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Police: At Home When Teens Reportedly Drinking, Parents Don't Answer Police Knocks, Intoxicated Father Arrested

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Police officers responding to a report of teenage drinking didn't find any of that among the teens present, but the father — who didn't answer the bedroom door until police had knocked on it for more than five minutes — appeared intoxicated, groggy and confused, police said.

Police charged him with four counts of risk of injury to a child.

Police described what happened with this account, including accusations not proven in court:

Police said they received a report of teenagers drinking at 11:58 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 16, at a house near the northern end of Hollow Tree Ridge Road.

When officers arrived there, they were met by a 15-year-old girl who said she had invited a group of friends over (the announcement didn't say how many were at the party).

She told police that two girls were drinking, but they had left. Police did not say that the girl was charged with anything.

Police checked the house and found no signs of ongoing drinking where the teenagers were.

Police asked to speak with her parents, but the girl told them they were asleep. The girl knocked on their door, but that didn't rouse them. A police officer then began knocking on the door. That knocking lasted for "an extended period of time," the police announcement said.

Several younger children got up out of bed to see what was going on. The officer continued knocking for another five minutes. From behind the door, a man finally acknowledged the officers' presence, but at first he wouldn't open the door. After several more minutes, the man, John Wellenius, 48, the children's father, opened the door.

A police officer immediately saw that Wellenius appeared intoxicated. He didn't know what day or time it was, and when asked about the teenagers in his home drinking alcohol, he said he was aware that his daughter had friends over, but not that anyone was drinking.

The police announcement also said: "Based on the confirmation of under-aged consumption of alcohol within the residence during the evening and the length of time that it took to make contact with the parents, probable cause existed that the inability to rouse the parents caused a risk to the minor children. In the event of an emergency, Mr. Wellenius would have been unable to provide reasonable assistance in a timely fashion for several other minor children in the home under the age of 10."

Wellenius was arrested.

Although the police said the children's mother was in the same room with the father and, at least initially, also couldn't be roused from sleep, the police announcement didn't say why and did not say she was intoxicated. The announcement didn't say she was charged with anything.

"The five remaining (non-family) juveniles were released into the custody of a parent," the announcement said. "The 15-year-old resident showed no signs of alcohol consumption and was determined to be able to care for the younger children if need required."

If the parent referred to was the mother in the bedroom, the announcement describes police leaving the children in the exact same situation it describes the father leaving them in, except later at night and after the party.

Wellenius was released on a \$500 bond and is scheduled to appear Nov. 27 in state Superior Court in

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