



Written by [Mary McHugh](#) on December 13, 2010

WI Teenager Accused of Child Abuse Against Older Teen

Early last October police in Watertown, Wisconsin, were called to the local high school, where a school official had reported that a 17-year-old female student in his office was complaining of having been physically assaulted by another student.

The alleged perpetrator, Brandi Jo Winkelman, was 10 months younger than her accuser. Because the victim was under 18, Winkelman was charged with felony child abuse by intentionally causing bodily harm, according to prosecutor Robert Barrington. Added to this was the misdemeanor charge of disorderly conduct. Winkelman's attorney, Steve Luchsinger, explained that the fight concerned a boy and that his client "was provoked and acting in self-defense."



The words "child abuse" have a "tremendous emotional impact," he noted in a [Chicago Tribune](#) report. Though some details are still sketchy, according to the criminal complaint filed with the Dodge County courthouse, the victim was confronted by Winkelman between classes in a hallway and a fight occurred over some rumors. Winkelman was accused of striking the girl three times. The victim said she never struck Winkelman.

According to the [Beaver Dam Daily Citizen](#):

The girl told officers the next day that she went to a dentist to get a custom made mouth guard for her teeth and they were loose and she had a hairline fracture on her teeth. She also went to the hospital and found she had a very light concussion.

Attorney Luchsinger stated that the accused, Winkelman, is an honors student and basketball player and "because of a glitch in the law, she's charged with child abuse."

Winkelman was released on a \$1,000 bond. A preliminary hearing is set for January 20. If convicted of both offenses, she will face a maximum of \$11,000 in fines and a six-year, 90-day jail term.



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