



NEWS RELEASE

GREENE COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

DAN PATTERSON

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September 13, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Unlicensed Day Care Provider Charged with Child Abuse

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that an unlicensed day care provider, Rachel L. Slawson, 34, of Springfield, Missouri was charged yesterday with child abuse involving one incident from September 2013 and a more recent incident in July 2016.

The 2013 incident was submitted to the Greene County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for review in June 2016 and was under review at the time of the July 2016 incident. The Springfield Police Department's investigation of the 2013 incident and the Greene County Sheriff's Office investigation of the 2016 incident are both continuing. The charges announced today are a result of the cooperation of those agencies and their collaboration with other multi-disciplinary team members including representatives of the Missouri Children's Division, the Child Advocacy Center, the Greene County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and the medical community.

Prosecuting Attorney Patterson stated that this case provides an important reminder that there are resources available to parents looking for quality child care, pre-school or after-school programs for their children. Child Care Aware of Missouri provides a free parent tool-kit and child care referrals and can be found on the web at <http://mo.childcareaware.org/parents-families/find-quality-child-care/> or by calling 1-800-200-9017. Information on how to obtain a background screening of a potential child care provider is also available from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services at <http://health.mo.gov/safety/fcsr/> or by calling 1-866-422-6872.

Subject: Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Press Release, State v. Slawson

Mr. Patterson cautions that the charges contained in the felony complaint are merely allegations and that the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

Copies of the felony complaint and probable statement filed in this case are attached to this release. The Missouri Supreme Court ethics rules prohibit comments on the facts or investigation of this case beyond those contained in the felony complaint and probable cause statement that are part of the public record.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Stephanie Wan. It is being investigated by the Detective Christina Flood at the Springfield Police Department and Detective David Schroeder at the Greene County Sheriff's Office.

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Associate Division _____

Plaintiff,

Case No. 1631-CR07613

OCN#

PA File No. 077363373

FILED
SEP 12 2016

CIRCUIT CLERK
GREENE COUNTY

COUNT I

The Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Greene, State of Missouri, charges that the defendant, in violation of Section 568.060, RSMo, committed the class C felony of abuse of a child, punishable upon conviction under Sections 558.011, 560.011, and 568.060.5(1) RSMo, in that on September 13, 2013 in the County of Greene, State of Missouri, the defendant recklessly caused K.T., a child less than eighteen years old, to suffer from abusive head trauma and in the course thereof, the defendant caused K.T. to suffer from physical injury.

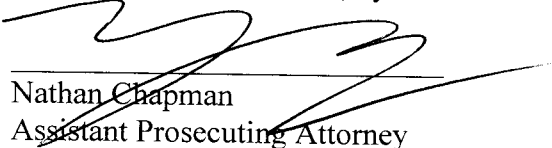
(Missouri Charge Code: 568.060-006Y20123899.)

The Prosecuting Attorney of the County of Greene, State of Missouri, charges that the defendant, in violation of Section 568.060, RSMo, committed the class B felony of abuse of a child, punishable upon conviction under Section 558.011, RSMo, in that on or between July 6, 2016 and July 21, 2016, in the County of Greene, State of Missouri, the defendant recklessly caused L.F., a child less than eighteen years old, to suffer from abusive head trauma, and, in the course thereof, the defendant caused L.F. to suffer from serious physical injury.

The facts that form the basis for this information and belief are contained in the attached probable cause statement concerning this matter, which statement is made a part hereof and is submitted herewith as a basis upon which this court may find the existence of probable cause for the issuance of the warrant.

WHEREFORE, the Prosecuting Attorney prays that an arrest warrant be issued as provided by law.

DAN PATTERSON
Prosecuting Attorney of the County of
Greene, State of Missouri, by



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Assistant Prosecuting Attorney
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PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT

Date: September 12, 2016

I Christina Flood, a law enforcement officer, knowing that false statements made in this form are punishable by law, state as follows:

1. I have probable cause to believe that Rachel L Slawson , DOB: 08/05/1982 committed one or more criminal offenses.

2. The offense(s) happened on September 13, 2013 between the hours of 7:30 am until 5:45 pm at 1456 E. Seminole Street, Springfield, Greene County, Missouri.

3. The facts supporting this belief are as follows: (Insert concise facts supporting each element of charge)

On September 13, 2013, Officer Alexander was dispatched to Mercy Hospital in reference to a 5 month old infant, KT, with a skull fracture. Officer Alexander contacted E.K., KT's mother. KT's mother explained that KT was left in the care of his babysitter, Rachel Slawson, at approximately 7:30 that morning and picked up around 5:45 that evening. When KT was picked up, Slawson helped get KT into a car seat and then as she was about to walk away said "by the way, he has a bump on his head, maybe a bug bit." Slawson then mentioned she noticed the bump during the "wagon ride" which usually occurs at about 8:30 am. Since Slawson carried KT to the car, EK did not see any injuries. After Slawson's statement, EK did examine KT and noticed a bump on his head. Based upon the bump, EK took KT to Mercy Hospital.

At Mercy, KT was diagnosed with a left parietal skull fracture, intracranial bleed, and scalp hematoma by Dr. Kutter, M.D. KT was admitted to the hospital for observation. I reviewed the hospital records and learned that KT's injury was described as a non-accidental trauma. According to the hospital records KT was released from the hospital the next day.

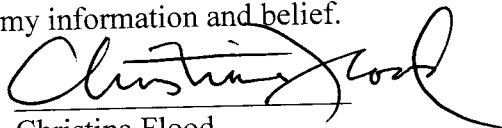
On September 14, 2013, Detective Heather Anderson interviewed EK. EK explained that the only two adults who cared for KT were herself and Slawson. EK explained that part of her morning routine was to rub lotion on KT's head. EK said this bump was a new injury and it was not present on the morning of September 13, 2013. EK stated she was not aware of any incident in which KT could have been injured while in her care. EK believes the injuries to KT had to occur in the care of Slawson.

On September 18, 2013, Slawson was interviewed by Detective Anderson. Post-Miranda Slawson initially stated she believed KT was injured before arriving at her house. Slawson said she first noticed the swelling on the 13th around 4:05pm. When Anderson discussed the injury with Slawson, she did admit the injury was "pretty noticeable." Slawson maintained she was the only adult who had contact with KT while he was in her care. As the interview progressed, Slawson began giving different possible explanations for what occurred. Slawson said that an 18

month old child hit KT with a chair. When confronted with the fact that an 18 month old could not throw a chair, Slawson said it was the four year old who threw the chair. Slawson said she was almost 100% sure this injury was caused by a chair thrown by one of the children.

I have reviewed the photographs and statements made by witnesses in this case. Slawson's explanations are not consistent with the extent of injuries received by KT. Additionally, I spoke with Greene County Detective David Schroeder about Slawson and I reviewed his probable cause statement for recent events in which a child in Slawson's care was injured. The county investigation also provides evidence that Slawson, when asked to explain how a child in her care is injured, is unable to provide a medically verifiable explanation.

The above statements are true to the best of my information and belief.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina Flood", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Christina Flood

DSN 1291

Springfield Police Department



GREENE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT



SEP 12 2016

CIRCUIT CLERK
GREENE COUNTY

Date: 09/09/2016 Case #: GCS160721004662

I, DAVID E SCHROEDER, knowing that false statements on this form are punishable by law state as follows:

1. I have probable cause to believe that RACHEL L SLAWSON, White/Female, DOB 08/05/1982, committed one or more criminal offenses.
2. The following crime(s) happened on 2016/07/21 11:00 - 2016/07/21 12:17 at 1061 S ELDER AVE in Greene County, Missouri.
3. The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

On July 21, 2016, at approximately 11:35 hours, Greene County Sheriff's Office Deputy Hall responded to 1061 S. Elder, Springfield, Greene County, Missouri, for the report of an eight (8) month old child who was having difficulty breathing. The child, identified as L.T.F (DOB 11/20/2015), was being watched by an in home daycare provider that was run by Rachel L. Slawson (DOB 8/05/82) out of her home. Slawson stated that L.T.F. was sleeping in a Pack and Play type crib upstairs in her room. She said there was a baby monitor in the room that she could hear if he was starting to wake up. Slawson said she went to check on L.T.F. at approximately 11:30 hours and when she did, she found that he was having trouble breathing. She stated she tried to call L.T.F's mother, Allison L. Faucett (DOB 11/23/1987) first but could not get a hold of her. Slawson then called 911. The child was transported to Cox South Hospital with Allison by ambulance.

On July 21, 2016, at approximately 15:01 hours, Deputy Allen responded to Cox South hospital because L.T.F was seen by medical personnel and was found to have a skull fracture and a possible brain bleed. A medical report stated the injury was a left subdural hematoma. Deputy Allen asked Allison if L.T.F. had suffered from any head injuries. Allison did recall that on July 6, 2016, L.T.F. was in Slawson's care and when Allison picked him up, Rachel told her that L.T.F. had sustained a head injury. Slawson told Allison L.T.F. had fallen to sleep in a car shaped bouncy chair and slumped forward, hitting his head on the steering wheel causing the injury. Allison said after she picked L.T.F. up from the daycare and got him home that he had thrown up so she took him to the hospital. During the hospital visit L.T.F. had an X-Ray that did not show any skull fractures. He was released from the hospital at that time.

Allison stated after the incident on July 6, 2016, L.T.F. was described as not acting right, not eating right, and acting lethargic for a long period of time. She did take him to the hospital where there was nothing found as well as a chiropractor for ear infections. There were no injuries located during any of these visits to medical professionals.

According to Cox Hospital medical records, doctors stated that L.T.F. was admitted to the hospital with obvious non-accidental trauma. Another medical report by Dr. Cascairo MD, stated there were bilateral retinal hemorrhages, involving multiple layers and in various configurations- non-

accidental trauma, specifically shaking. Dr. Strang MD, a neurosurgeon for Cox Hospital that saw L.T.F. was interviewed. He said it was possible the head injury to L.T.F. could have been caused from his injury on July 6, 2016, because the fracture was very small. He said the injury that occurred on July 6, 2016, was not consistent with the explanation of L.T.F. being in a bouncy chair and falling forward or bouncing himself forward and hitting the steering wheel of the bouncy chair.

Because Slawson had sent text messages to parents at the day care that included pictures and explanations of injuries, a search warrant was executed at Slawson's residence and her cell phone was recovered. A forensic examination of her cell phone was done and it was found that on July 6, 2016, the date of the first injury, Slawson was searching the internet for these topics: how to stop stressing when a baby is crying, why do I get so mad when my baby cries, why do people snap when their babies cry (the page she visited from this search was titled "When a Crying Baby Makes You So Angry You Might Hurt Them,") anger management classes, symptoms of an infant concussion, infant bleeding on the brain, infant concussion treatment, symptoms of subdural hematoma in infants, signs and symptoms of subdural hematoma in infants, and shaken baby syndrome. These searches were all done between 10:45 hours to 11:47 hours. On July 21, 2016 in a text message that Slawson wrote, she identifies L.T.F. as "that baby that cries a lot."

During a Child Advocacy Center forensic interview of children under Slawson's care, S.A.S. (DOB 2/09/2007) told a forensic interviewer that when Slawson holds babies she will vibrate them. She demonstrated this by holding a baby doll by the waist and moving it forwards and backwards from her body causing the dolls head to move in the same fashion. Another child, L.M.G. (DOB 4/21/2008) demonstrated to investigators with a baby doll how Slawson would hold babies by the waist and move them forward and backwards causing its head to make the same action.

Another child, G.A.A. (DOB 7/02/2006) told a forensic interviewer she has seen Slawson yell at kids and tells them to "shut up" when they are crying. G.A.A. has also seen Slawson be mean to L.E.S. (DOB 8/16/2014) by kicking him in the back causing him to fall down and as well as dragging him by the arm. G.A.A. has seen bruise's on L.E.S's back and arm.

Another child D.K.M. (DOB 10/22/2008) told a forensic interviewer that Slawson was mean to kids. D.K.M. said he has seen Slawson throw an unknown one (1) year old on its bed. He also said Rachel will toss babies into the air and pats their backs really hard to put them to sleep. He said when Slawson does this to L.T.F. it makes him cry harder.

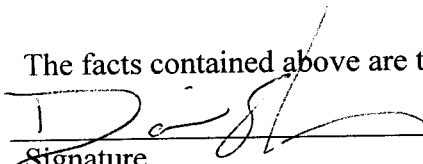
The child M.N.G. (DOB 12/21/2015) was also in Slawson's care. On April 27, 2016 Slawson reported to the mother, Jennifer Gibbon, that M.N.G. had a small bruise on her back that she had got because a nine (9) month old child had crawled on top of her causing an injury. On July 5, 2016, M.N.G. was injured again while in Slawson's care. M.N.G. had sustained a large bruise on her forehead which Slawson said after M.N.G. had scooted herself under a table, she pulled her out from underneath and she bumped her head a couple times on a chair. On July 19, 2016, M.N.G. sustained several red marks on the bridge of her nose as well as a possible injury below her right eye. Slawson was not able to provide an explanation for how these injuries occurred but told Richmond they were possibly self inflicted or that there was a toy in the crib with her when she was sleeping but she did not know.

On July 15, 2016, I.M.C. (DOB 11/26/2011) was in Slawson's care. I.M.C. sustained an injury above his right eye. Slawson's explanation to this injury was, "Basically they were wrestling and I put the broom between them to stop them and his head hit the broom." The broom was described as

orange in color and an orange broom was located and collected from Slawson's residence during the execution of a search warrant.

During an interview with Slawson, she denied knowing how L.T.F. got a skull fracture or subdural hematoma while in her care.

The facts contained above are true.


Signature

G752
DSN

Sergeant
Title