

Chester County District Attorney's Office

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PRESS RELEASE

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Man Charged in Sexual Assault of Two Girls Under Age of 13

A joint investigation between Chester County Detectives and the Caln Township Police Department resulted in the arrest of Claude Edwards, Jr., age 64, of Parkesburg. He was charged with Rape, Involuntary Deviate Intercourse, and related offenses for the abuse over many years of two female victims (Victim #1 and Victim #2) between the ages of 6 and 13.

Chester County District Attorney Deb Ryan said, "The defendant robbed two innocent girls of their childhoods by repeatedly violating them, sometimes every day. He engaged in unimaginable cruelty and depravity to satisfy his deviant behavior. My office will keep children safe from these horrific types of predators by holding them accountable for all of their life-altering criminality."

The allegations in the complaint are the following¹:

On June 23, 2020, Victim #1 told Chester County Detective James Ciliberto that starting in 2009, when she was about 6 or 7 years of age, the defendant began molesting her at her grandmother's house in Caln Township, Chester County, PA, where she would stay at night when her mother was at work. The

¹ A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

defendant lived with Victim #1's grandmother. Victim #1 stated the sexual abuse happened almost every day, that she was frightened and would cry during the assaults.

The defendant's abuse of Victim #1 included:

- Locking her in a bathroom or bedroom and forcing her to touch his genitals. When she resisted, the defendant assaulted Victim #1 by touching her vagina, breasts, and buttocks.
- Forcing Victim #1 to watch pornographic videos while the defendant described how he wanted to engage in similar activities with her.
- Attempting to force Victim #1 to perform oral sex on him.

The defendant told Victim #1 that she would get into trouble if she told anyone. The abuse ended in 2011 after her grandmother died when Victim #1 was between the ages of 11 and 12 years old.

On June 25, 2020, Victim #2 reported to Caln Township Police Sergeant Christine Cusick that starting in 2002, when she was 8-years old, the defendant began sexually abusing her at her grandmother's house in Coatesville, PA, where she lived, and the defendant lived, too.

The defendant's abuse of Victim #2 included:

- Raping Victim #2 when she was 8-years old. She bit the defendant's hand when he used it to muffle her screams. The defendant instructed her to say she had a

bicycle accident after she bled because he said, "They're gonna send me away, and nobody's gonna love you."

- When feeding her hamster, the defendant forced her to sit on his lap while he was erect and watch pornographic videos.
- Digitally penetrating Victim #2's vagina, performing oral sex on her, and exposing himself to her.
- Forcing her to touch his genitals.
- Sexually assaulting Victim #2 at his place of employment and a mobile home nearby.

The abuse ended in 2007 when Victim #2 was 13 years old and moved out of her grandmother's home.

The defendant was arraigned by Magisterial District Judge Hines in Coatesville. He was remanded to Chester County Prison in lieu of \$1,000,000 bail. The defendant's case was held for court after the preliminary hearing on August 27, 2020.

Anyone with further information concerning this investigation should call Chester County Detectives at 610-344-6866.

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Approved for release by Deborah Ryan, District Attorney

