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## Parents charged in baby's death

### Boy had drugs in his system, authorities say

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The parents of a Riviera Beach toddler who died six weeks ago with enough cocaine and oxycodone in his system to "kill an adult" are now facing felony charges of child neglect.

"It's very sad," said Riviera Beach police Sgt. Pat Galligan. "This baby's dead because of serious narcotics in his system."

The 21-month-old child, Darius Clark, died April 21 after being rushed from his home in the 700 block of W. Ninth Street to St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach.

The Medical Examiner's Office had a grim conclusion for detectives on Tuesday: a toxicology test on Darius had revealed there was enough oxycodone and cocaine in the little boy's system to kill an adult, Galligan said.

Two days later, when told that her son died with drugs in his system, Toccara Nobles appeared surprised and started to cry, according to police reports. Nobles, 25, was arrested Thursday and charged with child neglect causing great bodily harm. She told detectives she never gave Darius either drug and declined to give any further sworn statements.

Her boyfriend, Vincent Clark, 29, was arrested on unrelated felony charges shortly after his son's death and now faces a child neglect charge as well, Galligan said. Clark hid under a pile of clothes when police arrived at the home to investigate the death because of the outstanding warrants, according to police reports.

A Department of Children & Families investigator told police detectives the agency had prior involvement with the family and that Clark was not supposed to be in the house.

Police found three different kinds of pills in one prescription pill bottle on the bedroom dresser; the bottle's label had Nobles' name on it, according to police reports.

During the detectives' initial investigation, Nobles said she lived in the home with her sons and her father, and that her boyfriend had stayed the night. The toddler ate fried chicken, rice and macaroni and cheese and went to bed with Nobles between 10 and 11 p.m., according to what she told investigators.

At some point during the night, Nobles woke up and found "white stuff" on Darius's face. She wiped it off and went back to sleep. When she woke up in the morning, she got her older son ready for school and returned to the bedroom to wake up Clark and Darius, but Darius was stiff and would not wake up.

Nobles called 911 while Clark attempted CPR, according to police reports.

Clark, who spoke to investigators several days later, gave a slightly different account of what happened. In a police interview on April 25, Clark told detectives he and Darius went to sleep about 1 a.m. He said he had no medication in his pockets that could have fallen out. He also said he was the one who woke up in the morning and discovered his son's body to be stiff.

DCF spokeswoman Laura Tingo said the case is still under investigation.

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