



## AAC Publications

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### **Loose Rock**

New Mexico, Cactus Chimney Boulders

**On February 21, Callaway Lewis (female, age 8), her older brother, and her father, Anthony, were climbing around the Cactus Chimney Boulders, one of several small bouldering areas just east of the city limits, when the rock Callaway was climbing slid, pinning her between two boulders.**

Anthony was able to free Callaway and extract her from the foothills to the nearby road. She sustained a broken pelvis in multiple locations, several spinal fractures, spleen lacerations, a broken femur, shattered tibia and fibula, and a shattered right foot, resulting in amputation.

### ANALYSIS

Weathering of granite in the Sandia Mountains foothills accelerates during the winter and early spring due to continual freeze-thaw cycles on the west side of the Sandias, and rockfall and rock movement are most common in these months. As this tragic accident shows, past use of a hold or boulder does not guarantee its stability in the future. (Sources: News reports and the Editors.)

**Images**

Article Details

Author	News reports and The Editors
Publication	ANAM
Volume	12
Issue	74
Page	
Copyright Date	2021
Article Type	Accident reports