

DAILY NEWS

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Birth ma sues as tot severely burned in tub

Foster mother ruined my young son's life!

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A BRONX foster mom placed a 2-year-old in scalding water after he soiled his diaper, burning his backside and legs so badly he needed skin grafts, according to the boy's outraged mother.

"My son screams every time he gets near the bathtub now," said the toddler's birth mother, Katherine Roldan.

Little Ralph Garcia wound up with second-degree burns over 8% of his body after the June 3 incident, according to a lawsuit filed in Bronx Supreme Court.

Foster mom Shatima Miller, 26, was charged with failure to exercise control of a minor, a misdemeanor, and the boy was placed in another foster home, officials said.

Roldan is suing Miller and the foster care placement agency, Lutheran Social Services of New York, for an unspecified amount. Roldan claims Miller carelessly dropped Ralph in the scorching tub and then left him alone as his skin sizzled.

The boy was hospitalized for three

months as he recovered from the burns, Roldan said. "He'll have these scars and this pain his whole life because of her," said Roldan, 33.

Miller said she intended no harm.

"It was an accident!" she yelled when told of the lawsuit. "How can you be serious?"

Miller told doctors at Jacobi Medical Center that Garcia turned on the hot water himself, according to hospital records. She tried wiping his burns with a washcloth, but his skin peeled right off, records show.

Lutheran Social Services did not return calls and a spokesman for the city Administration for Children's Services declined to comment.

Roldan's son was placed in foster care after she violated an order of protection obtained by his father.

She has not regained custody of Ralph but said her "little angel" is too embarrassed to wear shorts because of his splotchy red scars.

"He'll never be the same," Roldan said.



Shatima Miller