

For Immediate Release

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FW MAN SENTENCED TO LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE FOR SEXUAL ABUSE OF A CHILD

Prosecutor: "This case is about stolen innocence."

(FORT WORTH, TX) -- This week, a Tarrant County jury found Daniel Garcia, Jr. guilty for the continued sexual abuse of a child under the age of 14, and sentenced him to life in prison without parole. The trial, held in Criminal District Court No. 3, was prosecuted by Assistant Criminal District Attorneys David Alex and Kevin Boneberg.

In his opening statement, prosecutor David Alex told the jurors this case was about "stolen innocence." The target of the abuse was seven years old when she began asking her single mother if she could meet her birth father, Garcia. Once introduced, Garcia developed a relationship with the young girl and was granted regular visitation rights. It was during these visits that the abuse began, first when the child visited him at his live-in girlfriend's home, and then in the home of Garcia's elderly parents, who are raising two of Garcia's other children.

The girl, now a tween, quietly recounted her memories of the abuse to the jury the first day of the trial. Garcia began fondling her within weeks of their first visit, escalating the abuse over a period of four years. She testified that Garcia showed her explicit pornography involving bestiality, and investigators recovered graphic internet searches on Garcia's laptop such as "sex with my young daughter". His laptop also revealed evidence Garcia had installed software enabling online peer file-sharing, regularly utilized by those possessing child pornography. Records showed Garcia removed the software during a timeframe that directly correlated to the girl's outcry about the abuse. When initially questioned by authorities following his daughter's accusations, Garcia, who has a history of using inhalants, claimed he "didn't remember" any abuse taking place, but that it was possible, as "the sky's the limit when I'm high."

In addition to the victim, witnesses included a fingerprint expert from the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office, Child Protective Services caseworker, forensic computer analyst, and the girl's mother, who had herself been a victim of sexual abuse as a child. During the trial's penalty phase, Garcia's father testified about an altercation that took place years before the victim came in contact with Garcia, in which the father of Garcia's two then-stepdaughters accidentally shot Garcia's father when he tried to shield Garcia from the bullet. Garcia's parents gained custody of two of Garcia's other children during that period, after Garcia was accused of molesting the stepdaughters, inciting the stepdaughters' father to the violence against Garcia.

In closing, prosecutor David Alex asked the jurors to protect other young girls from Garcia by finding him guilty. "It's too late to save (the victim) from Daniel Garcia, but you can save other young girls from ever having to go through what happened to her."

The jury had the option of passing a sentence ranging from 25 years to life. Garcia was taken immediately into custody, and will serve a life sentence without the possibility of parole.

"This case was an ugly glimpse into the mind of a pedophile," said ACDA Alex. "I pray that we can break the stronghold they have over their young victims and get more of them off the streets."

END