

Looking for answers

Parents of toddler killed by falling garage door claim reports of tragedy were incorrect; seek to clarify circumstances

By Matthew Van Dongen (St. Catharines Standard)
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The distraught parents of Kolton Tkachuk said Thursday the tragic death of their beloved three-year-old “should never have happened.”

“We want answers to how this happened,” said Kyle and Frances Tkachuk in an e-mail to The Standard Thursday.

The active, talkative toddler died after he was struck by a falling garage door at the family’s Cherie Road home Wednesday.

The St. Catharines family wants answers — but they also want the public to understand the circumstances surrounding their son’s death.

“We just want the public and our family and friends to know exactly what happened,” said Kyle, who added that parts of police and media reports about the tragedy were incorrect.

In particular, Kolton didn’t dart into the garage as the door fell, said Frances.

Instead, he was standing with his mother, who was talking to the owner of the construction company hired to fix the garage door, according to Frances.

She said she had opened the door from the outdoor keypad, but no work had begun.

Police reported a worker entered the garage with the intention of disconnecting the door from the opener.

Frances said a release cable was pulled and the heavy door fell on her son.

The Standard wasn’t able to reach a representative of the company, Concrete Finishing Services of St. Catharines.

Both the regional coroner and the provincial Ministry of Labour are investigating, but Niagara Regional Police are not treating the incident as a crime.

Provincial officials said Thursday their investigation is ongoing.

Kyle wouldn’t say Thursday whether the family would seek an inquest or further investigation into the circumstances surrounding Kolton’s death, noting he hasn’t seen the coroner’s report yet.

The family was more concerned Thursday with coming to grips with an unthinkable tragedy.

“We are very devastated,” the parents said in the e-mail.

This past weekend, Kolton celebrated his third birthday, surrounded by family and friends.

“He was so special as he brought our family, parents, grandparents and so many others in the community so much joy and life,” they wrote.

“This has taken a piece out of each one of our hearts.”