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Iowa woman targeted girl she thought was Mexican in hit-and-run, police say

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A woman in Iowa has been charged with attempted murder after she told police that she intentionally ran over a 14-year-old girl because she believed the teenager was Mexican, authorities said Friday. The girl, Natalia Miranda, suffered a concussion and severe bruising but is expected to make a full recovery.

Clive Police Chief Mike Venema said Friday during a news conference that Nicole Marie Poole Franklin, 42, admitted to steering her SUV onto a sidewalk on December 9 in the suburban Des Moines community and running over the teenager, who was walking to school to watch a basketball game. Franklin then fled the scene.

Franklin made several derogatory statements about Latinos during a police interview in which she admitted she intentionally ran over the teenager, police said.

"Franklin told investigators she ran the girl over because she was, in her words, a Mexican,"

Hate crime charges are also being considered, reports the Des Moines Register. Venema said he "was very shocked to hear that this was an intentional act," the paper reports.

"I want to say in the strongest terms possible that there is no place in our community ... for this type of hatred or violence," Venema said.

Natalia was hospitalized for two days.

"I don't remember the impact," the teenager told CBS Des Moines affiliate KCCI in the days after the crash. "I just remember the car coming at me."

The teen's parents told KCCI after the incident she was unconscious for about 15 minutes before she woke up in the snow, and was able to stumble the rest of the way to her school for help. Her parents said they found her injured, shaking and scared.

Speaking to KCCI, Natalia recalled trying to get up out of her hospital bed, and being unable to.

"Sitting up was the worst pain I've ever felt," she said.

Franklin was already in jail on a separate assault charge when police linked her car to the hit-and-run using surveillance video, KCCI reports. In the assault case, which also occurred on December 9, she's accused of making racist remarks to a West Des Moines convenience store clerk and customers and throwing items at the clerk.

Franklin is charged with assault, operating under the influence, theft and public intoxication in that incident, and hate crime charges are being considered in that case as well, the paper reports.

Franklin appeared in court Friday and is being held in Polk County jail in lieu of \$1 million bond, KCCI reports.

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