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Teen Linked to Schoolboy Abduction Critical After Shooting

July 28, 2025

– Categories: Crime



A 16-year-old boy, previously involved in the attempted kidnapping of schoolboy Ben Phikihpoom, is clinging to life in Melbourne's south-east after a shooting on July 28, 2025. The incident, which police suspect may involve misadventure, has reignited debate over youth crime and public safety.

The shooting occurred in Mulgrave, where the teenager was found with a gunshot wound to his upper body, as reported by 9News. He was rushed to the hospital in critical condition, with Victoria Police investigating whether the firearm discharged accidentally. This teen was one of several who, nearly two years ago, attacked and attempted to abduct Ben Phikihpoom, a schoolboy walking home in Dandenong. During that 2023 incident, Ben was robbed, dragged into a stolen car, and thrown from the vehicle at

70km/h, suffering life-altering injuries. Despite his trauma, Ben has returned to school, and his parents told 9News they forgive the teen now fighting for his life. The boy, on 10 counts of bail at the time of the shooting, avoided jail for the kidnapping attempt, a decision that has frustrated some in the community.

The case has sparked outrage over youth justice in Victoria. Posts on X, including one from @gillianlant, highlight public concern about leniency toward juvenile offenders, with many arguing the system fails to deter repeat crimes. The Australian Labor Party (ALP) government's handling of youth justice has drawn criticism for being too soft, with critics claiming it emboldens dangerous behavior. This shooting, potentially a result of reckless firearm handling, underscores the risks of inadequate oversight and rehabilitation for young offenders.

As police probe the incident, with no other suspects currently sought, questions linger about how a teenager on bail accessed a firearm. The Mulgrave community, still reeling from the 2023 kidnapping, now faces fresh fears about safety. This tragedy serves as a grim reminder of the consequences of unchecked youth crime and the urgent need for stricter measures to protect the public. Whether this shooting was a misadventure or something more sinister, it highlights a broken system struggling to balance justice and prevention.