



DJJ Commissioner Neil Hernandez discussed Florida Boot Camp case with Court TV 'Bloom & Politan' host Lisa Bloom.

DJJ Discusses Florida Boot Camp Death With Court TV's Lisa Bloom

On October 12th, DJJ Commissioner Neil Hernandez appeared on Court TV's 'Bloom & Politan' to discuss the trial of Florida juvenile detention staff members charged with causing the death of resident Marvin Anderson. Anderson was a 14-year old resident placed in detention for joyriding, who collapsed and died while in custody after engaging in strenuous physical activity imposed by boot camp officials.

Prosecutors in the Florida case alleged state employees caused the death of the victim by ignoring medical information that should have restricted the youth's activity.

Commissioner Hernandez confirmed that Boot Camps do not exist in New York because of the risk they pose to young residents. In the aftermath of the death, Florida officials closed their boot camps, a growing trend that has already been implemented in several states across the country. Boot camps have come under increasing scrutiny as incidents of injury and death have sparked questions as to their effectiveness in caring for juveniles.

"In the City's juvenile detention system, we would have picked up on his medical condition, we would have engaged his prior medical provider and we would not have allowed him to be engaged in physical activity. He should never have been in this boot camp, bottom line," Commissioner Hernandez said. "Here in the City, we're not just concerned about public safety, but we're concerned about supporting these kids, their families; keeping them at home, de-institutionalizing the juvenile justice system and being responsive to their needs."

"There are a lot of very disturbing questions," said famed victim's rights attorney Gloria Allred, who also appeared on the program. "Don't they (Florida Juvenile Justice officials) have a duty to provide a safe environment for those juveniles who are coming into their care? Why didn't they properly assess him before they had him running?"

Jury deliberations concluded late in the day on October 12th with the jury finding insufficient evidence to convict the seven employees, resulting in acquittals for all charged in the case.

Court TV's 'Bloom & Politan' airs weekday mornings to a national audience that exceeds one million viewers.

