



NEWS RELEASE

GREENE COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KENNETH ROBERT DAVIS CONVICTED OF SEVEN COUNTS OF CHILD ABUSE

SPRINGFIELD, Missouri – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Kenneth Robert Davis, 32, of Springfield, Missouri was convicted yesterday by a Greene County Jury of two counts of abuse of a child resulting in serious physical injury and five counts of abuse of a child following a four day trial before the Honorable Thomas Mountjoy.

The defendant was convicted for severely beating his eight year old daughter in the summer of 2018. Independent witnesses, including a separate seven year old girl, testified that they had seen the defendant punch the victim in the head and grab the victim by the neck and throw her to the ground. The victim had a multitude of significant injuries on all planes on her body including a fractured nose, two black eyes, swollen and bleeding lips, bruises and abrasions on her neck consistent with strangulation marks, large bald spots on her head consistent with her hair being pulled out, bruising and laceration to her buttocks consistent with being struck repeatedly with a belt, and bruises and abrasions to her back, arms, and legs. Cindy Tull, a nurse practitioner with the Child Advocacy Center, testified that, in her opinion, the injuries suffered by the victim were the result of child abuse and that “[i]n 10 years of being at the CAC, [she had] never seen the extent of these injuries except for textbooks or through training and research.”

The victim testified at trial and recalled that the defendant had “smacked” her in the mouth several times, spanked her until her buttocks bled, hit her in the face with a phone charger, pulled her hair, and had slammed on the brakes in the van she was riding in causing her face to hit the console of the vehicle. The victim testified that she could not remember anything else. During a forensic interview, the victim also stated that the defendant had choked her with a seatbelt. Nicole Schrock, a forensic

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interviewer with the Child Advocacy Center, testified that, in traumatic incidents like the one described by the victim, the trauma can affect how a person encodes and recalls memory and that it was extremely common for a victim of trauma to have difficulty relating things in a chronological order and recalling all of the details of a traumatic event. She also testified that the trauma response can continue to exist in a victim for hours and even days after the traumatic incident which can affect interviews done by law enforcement officers and forensic interviewers in the days following the traumatic incident.

The defendant testified on his own behalf and claimed that some of the victim's facial injuries were the result of an accident and provided no explanation for the rest of her injuries. During closing arguments, the defense argued that the victim was so inconsistent she could not be believed and that the victim had simply had an accident. The State noted that the victim's young age and the trauma accounted for the inconsistencies in her statement, that the defendant had lied during his testimony to avoid being held accountable or being labeled as a child abuser, and that all of the circumstantial, physical, and testimonial evidence corroborated the victim's account. Finally, the State urged the jury to find the defendant guilty because the victim deserved justice for the unimaginable beating that she had been subjected to.

The jury deliberated for approximately three hours before coming back with guilty verdicts on two counts of abuse of a child resulting in serious physical injury and five counts of abuse of a child. Because the defendant is a prior and persistent offender he is facing a maximum sentence of life in prison for each conviction of abuse of a child resulting in serious physical injury and a maximum sentence of ten years in prison for each conviction of abuse of a child. Judge Mountjoy set a sentencing hearing for December 6, 2019 at 2:15PM following a sentencing assessment report by the Department of Probation and Parole.

**This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Stephanie Wan and Amanda Johnson. It was investigated by the Greene County Sheriff's Office and Detective Jennifer Flood was the lead investigator assigned to the case.**

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