



NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Man Convicted of Sexually Abusing His Step-Daughters

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that John Wesley Kimberlin, 35, of Springfield, Missouri was convicted late yesterday by a Greene County Jury of statutory sodomy in the first degree, child molestation in the first degree, statutory sodomy in the first degree, and statutory sodomy in the first degree for sexually abusing two of his step-daughters between February 2003 and September 2005. The defendant was also charged with statutory rape in the first degree, but the jury was unable to reach a verdict on that count. The jury deliberated for over four hours before delivering their verdict.

Both of the defendant's victims testified at trial. At the time of the abuse, both girls were under the age of 12 and their mother was married to the defendant. The oldest victim would visit the defendant and her mother on weekends at which time the defendant would take her into his room and touch her vagina both over and under the clothing. The older victim also testified that the defendant had sexual intercourse with her but she had trouble remembering whether it happened in Springfield or Lebanon. She testified that she did not tell anyone about what happened because the defendant threatened to hurt her and her family if she told. She also testified that he told her that her family would hate her if she told.

The youngest victim was living with the defendant and her mother in Springfield and described a night where the defendant came into her room and began licking and touching her vagina. She described feeling "violated" and "uncomfortable" during the abuse. She said she did not tell because she was confused about what she should do and then, after time went by, she continued to keep a secret because she believed that no one would believe her because she waited to tell.

Subject: Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Press Release, State v. Kimberlin, 1131-CR01737

Neither victim disclosed the abuse until over five years later, even though the defendant was no longer in their lives. Cara Gerdiman, director of Kids Harbor Incorporated (the Child Advocacy Center located in Lake Ozark, Missouri) testified that children often do not immediately disclose and, on average, it takes six months to five years for a child to disclose abuse, if the child discloses the abuse at all. Gerdiman testified that this was because children are often abused by people they know, love, and trust and that abusers often use threats to keep their victims quiet. Gerdiman also testified that it was actually more common for children to lie to hide abuse rather than fabricating false claims of abuse.

The defendant has multiple criminal convictions for driving while intoxicated, resisting arrest, forgery, stealing, tampering in the first degree, burglary in the second degree, knowingly burning, and endangering the welfare of a child in the first degree. Each conviction for statutory sodomy in the first degree carries a range of punishment of 10 years to life in the Missouri Department of Corrections. Because the defendant has an extensive criminal history, the conviction for child molestation in the first degree carries a range of punishment of 10 years to life in the Missouri Department of Corrections. The jury trial was presided over by The Honorable Thomas Mountjoy. Judge Mountjoy set a sentencing hearing for November 22, 2013 at 2:45PM following a sentencing assessment report by the Department of Probation and Parole.

If you suspect that a child you know is being abused, neglected, or exploited, please call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-392-3738. The telephone line is answered seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Stephanie Wan and Nathan Taylor. It was investigated by the Springfield Police Dept. and Corporal Nathan Thomas was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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