

**ACTIVITY:** Teasing a captive shark

**CASE:** [GSAF 2014.05.22](#)

**DATE:** Thursday May 22, 2014

**LOCATION:** The incident took place at the Australian Shark and Ray Centre, 686 Marsh Road, Bobs Farm, New South Wales, Australia.

**NAME:** Unknown

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 10-year-old male.

**NARRATIVE:** The boy was on a school excursion with 53 other children. They had been at the Australian Shark and Ray Centre about 25 minutes and was in his fourth and final safety briefing. The children were preparing to enter the water with the sharks

According to the staff, the boy was told more than 10 times not to touch the front of the shark's snout or its mouth. He ignored the staff, put his finger near the shark's mouth and the shark nipped his finger.

**INJURY:** The boy sustained a cut on the tip of his finger

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** Staff at the centre called an ambulance, who treated the boy before taking him to Tomaree Community Hospital. An Ambulance Service of NSW spokeswoman said the wound was not considered serious and may require a few stitches. A Hunter New England Health spokesman confirmed the boy had been discharged on Thursday afternoon.

**SPECIES:** The incident involved a tawny nurse shark, one metre in length. "These sharks are docile and calm, they mainly like to lay down on coral reef and eat by sucking up food, they are not an aggressive shark in any way," said Ryan Pereira. "We use the tawny to identify to people why shark attacks happen, that they are a matter of mistaken identity. A finger can look like a bit of squid if you dangle it in the water, out in the surf we look like a turtle and when we dive under waves we look like a seal, its nothing to do with a shark targeting us."



*Ryan Pereira feeding the tawny nurse sharks  
at the Shark and Ray Centre at Bobs Farm on Thursday.  
Picture Max Mason-Hubers*