

MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

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Babysitter found guilty of Murder Sentenced to 15 years to Life in Prison

(Akron, June 15, 2011) ... Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Tiffani Calise, 20, of Green, was found guilty by a jury on all counts related to the death of Aaliyah Ali, 23 months, also of Green.

Calise was found guilty of Murder, Manslaughter (violating the duty of care, protection, or support), and two counts of Child Endangering. Judge Alison McCarty sentenced Calise to the mandatory 15 years to Life in prison.

Walsh said, "Anytime a baby has died at the hands of their caregiver it is a sad day. While justice has been served, it does not bring Aaliyah back to her family. We thank the jury for their hard work during this emotional case and our thoughts continue to be with Aaliyah's mother and family during this time."

On August 10, 2010, at 11:45pm, Calise called 911 reporting that a little girl, Aaliyah, who she was babysitting, was unconscious after a fall in the bathtub. Aaliyah's mother had dropped her off the day prior. The toddler was taken to Akron Children's Hospital and was found to have extensive brain damage and swelling; there were no outward signs of injury. After two days the child was removed from life support on August 12.

During the trial evidence was presented that showed that Aaliyah was the victim of being violently shaken. Dr. Daryl Steiner, DO and Medical Director of the CARE Center (Children At Risk Center) at Akron Children's Hospital, found the injuries to be abusive and caused by shaking the head violently.

Dr. Dorothy Dean, a Summit County Medical Examiner, found massive brain damage, many different types of retinal hemorrhages, and other findings consistent with abusive head trauma. Dean testified that her autopsy showed that there were no bruises found on the child to indicate a fall had occurred and that there was no other way that Aaliyah could have died except by being violently shaken.

Walsh concluded, "This is another example of the tragic results of shaking a child of any age, not just newborn babies, which is how we typically think of "shaken baby." It is important never to shake a baby or child, as the consequences are heartbreaking and severe."