



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## SENTENCING GUIDELINES COMMISSION

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November 10, 2009

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** SGC

**FROM:** Shannon Hinchcliffe, SGC Policy Counsel

**RE:** SUMMARY OF FACTS OF WASHINGTON V. CHRISTIANSEN CASE  
NUMBER 07-1-03033-1.

At the October 9, 2009 SGC meeting, during the discussion of Assault of a Child first degree recommendations, members requested a summary of the facts surrounding the Eryk Woodruff case and a copy of the defendant, Matthew Christiansen's judgment and sentence. Eryk Woodruff is the namesake of the "Eryk Woodruff Act" (EHHB 2279) which tasked the SGC with the review of and recommendations for the crime of Assault of a Child first degree.

The following is a summary of facts contained in the **Information** and corresponding **Affidavit of Probable Cause** filed in the Washington v. Christiansen case number 07-1-03033-1.

Mr. Christiansen was charged with Assault of a Child in the First Degree for events occurring from September 8, 2007 to September 13, 2007. The affiant (a Snohomish Deputy Prosecuting Attorney) reviewed Everett Police Department reports, witness statements, medical reports, CPS reports and the defendant's statement.

#### Summary of Facts

Eryk Woodruff's mother knew the defendant's wife and considered her a friend. Defendant was unemployed at the time and stayed home and watched his own two children, he also agreed to babysit Eryk and his three-year-old sister. The defendant's wife worked so he was the only adult home during the day with the children.

When Eryk's mother picked him up on 9/6/07, he had a small cut on his left temple, the defendant explained it had occurred when they child fell and hit his head on a toy. On 9/11/07, the defendant called Eryk's mother to let her know that he had been hit in the face with a toy and had two black eyes. When the father picked up Eryk that afternoon, the defendant explained that the boy had some bruising on his trunk due to rough play with the other children. When his diaper was changed that night Eryk whimpered, Mr. Woodruff was concerned, took pictures and posted an ad for another babysitter.

On 9/13/07, the defendant began babysitting Eryk at 6:30 a.m., at approximately 1:39 p.m., the defendant's wife had just arrived home and found Eryk unconscious, she called 911. Paramedics and police arrived within two minutes and Eryk was transported to Harborview Medical Center due to the potentially fatal nature of his head injuries. The defendant made statements at the scene to paramedics and police about the events that had occurred.

Medical evidence indicated that the assault was the last in a series of assaults by the defendant. Injuries included an acute fracture to the child's mandible, multiple rib fractures, a subdural hemorrhage, a fracture to right lower arm, and multiple unexplained bruises. A medical team consulted on his injuries and made several findings regarding the duration of abuse and causes of his assortment of injuries.

Defendant had no known felony convictions and two previous CPS referrals in 2004 for allegedly spanking his two year old stepson so hard that it left bruises.