



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

Date: September 15, 2021
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Two Arrested on Child Neglect Charges after 4-Year-Old Falls Out of Moving Vehicle

On September 15, 2021, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) arrested two suspects after a child fell out of their moving vehicle. The two adult occupants, identified as Jacob Santos (DOB: 11/16/05), the driver, and Desiree Rodriguez (4/27/95), the mother of the child and passenger.



Left: Jacob Santos (Uncle) (DOB: 11/16/05) Right: Desiree Rodriguez (Mother) (4/27/95).

The reporting party called 911 after witnessing a small child falling out of the rear door of a vehicle. The reporting party also witnessed the car continuing to travel west on State Road 100 without stopping to collect the child.

Shortly after, the vehicle returned to the scene to collect the child. During the investigation, it was discovered that there were four juveniles in the backseat, ages 4 to 9, including the child who was ejected. All four of the juveniles were not wearing seatbelts as there were only three seatbelts available and no car seats located in the vehicle. The two adults in the vehicle did not realize that the 4-year-old had fallen out of the vehicle until the other juveniles had alerted them.

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The driver arrived back on scene to collect the child while the reporting party was talking with the deputy. Deputies noticed a strong smell of marijuana coming from the vehicle.

Deputies located recently smoked marijuana, a baggie of approximately 1 gram of marijuana, and a baggie of 2 ½ Xanax bars.

The adults stated that they were heading to South Carolina from Miami to see family. Rodriguez stated that she fell asleep at one point during the drive and woke up to the other children asking where their sibling was.

“This is another mother who will not be earning the mother of the year award and the uncle won’t be the uncle of the year,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “I am glad that the child was not hurt. This could have ended very badly for the child. Thank you to the witness for calling us and to the deputies that quickly responded to protect the child and arresting the uncle and mother for child neglect.”

Jacob Santos was arrested and transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility without incident. He’s being charged with Child Neglect, Driving While License Suspended, and Possession of Marijuana under 20 grams. He is being held on a \$3,400 bond.

Desiree Rodriguez was arrested and transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility without incident. She’s being charged with Possession of a Controlled Substance and Child Neglect. She is being held on a \$5,000.

All four children were turned over to the Department of Children and Families DCF.

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