfriend accidentally backed over the child in an SUV, according to Connecticut authorities. *(Facebook)*

SPRINGFIELD — The 2-year-old boy who was **struck and killed** by a sport utility vehicle in East Hartford over the weekend lived in Springfield, according to news reports.

Kyaun Jackson was run over by an SUV that was backing out of the driveway of his grandmother's Connecticut home, [abc40](#) reports.

The toddler lived with his mother, [Drena Sanders](#), in Springfield, according to the TV station, whose report did not include an address for the family.

"Having to, you know, bury your son at such a young age, you do everything to protect your kids," Sanders told abc40. "And I prayed every night – every night – since both of my kids were born that God protected them from everything. And as a mom, I did that."

Sanders dropped off her son at his grandmother's East Hartford home on Friday evening. On Saturday afternoon, however, Sanders received devastating news that Kyaun was killed after his grandmother's boyfriend backed over him with an SUV. The toddler was playing on a scooter in the driveway, according to Sanders.

Charges have not been filed in connection with the fatality, part of a growing national trend that kills nearly 300 people and injures about 18,000 annually, according to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#). About 44 percent of fatalities from so-called back-over crashes involve children, most of whom are less than 5 years old. The other most vulnerable group is senior citizens, who represent about 33 percent of all back-over fatalities.

Sgt. Michael DeMaine, public information officer for the [East Hartford Police Department](#), said the accident happened around 3 p.m. Saturday at 20 Morris Court. An [initial investigation](#) indicates Kyaun was playing in the driveway at that address when the driver of a Ford Expedition, 42-year-old William Troy Johnson, backed into the boy.

DeMaine said Kyaun was treated at the scene before being taken to Connecticut Children's Medical Center in Hartford, where he was pronounced dead. The boy died from skull fractures and brain injuries caused by blunt impact to the head, officials said.

"The East Hartford Accident Reconstruction Team responded to investigate this fatal motor vehicle accident. This investigation is ongoing and there are no charges filed at this time," DeMaine said in a statement issued by police on Monday.

Sanders, who's still trying to sort out what happened, said her 8-year-old daughter witnessed her younger brother get killed.

Police did not release the grandmother's name, but [WFSB-Eyewitness News 3](#) has identified her as Kimberly Edwards, 43. "Unfortunately, my boyfriend didn't get a chance to get out of the driveway before Kyaun was right there, out of nowhere, and I was standing there ... and I didn't see the scooter or him," Edwards told the Hartford TV station.

Edwards, who lives at the Morris Court residence with Johnson, said she scooped up her grandson and tried to protect his badly injured head.

Edwards said Johnson, who loved Kyaun, had to be hospitalized after the accident because he could not bear the pain of what had happened. Kyaun referred to Johnson as "Toy, Toy," Edwards said, and the pair would often watch football together.

Edwards is the mother of Kyaun's father, and the Springfield boy would often visit his father's family in East Hartford, which is only about 24 miles south of Springfield.

With more Americans driving larger vehicles, back-over deaths are enough of a problem that Congress passed a 2007 law ordering the Transportation Department to have a rule in place by 2011 requiring cameras or other backup warning devices on all new cars and light trucks.

But those regulations have yet to take effect, prompting a coalition of car-safety advocates and others to file a [lawsuit](#) against the Obama administration to enforce the law. Two of the plaintiffs in the suit, filed last month in federal court in New York, are parents who accidentally backed over their kids.

Sen. [Richard Blumenthal](#), D-Conn., has called the delays "outrageous and unacceptable." Blumenthal said in September that "rear cameras should become standard on all cars," just as seat belts and airbags are required features in all vehicles.

In the meantime, Sanders is facing the difficult task of burying her baby boy. A funeral is planned for Monday, but service details were not immediately available.

"I don't really think you can move on when you, like, lose something that's, like, a part of you," she told abc40. "I want my son here with me, but I know he's in a better place."

The Sanders family is accepting donations to help defray the cost of the funeral. Anyone wishing to make a contribution can send a check to: The Kyaun Jackson Memorial Fund, United Bank, 1077 St. James Avenue, Springfield, MA, 01104. Donations can also be made in person at any United Bank branch.

Material from abc40, the East Hartford Police Department, the Hartford Courant, USA Today and WFSB-Eyewitness News 3 was used in this report.

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2013/10/report_2-year-old_kyaun_jackso.html