

Cleveland police gave 12-year-old Tamir Rice no medical aid after shooting him

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Newly-released video footage of the November 22 police shooting of 12-year-old Tamir Rice shows Cleveland police officers providing no medical aid to the child as he lay on the ground dying. The video clip also shows the same police tackling and handcuffing Tamir's 14-year-old sister as she attempted to run to her brother's side.

Tamir Rice was shot on November 22 by rookie Cleveland Police Department (CPD) officer Timothy Loehmann as the child played in a park with a toy gun. In addition to shooting the youth in less than two seconds after arriving at the scene, the new extended video shows Loehmann and partner Frank Garmback standing by and talking between themselves while Tamir lay dying. The child, who was shot in the abdomen and died nine hours later, received no medical assistance from the police until an FBI officer arrived on the scene several minutes later.

After roughly 90 seconds, the video shows Tamir's 14-year-old sister attempting to run to her brother's aid, at which point officer Garmback aggressively tackles, handcuffs, and throws the visibly distraught teenager into the back of his police car.

"This has to be the cruelest thing I've ever seen on video," stated Walter Madison, an attorney for the Rice family.

"This video shows in crystal clear HD that the responding officers acted inappropriately and recklessly," said another family attorney, Benjamin L. Crump. "The family is outraged that rather than comfort a sister coming to the aid of her dying brother, the officers instead manhandled and tackled her, cuffed her and thoughtlessly tossed her in the back of a patrol car," Crump added. The Rice family has filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the Cleveland Police Department.

Neither of the two officers involved in the incident have faced serious repercussions for their murderous behavior. Timothy Loehmann, the officer who shot Tamir, has a long history of mental instability, and had received a string of rejections when applying for work at other police departments before he was hired by the CPD. Cleveland officials have announced that the county's Sheriff's department will be leading an investigation into the killing, headed by an official with long-standing ties to the CPD.

The video corroborates statements made last month by Samaria Rice, Tamir's mother. "I noticed my son laying down on the ground, and I went charging and yelling and everything at the police because they wouldn't let me through," she said. "Then I saw my daughter in the back of the police car as I was trying to get through to my son. The police told me to calm down or they would put me in the back of the police car. ... The police was just standing around and wasn't doing anything." Samaria said that police had given her a choice to "either ... stay with the 14-year-old, or ... go with the 12-year-old."

The Northeast Ohio Media Group, which first released the video, noted that officials for the city of Cleveland had initially fought to keep the footage from the public. The video's release comes amid numerous allegations of police brutality by the CPD. A Cuyahoga County medical examiner ruled earlier this week that the death of Tanisha Anderson, a 37-year-old mother, was a homicide due to "sudden death associated with physical restraint in a prone position." Police had slammed the woman's head into the pavement, causing her to black out and stop breathing, while little was done to revive her.

On Thursday, a Cuyahoga County judge issued a ruling that called for the reinstatement of two CPD

officers who had killed two unarmed suspects in a hail of bullets after they had engaged the officers in a car chase. A Justice Department investigation into the Cleveland Police Department, issued last month, noted that the CPD engaged in “a pattern or practice of the use of excessive force in violation of the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution.” The methods used by CPD included the “unnecessary and excessive use of deadly force ... shootings and head strikes with impact weapons” and “unnecessary, excessive or retaliatory use of less lethal force including tasers, chemical spray and fists.”

The killing of Rice was just one of a surge of police killings which contributed to mass protests against police brutality throughout the globe last year. The killing came just days before a St. Louis, Missouri grand jury decided not to indict Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson for the August killing of unarmed youth Michael Brown. That killing led to mass outrage, as National Guard units were deployed throughout the region in order to repress peaceful protests against the killing.

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