

Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:
media@npa.gov.za

Victoria & Griffiths
Mxenge Building
123 Westlake Avenue
Weavind Park
Silverton
Pretoria

www.npa.gov.za

TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: 50 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR FOSTER FATHER FOR THE RAPE OF MINORS IN HIS CARE

The Worcester Regional Court sentenced a 65-year-old foster father to 50 years imprisonment for the rape of two minor girls aged 11 and 12-years-old.

For each count of rape the regional court sitting in Montague sentenced him to 25 years imprisonment and ordered the sentences to run concurrently.

The two cousins were removed from their biological parents due to socio economic conditions of the parents and neglect. They were placed in the foster care of Charles Stevens and his wife. The rapes happened on 03 March 2018 and 11 March 2018, respectively. His wife was not aware of the abuse as the incidents happened while she was asleep.

The abuse came to light when the 12-year-old fell ill at school and was taken to a clinic. She reported the abuse to a health care worker. As part of investigation, the 11-year-old was also interviewed by police and reported same. A forensic medical examination at Robertson Hospital confirmed signs of penetration.

The Worcester Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCC) was instrumental in ensuring that both girls were immediately removed from the house and placed in another safe place. Advocate Cindy Abdol, Case Manager at the Worcester TCC, and Cindy Jacobs, a Site Coordinator at the TCC liaised with social workers and Child Welfare Robertson to ensure that support services were provided to the victims.

Advocate Hendrik Koert, told the court that Stevens threatened the girls that they would all go to jail if they said anything and promised them sweets and money.

Welcoming the sentence Advocate Koert said the court gave a voice to the voiceless in sentencing the accused. "The scourge of gender-based violence coupled with socio economic challenges is very real for the rural Boland community. In passing sentences of this nature, the court sends a clear message to victims and the community that their voices matter, that their voices are heard. The complainants represented the most vulnerable members of society and it is important that we send a message to everyone that the State will do its best to ensure that they are protected," she said.

Stevens has been held in custody since his arrest in 2018 after Advocate Koert successfully opposed his bail application

Eric Ntabazalila
National Prosecuting Authority
Regional Communications Manager
Western Cape
Tel: (021) 487 7308 Mobile: 073 062 1222
Email: entabazalila@npa.gov.za