

Fresh outrage as U.S. police pepper-spray handcuffed 9-year-old girl in New York

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U.S. police pepper-spray a handcuffed nine-year-old girl in Rochester, New York

Rochester, February 1 (RHC)-- A nine-year-old Black girl has been handcuffed and pepper-sprayed by U.S. police in the city of Rochester, New York, sparking fresh outrage and anger over excesses committed by the police.

Police called to the scene and responded by handcuffing the minor, before trying to force her into the car and pepper-spraying her when she resisted, a minute-long bodycam video shows. Rochester Deputy Police Chief Andre Anderson said Sunday the minor had been suffering from a serious mental health emergency, claiming the girl was suicidal and threatened to kill her mother.

The police violence has sparked anger and reactions from officials. Mayor Lovely Warren condemned the use of force against a child, and said she was “deeply troubled” by the incident. She pledged an internal review of the city's law enforcement practices.

"It is clear from the video that we need to do more supporting our children and families," she said at a press conference Sunday. "I have a 10-year-old child, so she's a child, she's a baby. This video, as a mother, is not anything you want to see."

Demond Meeks, member of the New York State Assembly, tweeted that the officers involved should be fired for their conduct.

U.S. police violence against African-Americans, including the killing of George Floyd last May, set off protests across the U.S. against racial injustice and police brutality last year.

The latest incident is the second time in a year that Rochester has come under national scrutiny for police violence against African-Americans, following the killing of Daniel Prude last March. The death of Prude, who was undergoing a mental health crisis at the time of his detention, prompted a grand jury probe and sparked mass protests.

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