

## Cops: Mom got involved in girls' fight

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A dispute between two 12-year-old girls on Facebook turned into a fight after which the mother of one of the girls attacked a preteen spectator who demanded she stop the brawl, authorities said Tuesday.

The mother, Daphne Melin, 32, and her attorney, Michael Brown, defended her actions, saying she went to the fight to ensure it was fair, no weapons were used and it was not "a 10-on-1 situation." But while there, he said, she was attacked from behind by the 12-year-old spectator.

While Melin took her daughter to the confrontation, which occurred at William Floyd Elementary in Shirley, police said, the other girl did not show up and sent a friend in her place.

VIDEOS: [The fight caught on tape](#) | [Daphne Melin's attorney speaks about incident](#)

The dispute, police said, began and concluded on the Web -- first on Facebook and later with a video of the fight posted on Facebook and YouTube that later was removed.

Suffolk Police Lt. Timothy Dillon, who supervised the investigation, said Melin, accompanied by Brown, turned herself in Monday and was charged with three counts of endangering the welfare of a child and one count of third-degree attempted assault. All are misdemeanors.

Melin, who lives in Shirley, said she and her daughter were the victims and that she had gone to the police station at Brown's suggestion to file a complaint that her daughter had gotten harassing emails from another girl.

"I had pages and pages of harassing documents from the girls. It's cyberbullying. It was over a boy," she said outside her home Tuesday. "People are thinking I'm a bad person. I was defending my daughter."

Police did not reveal the identities of the girls involved in the 3 p.m. incident Sunday, but all were 12 and attend William Floyd Middle School in Moriches. The fight was at 3 p.m.

The girls had "been calling each other names on Facebook," Dillon said. "It apparently was a personality conflict. They decided to end it in a fight."



About 10 children watched the fistfight, with the girls “grabbing hair” and “throwing punches at each other,” he said.

“A spectator, another 12-year-old girl, decided to yell out to the adult, ‘You’re an adult. You should be breaking up the fight,’ “ Dillon said.

The two argued, then “the 32-year-old adult spit in the 12-year-old’s face and grabbed her by the hair, pulled her down and kneed her in the head a couple of times,” Dillon said. That girl sustained neck pain, police said. They said she was the only one injured.

Brown said his client’s daughter was bullied on Facebook with “really horrific type of language.”

“My client was doing the responsible thing, went to the principal and the school district. The school basically turned a deaf ear to it,” Brown said Tuesday evening.

The William Floyd School District would not discuss the incident and said it was cooperating with police.

Melin was freed on bail pending her appearance Dec. 1 in First District Court in Central Islip. Police said Suffolk Child Protective Services had been notified.

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