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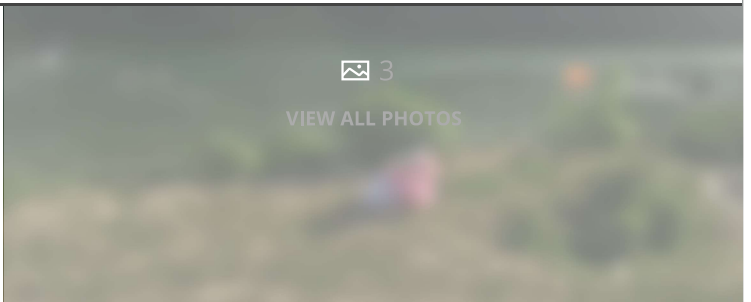
15-year-old boy drowns at park in San Marcos

by Adela Uchida

Wed, June 26th 2019 at 5:23 PM

Updated Wed, June 26th 2019 at 10:13 PM



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The Hays County Sheriff's Office says the drowning victim at 5 Mile Dam park is a 15-year-old boy. (CBS Austin)

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A fifteen-year-old boy drowned in Hays County Wednesday, at Five Mile Dam along the Blanco river.

There were no signs of any trouble in the water at Dudley Johnson Park in San Marcos early in the evening, just hours later. A group of teenage boys showed up to celebrate a milestone. "I'm sixteen. Today is my birthday," said Luke Verson. He and his friends got an inkling that something was very wrong as they were arriving. "We came here just to like hang out and chill at the dam, but we just learned about what happened when we came here," he said.

"What happened" was the drowning of a 15-year-old boy. The Hays County Sheriff's Office confirms they responded to a possible drowning call at 2:06 in the afternoon. Just before 3:30, rescuers recovered the boy's body from the water. A spokesman for the sheriff's office says not all the boy's kin had yet been notified.

It was a sobering realization for Luke. "I mean, I never feel unsafe but like you always got to be wary," he said. His friends were surprised too. "I came out here today for a party, or for just to celebrate my friend's birthday," said Jose Gustava Rios -- who had come to celebrate his friend's birthday but was now aware of the death of a boy their own age, in the seemingly safe waters. "It feels safe but at the same time, you got to be careful especially in the water. It can get pretty like cloudy and you can lose, like, sense of where you're at, especially underwater," he said.