



# JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ELKVILLE MAN CONVICTED OF FIRST DEGREE MURDER OF A CHILD

Michael C. Carr, Jackson County State's Attorney, announced today that an Elkhart man was convicted of First Degree Murder following a jury trial.

Jarrod W. Rudder, 27, formerly from Michigan, was convicted of First Degree Murder, following a jury trial which began Monday, June 15, 2015. The trial concluded on June 22, 2015, after the jury deliberated for nearly two hours.

On April 20, 2012, just before midnight, the Jackson County Sheriff's Department received a 911 call to report a two-year-old child being unresponsive. The caller, who was the defendant, reported that the child fell in the bathtub of the Elkhart residence. An Elkhart police officer arrived on-scene and immediately recognized that the child was suffering symptoms consistent with a closed-head injury. The victim was transported to Carbondale Memorial Hospital and later air lifted to St. Louis Children's Hospital.

Upon arrival at St. Louis Children's Hospital, doctors became concerned with the number of bruises on the child's body. Child Abuse Pediatricians became involved with the victim's care. The victim was also suffering from major brain swelling, and his condition was critical.

Detectives with the Jackson County Sheriff's Department began investigating and learned that the victim's mother had been at work, and the child was left in the care of the defendant, who was dating the mother. The defendant gave several conflicting accounts about what had happened to the victim. During the investigation, however, the defendant admitted that he had grabbed the victim by the arm, swung him around off of a couch, and the child struck a wall in the residence.

The victim died at St. Louis Children's Hospital on April 22, 2012. During an autopsy, it was discovered that the victim suffered diffuse axonal injury to nerves in his brain, which is caused by extreme acceleration and deceleration forces. The victim also suffered eight lateral rib fractures and severe hemorrhaging deep within his abdominal cavity.

The pathologist and Child Abuse Pediatricians testified that the child would have suffered immediate symptoms as a result of these injuries. Medical experts testified that these injuries were not the result of a fall from the bathtub or a ground level fall. The medical experts determined that these injuries were consistent with abuse and inflicted trauma. Many witnesses testified during the trial that

the victim was not injured prior to the mother leaving for work, stating that the victim was walking, talking and running without any noticeable issues.

On June 22, 2015, the jury returned a guilty verdict for First Degree Murder, rejecting Involuntary Manslaughter. Sentencing has been set for August 18, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.

The investigation was conducted by the Jackson County Sheriff's Department, with assistance from the St. Louis City Medical Examiner's Office, the St. Louis Children's Hospital's Child Protection Program, and the Elleville Police Department. Assistant State's Attorney Casey Bloodworth was responsible for the prosecution of this case.