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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - Federal officials will not pursue civil rights violations or other charges against the boot camp employees implicated in the videotaped death of a 14-year-old who was hit and kicked by guards while a nurse looked on, the Justice Department said Friday.

Despite a lengthy investigation, prosecutors could not establish that the seven guards and the nurse willfully deprived Martin Lee Anderson of his civil rights, the department said, and the probe has been closed.

"They have all the evidence in the world and still no one is held accountable," said Ben Crump, an attorney for the teen's parents.

Anderson died Jan. 6, 2006, a day after being hit and kicked by the guards. A videotape of the 30-minute incident attracted national attention and led to the closure of Florida's boot camps for juvenile offenders.

Anderson had just been assigned to the Panama City camp after he was caught trespassing at a school, which violated his probation on another charge.

Crump said the family was told of the decision during a lengthy, emotional meeting with U.S. prosecutors at the federal courthouse in Tallahassee. About 30 family supporters gathered outside the building. Some carried signs: "Murder on TV." "Justice is not blind. Watch the video." "No Justice, No Peace."

"What did they want, 45 minutes more (of videotape), another hour?" Crump asked. "This was the one time we had such hope, such faith."

He said the federal officials invited Anderson's relatives to discuss the decision directly with U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder Jr. in Washington, D.C., "and that's our next stop."

"It's not over," said Gina Jones, the boy's mother. "It's not closed and I'm going to make sure it stays open. That was my baby. There was no reason to be beaten like that."

A state court jury acquitted the guards and nurse of manslaughter on Oct. 12, 2007. Federal authorities then began investigating whether the boy's civil rights were violated.

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Coincidence

I guess it seems odd the the kid had this medical condition which just happened to manifest itself after getting beaten instead of a week earlier or later. It would be interesting to know all the facts of the case.

posted by **kite005s** on Apr 16, 10 at 11:31 am |

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Another coverup -

If the kid had not gone to boot camp - even at his own doing - he would be alive - they killed him - but, it acceptable. B friggin S .

posted by **fnortner** on Apr 16, 10 at 11:37 am |

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FLORIDA LAW

Laws are a little different in those Republican states.

posted by **jbander** on Apr 16, 10 at 12:47 pm |

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