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Police Searching For Missing Girl, 16

Parents Worried About Teen's Welfare

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BOSTON -- Police are searching for a Pembroke, Mass., girl who left a school for troubled teens nearly a week ago and hasn't been seen since.

Family members said Brenda Santos, 16, doesn't have her medication with her, so they're desperate to find her.

NewsCenter 5's Mary Saladna reported that Santos' family is distraught.

"We love her and we miss her and you know, she needs to know that if she has control of this situation, you know, we're not mad. We just want her home," her mother Amy said, breaking into tears.

Amy and Bob Santos have not seen their daughter for six days. The couple adopted Brenda at age 5 to rescue the girl from a childhood of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. The teen attends Pelham Academy in Lexington, a school and residential treatment program where she receives medication, counseling and support for her special emotional needs.

But last Friday morning, Brenda, who is supposed to be closely supervised, was allowed to walk out of the school with another student.

"They have acknowledged the fact that the staff were not trained appropriately," Amy said.

"It's been very frustrating, I mean, they're the ones that let her out the door. That's the bottom line. They let her out the door," Bob said.

Officials at Pelham Academy said they could not comment on the case because of confidentiality considerations, and because the teen Brenda was with is in DSS custody, little is known about her background or possible whereabouts. The Santos' concern now is that Brenda could be in trouble - over her head.

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"Brenda is easily influenced. In her need for attachment to anybody would definitely crumble under pressure of, you know, 'If you report me or turn us in, I'm not going to be your friend,'" Amy said.

Lexington police have two detectives working the case. They're asking anyone with information to contact them.

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