

WHIO-TV (Dayton): Police: Man Made Meth Around Kids

October 23, 2009

SPRINGBORO, Ohio -- Police have arrested a Springboro man for cooking methamphetamine in his home just a few feet away from an 8-year-old child and a 1-month-old baby.

Officers said Robert Hubbard, 35, was cooking meth when they arrived at his home on Clearcreek-Franklin Road Thursday night.

Hubbard was taken to the Warren County Jail, where he is being held without bond.

He was charged with illegal manufacturing of drugs with a child, possession of chemicals for the manufacture of drugs and child endangering.

The children were turned over to Warren County Children's Services.

Authorities said more arrests could follow.

The Cincinnati Enquirer: Man charged with breaking baby's leg

BY: Jennifer Baker

October 27, 2009

NORTH BEND – A 22-year-old father of a newborn baby was arrested and charged Monday with breaking her leg.

Zachariah Revell of North Bend is held without bond on a count of child endangering at the Hamilton County jail.

Revell seriously harmed his 5-month-old daughter on Sept. 23 in the bedroom of a residence in the 3400 block of Lawrenceburg Road, Hamilton County Sheriff's detectives wrote in court records.

Revell broke the baby's left tibia bone, according to the sheriff's office.

Medical X-rays revealed the baby had previous injuries: a fracture in the left tibia and a compression fracture of the spine, records state.

Revell told authorities he pulled and twisted the baby's leg after she got stuck in the rails of her crib, court records show.

The Cincinnati Enquirer: Ky tops in child abuse death, Ohio 10th worst, according to advocacy group

BY: Mark Curnutte

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Kentucky has the nation's highest rate of death due to child abuse and neglect, according to a report by a child advocacy group in Washington, D.C.

Employing the most recent information available, from 2007, <http://www.everychildmatters.org/National/Campaigns/We-Can-Do-Better.html>, the Every Child Matters Education Fund found Kentucky had 4.09 deaths per 100,000 children.

The study showed that 1,760 U.S. children are documented to have died from abuse or neglect in 2007, a 35 percent increase from 2001.

But child advocates say that the number of deaths could be as much as 50 percent higher because of differences in how abuse and neglect are defined and counted state to state.

"It's heart-wrenching to know each day in America, five children will die from abuse and neglect, but what's worse is that the real number is even larger," said Michael Petit, president of the Every Child Matters Education Fund.

The report calls for more investment in health, social services and education for families as preventative measures.

In Northern Kentucky, the Brighton Center has such a program in place.

The center's Community Collaborative for Children works in the same 12 counties as the Northern Bluegrass Service Region of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services - which includes Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties.

It offers training in schools and in one-on-one settings with families struggling with alcohol or drug abuse, money problems and drug-affected babies. It provides infant simulators that show the effects of shaking a baby, leads seminars in anger management and provides training to teachers and other

mandatory reporters of abuse on how to identify burns, bites, bruises and other signs of abuse and neglect.

Economic pressures, including the increasing number of home foreclosures, have put more families at risk of child abuse.

"We do what we can; anything to keep the frustration level down in the home," said Lisa Ross, supervisor for the Brighton Center collaborative program. "Rarely does a parent set out to abuse a child."

She was surprised by Kentucky's ranking. "Yes, it's a little surprising," she said. "(The increase) might be the result of increased awareness and reporting."

In Kentucky, reports of abuse rose from 37,538 in 2001 to 63,612 in 2007, according to Every Child Matters.

Ohio had 104,000 reports of child abuse in 2001. The new report offered no additional numbers for the state.

The direct costs of abuse and neglect, such as operating child-welfare and judicial systems and hospitalizing injured children, were more than \$33 billion in the U.S. in 2007, according to the Children's Defense Fund.

In addition, long-term costs and effects of this heightened abuse are special education, lost productivity and juvenile and adult crime.

The severity of child abuse in Greater Cincinnati has increased, along with the numbers of cases being investigated, social workers say.

A report released earlier this month by the local United Way, Successful Starts, examined the well-being of children 6 years and younger in the region.

In Hamilton County, there were 584 substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect involving children 0-2 years. Another 303 cases were proven for children ages 3-4, and 316 for children 4-6 years.

Kenton County had 308 substantiated cases of abuse and neglect for children 0-6 in the same time period.

"The number of cases across the region suggests that parents and caretakers of very young children lack the parenting and nurturing skills that are critical to healthy development and learning," the United Way report read

The Youngstown Vindicator: Canfield's 'filthy' house

BY: Robert K. Yosay

October 28, 2009

CANFIELD — A city couple is charged with child endangering and cruelty to animals after two children and nine animals were removed from their home.

Canfield Detective Brian McGivern said the children, both boys ages 7 and 2, were placed in protective custody, and will remain there for at least 30 days. The animals were taken to the Mahoning County dog warden but did not survive.

He said the children, along with seven dogs and two cats, were taken from the home of Brian Spin, 38, and Betsy Spin, 32, of 535 Brookpark Drive.

Police found them living in deplorable conditions Thursday. McGivern said the house was filled with garbage, animal and human waste and mold.

“The entire house was completely uninhabitable,” he said. “It was like walking in two inches of maple syrup. That’s how saturated the rugs were with urine and feces.”

McGivern said police were called to the home after a woman driving by saw three dogs running loose on the street. When officers arrived at the residence, McGivern said they found Spin in the yard with the three dogs.

“These dogs were in bad shape,” he said. “When you walk in the house, your eyes start watering and you start coughing. It was a foul odor.”

McGivern said the children were in an upstairs bedroom with Betsy Spin’s mother Georgia Holowach. He said they were covered in bug bites and very dirty.

“They were filthy, very poor hygiene, but they were in good health,” he said. “The 2-year-old was still being breast fed by [Betsy Spin] every two hours.”

The older child was home-schooled, McGivern said. Spin worked from home, and his wife was unemployed.

The couple was forced to leave the residence and had been staying with family. They were brought to the Canfield Police Department on Tuesday afternoon, booked and released under the responsibility of their attorney.

They now face nine counts of cruelty to animals and two counts of child endangering. They are scheduled to appear in Mahoning County Court in Canfield at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday.

McGivern said the investigation continues.

The 4,596 square foot home, which is owned by Holowach, has a total market value of \$344,600 and was built in 1967, according to the Mahoning County Auditor's Web site.

McGivern said the Spins lived in the home through a land agreement.

About a half-dozen neighbors contacted Tuesday afternoon said they didn't want to discuss the matter.

McGivern said it took the dog warden four days to find and remove all the animals.

"Trash was piled so high inside the house, and the animals were just running wild that he couldn't just climb over it," he said.

Dog Warden Dave Nelson said three dogs died en route to the pound, and the other six animals were euthanized because of their condition.

The dog warden found another dog Tuesday afternoon living inside a mattress in the back yard.

"They had mange all over their bodies, which caused extreme pain," he said. "The sores they had caused bits of their ears to fall off because it rots the skin."

Nelson said the animals ranged from 1 to 6 years old, and were extremely emaciated.

"This is in the top 10 of all the houses I've raided in the past 20 years," he said. "It's just bad. It's beyond belief."

The Cincinnati Enquirer: Man charged with abusing baby

*BY: Jennifer Baker
October 30, 2009*

MT. HEALTHY – A 21-year-old man was arrested and charged Thursday with abusing his girlfriend's toddler son.

James Cunningham is held at the Hamilton County jail on one count each of child endangering and assault, court records show.

Hamilton County's children services agency contacted police Thursday after discovering the baby suffered injuries on his buttocks and ear at an apartment in the 8000 block of Hamilton Avenue, a police incident report states. The boy is 15 months old.

The baby's condition was not available this morning. It also was not clear if the toddler remains with his mother, or if he was placed in foster care.

The Youngstown Vindicator: Foster mom avoids murder charge in toddler's death. The dead girl's biological family takes exception to the manslaughter charge.

*BY: Ed Runyan
October 30, 2009*

WARREN — The woman charged with killing her 20-month-old foster child last April in a Champion duplex smothered the girl and grabbed her neck tight enough to leave ring marks on her skin, the Trumbull County prosecutor's office said Thursday.

But that isn't evidence that Bonnie Pattinson, 31, intended to kill Tiffany Banks Cross, said Diane Barber, assistant county prosecutor.

That conclusion resulted Thursday in Pattinson's pleading guilty to involuntary manslaughter, which will result in a prison sentence of up to 10 years. The original charges of murder and felonious assault on which she was indicted could have landed her in prison for life.

"There is no evidence that she intended to kill the child," Barber said after the hearing, explaining why Pattinson was allowed to plead guilty to the lesser offense.

Pattinson will be sentenced by Judge John M. Stuard in Trumbull County Common Pleas Court in four to six weeks, once the county Adult Probation

Department conducts a presentence investigation. Pattinson remains in Trumbull County Jail on \$1 million bond.

The child's death has been shrouded in mystery since it happened April 2. Her obituary gave no indication that the death was suspicious or that the girl was in foster care when she died, saying only that she died of natural causes, was the daughter of Thomas Cross and Felicia Banks and that she was survived by two siblings.

Meanwhile, a Champion police report indicated that the girl had suspicious marks on her body when paramedics arrived. Pattinson told police at the time that Tiffany had been asleep about 10 to 20 minutes, and when she checked on her, she wasn't breathing.

Tiffany was pronounced dead later at the hospital.

The Trumbull County coroner, Dr. Humphrey Germaniuk, ruled in July the death was a homicide and said she died of asphyxiation associated with multiple blunt-force injuries.

By this time, Cross and Banks came forward to say that they were the child's biological parents but that Tiffany had been taken from them at birth and had been reared by foster parents under the supervision of the Trumbull County Children's Board.

They had not seen the child since the previous November, when they lost permanent custody, and wanted answers as to what happened, they said.

Loretta Banks, Felicia Banks' mother, said she was further frustrated Thursday to learn that Pattinson had been offered the plea agreement and appeared in court Thursday without the Banks family's knowledge.

They had attended all of Pattinson's earlier hearings and thought Pattinson's next one was today, Loretta Banks said.

"I think they should never have given her an offer like that," Loretta Banks said. "You can get five years doing drug deals, and she murders a child and gets only 10 — and maybe not even that," she said.