



NEWS
For Immediate Release:
Thursday, November 20, 2014

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Kurtis Mathes Sentenced to 8 Years in Prison

AKRON, OHIO – November 20, 2014 – Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh today announced that Judge Tammy O’Brien sentenced Kurtis Mathes 23, of Johnson Court in Akron, to a maximum of 8 years in prison for felonious assault of his girlfriend’s 2- year old son. Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh asked for the maximum sentence which is 8 years.

Mathes was watching the 2-year old boy on January 29, 2014, when he called 911 reporting that the child was not breathing. The child suffered a severe brain injury, subdural hematoma, and retinal hemorrhaging in both eyes. Physicians at Akron Children’s Hospital determined the child’s injuries were due to physical abuse. The child is now permanently disabled due to devastating neurological injury.

Prosecutor Walsh said, “I am hoping House Bill 349 passes quickly so that an additional mandatory prison term of 5 to 10 years can be imposed for people like Mathes who commit such heinous crimes on the most vulnerable; a child. “These crimes often involve very young and vulnerable victims who are unable to protect themselves—it is hoped that this increased prison term will prevent and deter these cases.”

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***Editor’s Note: House Bill 349 – Destiny’s Act** –is named in honor of Destiny Shepherd, who was a year old when she received permanent brain injuries as a result of being violently shaken. The child’s mother went to a local store to get milk for her daughter and when she returned home, her home was surrounded by police and emergency vehicles. The child was taken to Dayton Children’s Medical Center where they determined that the child suffered skull fractures and serious brain injuries caused by a boyfriend shaking the child. The child now struggles daily with permanent disabling brain injuries. Under current law, Destiny’s assailant could only be sentenced for up to eight years for felonious assault of a minor under the age of 5. House Bill 349 will require the court to impose an additional mandatory prison term of 5 to 10 years if an individual is convicted of or pleads guilty to a felony offense of violence and also to a specification that the victim suffered permanent disabling harm. House Bill 349 defines permanent disabling harm as serious physical harm that results in permanent injury to the intellectual, physical or sensory functions and that permanently and substantially impairs a person’s ability to meet the ordinary demands of life.*