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VAN WITH B'KLYN KIDS ON PA. TRIP **CRASHES I-80 ACCIDENT KILLS 2, 7** OTHERS CRITICAL

BY THIS STORY, WAS REPORTED, BY MIKE, CLAFFEY, TARA, GEORGE, DAVE, GOLDINER, GREG, B. SMITH, JOANNE WASSERMAN, IT WAS, WRITTEN BY, LEO STANDORA. /

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS / Saturday, July 11, 1998, 12:00 AM

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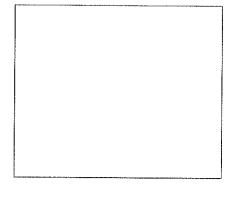


A van packed with Brooklyn children heading home from an amusement park sideswiped a car, smashed into a guardrail and overturned on a mountain highway in Pennsylvania yesterday, killing two passengers. The driver of the struck car said he saw children's bodies "flying out of the van" and strewn along the roadside. Hospitals reported two people dead one a little girl and as many as seven others critically injured. The 15-passenger van carried 18 kids all kindergartners through second-graders and six adults from the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corp. day camp, officials said. Pennsylvania State Police said the accident occurred at 5:30 p.

m. on Interstate 80 in Tannersville, about 100 miles west of New York. Troopers said the van and another vehicle, a partially filled bus with 34 people aboard, were returning from a day trip to Knoebel's Amusement Park in Elysburg, Pa., sponsored by the Restoration Corp. When the bus finally returned to Brooklyn at 11:35 p.

m., it was swarmed by frantic parents screaming for their children. Police said the van driver had fallen asleep at the wheel on a downhill stretch, but awoke just in time to avoid rear-ending a car. Police said all but three children were thrown from the van, which left a trail of broken glass and metal pieces on the roadway. The others were trapped inside. The driver of the car wasn't seriously injured. Passengers from the bus most of them older children helped tend to the victims until emergency vehicles arrived. Police said the six most seriously

injured were helicoptered to three hospitals: Pocono Medical Center in East Stroudsburg, Lehigh Valley Medical Center in Allentown and the Community Medical Center in Scranton. One passenger age unknown brought to the Lehigh Valley hospital died, a spokeswoman said. An emergency nurse at the Pocono Medical Center confirmed that one of the injured brought there was a girl about 5 who died in surgery. "That little thing I just lost on the table was the same age as my own kid," the tearful nurse said before abruptly walking away to compose herself. Hospital spokesman Don Lusardi said other victims were undergoing thorough evaluations. Jerry Snyder of the Community Medical Center identified two patients there as Patricia Parrish, 23, and Mwando Bailey, 17, but was unable to provide their conditions. Parrish, is the girlfriend of Wu-Tang Clan member Buddha Monk and the mother of their daughter, 6-year-old Shaquasha. Shaquasha, the niece of Wu-Tang Clan member Ol' Dirty Bastard, was in the van when it crashed and suffered minor injuries. Monk picked her up at Pocono Medical Center late last night. Meanwhile, the undamaged bus, which was trapped for hours in jammed traffic after the accident, headed back to Brooklyn where anxious and some angry parents were waiting and praying at Restoration headquarters. Inside, parents of the youngest kids sat in a fifthfloor room off-limits to media to hear what happened to their children. "They're yelling out kids' names that are hurt," said Sabrina Johnson, "and you if you hear your child's name that means your child is in the hospital. You sit and pray you don't hear that name. People are just sitting there and praying to Jesus.





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Sherri Shepherd is facing pains since splitting from Lamar Sally, "I know that

you cannot grow without pain," she told E!

" Johnson said she was concerned about her niece, Jasmine, 12, but felt

VAN WITH B'KLYN KIDS ON PA. TRIP CRASHES I-80 ACCIDENT KILLS 2, 7 OTHERS CRITICAL - NY Daily News

parents and relatives were getting the runaround. "My mother was here at 7:30 and they told her there was a delay. Then they said there was an accident. It wasn't until 8:30 that my mother called me crying and screaming that the kids were involved. They knew all the time but they lied to me and to my mother.

" One woman said it was hard to believe what happened. "Everybody was so happy when they left this morning," she said. The woman said "the babies" younger children were packed three in a seat in the van. Restoration President Roderick Mitchell said, "We contacted the parents, we are in communication with the hospital. We are trying to determine the facts. We were very systematic.

" Some parents raced out to Pennsylvania after hearing of the accident.

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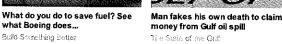
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