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Oxford

Two face charges in sex assault

Convicted sex offender, and his wife who teaches at alleged victim's high school, to be arraigned today.

Mike Martindale / The Detroit News

OXFORD — A 64-year-old convicted sex offender from Brandon Township and his wife are both expected to face charges today in the sexual assault of a 16-year-old girl who was allegedly paid money to test sexual devices for the man.

The Oxford High School teenager was introduced to the man by his wife, who teaches at the school, in 2006, according to investigators. The girl, then a freshman, was invited to their house to do odd jobs by the wife, who because of her status as a teacher will be charged with failure to report child sexual abuse, authorities said. The girl has worked for the couple for two years.

The News does not normally identify juveniles, rape victims or suspects in criminal cases until they are charged or named as fugitives in not-in-custody warrants.

"It is one of the more disgusting cases we have seen in some time," said Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard. "Not only do we have a convicted sex offender plying his trade, but it appears to be against a schoolgirl and with the indifference of a school employee. She (the wife) should have raised some kind of alarm."

The man, who is on the state's sexual offenders registry for a 2002 conviction, could be sentenced to 20 years in prison if convicted of the child sexual activity charges. Because he is a felon who was also arrested with a firearm, he also faces up to five years in prison and a mandatory two years in prison on charges of possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

His 53-year-old wife faces up to 93 days in jail if convicted of nonreporting, a misdemeanor offense. Both will be arraigned in Clarkston 52-2 District Court today, Bouchard said.

The teenager has told investigators the man invited her over to the couple's house June 26, and while they watched a movie together, he sexually assaulted her. She fled the house and drove home. She later called authorities and reported the incident.

The girl has also reported the man has paid her money to test sexual devices and submit a survey of her experience.

Oakland Circuit Court records reveal he was sentenced to probation in 2002 for a similar offense involving a 14-year-old foster daughter. In that case, he was convicted of four counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct after an Oakland County jury trial, but the verdict was dismissed on appeal.

The man subsequently pleaded no contest to a lesser charge of second-degree criminal sexual conduct, was sentenced to one year in jail (time already served) and placed on two years' probation -- which expired in 2004.

The foster daughter told investigators that she had sexual intercourse twice with the man in the home and that he had offered her a "job for testing products, including bras, panties and sexual aids." The girl said the man instructed her to "try out" the products and fill out a survey about how they worked and what she thought of them.

According to court records, the foster girl's birth mother died when she was 2 years old, and her father was sent to prison for an unspecified crime. She had spent time in at least one other foster home, where there was reported physical abuse, and she was "shuffled through the system." She was placed with the Brandon Township couple about nine months before her 14th birthday, records show, and lived with them for 10 months.

The girl said she was sexually assaulted by the man two days after her 14th birthday and that his wife walked in on them when they were having sexual intercourse for the second time. The wife took the Fifth Amendment against self-incrimination and initially would not discuss what she saw or heard in the home, according to court files, because she "did not want to implicate herself."

When asked why she didn't report a suspected incident of abuse to a child case worker -- a duty of teachers and other professionals -- the wife said: "I know my rights and don't need to speak to police until we have an attorney present."

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