

Judge orders change of unusual first name

NEWPORT, Tenn. (AP) – A judge in Tennessee changed a 7-month-old boy's name to Martin from Messiah, saying the name was earned by only one person.

Child Support Magistrate Lu Ann Ballew ordered the name change, according to WBIR-TV (on.wbir.com/lcDOeTY).

"It could put him at odds with a lot of people and at this point he has had no choice in what his name is," Ballew said.

It was the first time she ordered a first name change, the judge said.

Messiah was No. 4 among the fastest-rising baby names in 2012, according to the Social Security Administration's annual list of popular baby names.

The judge in eastern Tennessee said the baby was to be named Martin DeShawn McCullough, which includes both parents' last names.

The boy's mother, Jaleesa Martin, of Newport, said she will appeal. She says Messiah is unique and that she liked how it sounded alongside the boy's two siblings – Micah and Mason.

"Everybody believes what they want so I think I should be able to name my child what I want to name him, not someone else," Martin said.

Ballew said the name Messiah could cause problems if the child grows up in Cocke County, which has a large Christian population.

"The word Messiah is a title and it's a title that has only been earned by one person and that one person is Jesus Christ," the judge said.

Kids, teens at risk for pedestrian injuries; keep them safe when they walk to school

School supplies are bought and backpacks are ready. Parents have planned how their kids will get to school.

But one thing they might not think to do is talk to their children about walking there safely, particularly their teenagers. Teenagers are now the most at-risk youth for pedestrian injuries, according to a study by Safe Kids Worldwide and FedEx.

The report "Walking Safely, A Report to the Nation," released in 2012, revealed that while walking safety has improved overall for children since 1995, there are still a staggering number of children hit by cars. More than 61 children are injured every day severely enough to seek medical attention. More than 500 children are killed every year in the U.S.

Interestingly, the most at-risk age group has shifted. Today teens are at greatest risk. The death rate among older teens is now twice that of younger children. In the last five years, injuries among 16 to 19 year olds increased 25 percent over the previous five years. Today, 14 to 19 year olds account for half of all child pedestrian injuries.

"The work we have been doing with younger kids has clearly been effective," said Cherie Sage, Safe Kids Kansas. "But this new trend impacting our teenagers is disturbing."

One suspected cause of this disturbing trend is distraction, since the increase in teen injuries seems to correlate with the prevalence of cell phone use, both among walkers and drivers. A study by the Consumer Product Safety Commission also finds a trend in injury risk involving distracted walkers.

"With approximately 75 per-

cent of 12 to 17 year-olds owning cell phones, it's important to talk to your children about putting phones away and paying attention when walking," said Sage.

Safe Walking Tips

Safe Kids Kansas recommends these safety guidelines:

- Children should cross the street with an adult until age 10.
- Choose the safest route, most direct route with the fewest street crossings and walk it with children. Children should take the same route every day and avoid shortcuts.
- Teach children to recognize and obey all traffic signals and markings.
- Make sure children look in all directions before crossing the street. If you see a vehicle, wave and make eye contact with the driver before crossing the street.
- Teach children to cross the street at a corner or crosswalk, never from between parked cars or from behind bushes or shrubs.
- Warn children to be extra alert in bad weather. Visibility might be poor and motorists might not be able to see them or stop quickly.
- Consider participating in existing Walking School Bus programs. For information about how a Walking School Bus works, visit walkingschoolbus.org.
- Talk to your teens about distractions. Cell phone use, whether texting, talking or listening to music with headphones, can distract a pedestrian from seeing or hearing cars.
- Be a good role model. Children need you to not only tell them, but also show them how to be safe pedestrians.

To read the full report, go to www.safekids.org/walkingsafely.

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