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One teen fighting for life; one faces felony charges

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A Chico teen-ager, fighting for her life after a Tuesday evening accident, is not fighting alone.

The 16-year-old Champion Christian student is receiving spiritual support from her classmates. At 7 a.m. Thursday, a prayer chain encircled Enloe Medical Center. The 100 students, family members, faculty and friends prayed for healing and a miracle.

"A number of kids are coordinating prayer meetings," said Dan Swagerty, vice principal of the private Christian school in Chico. Students are continuing to pray for her in the lobby of Enloe. Swagerty said they have been there since they first heard of the accident.

"The family is not alone," he added.

She and her family, whose names have not been released, were injured when a stolen Toyota RAV 4 ran into their Ford Windstar minivan. The RAV 4 was driven by another 16-year-old girl.

The 16-year-old driver was reported as a runaway; the vehicle was reported stolen. Chico police spotted the small blue SUV on West Eighth Avenue and attempted to make a traffic stop. The pursuit began.

At Palm Avenue, she turned south toward East Fifth Avenue. Moments later, the RAV 4 struck the Windstar as it was headed east on Fifth Avenue.

Both vehicles overturned.

Two passengers in the RAV 4 were injured and the driver broke a leg.

Three passengers and the driver of the Windstar were injured. The 16-year-old was the only victim to receive life-threatening injuries. The other three have been released from Enloe.

"Our hopes and prayers are with the family," said Chico police Lt. John Rucker. Rucker acknowledged that there was a **police pursuit** occurring at the time of the accident.

According to the police, the driver of the RAV 4 will be facing major criminal charges. She is charged with driving a stolen vehicle and evading a peace officer causing injury. Both are felony charges.

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