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Hunt on for kids who kissed rabid bat

FORT MYERS: The Lee County Health Department has located two of the five boys who were seen playing and kissing a bat that has a confirmed case of rabies.

On Monday around 4:00 p.m. a witness saw five boys between the ages of 10-12 years-old handling, playing and kissing a bat by the pier on Fort Myers Beach.

The Brazilian Free-tailed Bat was captured by a bystander and taken to the state laboratory in Tampa for testing.

The bat tested positive for rabies - a fatal disease and there is no known cure for rabies, only vaccination.

"Today our mission is to find boys exposed to the bat," said Dr. Judith A. Hartner, Director of the Lee County Health Department. "It is critical that the youth who were playing with the bat on Fort Myers Beach pier are vaccinated as soon as possible."

Shirley Brow sells bait on the Fort Myers Beach Pier. She says she got a funny feeling Monday when she saw the children playing with the bat.

"I was telling him that little boys should leave the bat alone," said Brow. "He was holding it like this, kissing it saying, 'You want to see if he really likes me? Want to play with the bat?'"

Soon, she said, the group of boys and the dead bat were gone.

She says she wishes she'd at least called for help, knowing now that the animal wasn't cute or cuddly - but diseased and dangerous.

"I'm scared for the little boy. And now I'm scared because it was close to me," Brow said.

The Health Department gives a 10 day period to get vaccination started and Friday was day 4.

So if you have any information on how to contact the other children seen handling a bat, please contact the Lee County Health Department at (239) 332-9501.

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