

# Chester County District Attorney's Office

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## PRESS RELEASE

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November 27, 2020

### Mom Charged in Child Torture Case

The Chester County District Attorney's Office and the Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department charged 31-year-old Julianne Lewis, of West Chester, PA, with multiple counts of Aggravated Assault, Kidnapping a Minor, Endangering the Welfare of a Child, False Imprisonment, Conspiracy, and related charges for her role in the brutal beating, systemic abuse, and neglect of her 9-year old daughter. Her boyfriend, Dimitrios Moscharis, was arrested and charged earlier this week.

The child victim is currently in critical condition at Nemours/A.I. DuPont Hospital in Wilmington, D.E., with injuries to multiple organs, extensive bruising all over her body, and likely brain damage due to oxygen deprivation for an extended period. Medical professionals describe her injuries to be consistent with trauma and child torture.

Chester County District Attorney Deb Ryan said, "It is incomprehensible that a mother would not only engage in this horrific treatment of her child but also fail to intervene to protect her from abuse from a man she just met. She participated in a systemic abuse pattern that violated her duty of care and subjected her to unimaginable acts of cruelty. Her failure to render aid to her child is despicable. We are grateful to the Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department and

the Chester County Detectives for their tireless efforts in this investigation. We will get justice for this child.”

The allegations in the complaint are the following<sup>1</sup>:

In the early hours of November 23, 2020, Westtown-East Goshen police responded to a 911 call of an unconscious 9-year old child at a Westtown Township home. The child’s mother, Julianne Lewis, reported that while she was driving for Lyft in Northeast Philadelphia, she received a text from the co-defendant, her boyfriend, to come home immediately. The child had been in the defendant’s care. When Lewis arrived home – which she claimed was in disarray, indicating a struggle – she found her daughter unconscious, wet, and fully clothed in the bathtub. She claimed that she and the co-defendant pulled her from the bathtub to perform CPR after Lewis called 911.

Police found the child unresponsive on the bathroom floor. When EMS removed her clothes to perform life-saving measures, they found extensive bruising all over her body that appeared both old and new.

The child was taken to Nemours/A.I. DuPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, DE. Doctors at DuPont said the victim child suffered a “near fatality,” meaning she suffered life-threatening injuries, including to her lungs. Tests showed that she likely suffered brain damage because she was deprived of oxygen for a significant time, indicating strangulation or suffocation. Doctors also reported injury to the ligaments along her spinal cord, consistent with imprisonment in a small space and the child contorting her body during an assault and/or after the loss of consciousness.

The child’s body had bruising patterns consistent with objects found near the bathroom, including a curtain rod, hanger, and other implements.

During the investigation, police learned that she and the co-defendant had been dating for about two months. The co-defendant told Lewis that the child needed disciplining, so whenever the child acted out or didn’t listen over minor complaints, like whether she brushed her teeth or did her homework, Lewis

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<sup>1</sup> A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

allowed and watched the co-defendant hit her with a curtain rod or a baton used to open and close window blinds. Additionally, they forced the child to walk up and down the stairs with her arms outstretched for hours at a time, the defendant's punishment of choice for her daughter. They also locked her in the closet for extended periods, made her kneel on a pile of hangers, and made her sleep on a concrete floor in the basement on numerous occasions.

Investigators learned that co-defendant Moscharis forcefully grabbed the child by her shoulders and covered her mouth with his hand while verbally berating her. These assaults took place over approximately two weeks in Lewis's presence, but she did nothing to help her.

On November 22, 2020, the victim was forced into a two-foot by three-foot closet for more than 15 hours with clothes dumped on her and without access to food, water, or a bathroom. During that time, the defendant went to work, returned home, and then left again with the co-defendant to purchase marijuana. When they returned home, they got high and fell asleep while the child remained in the closet. The defendant made no effort to release her daughter, check on her, or render aid.

Later, when the defendant was at work again, she was contacted by the co-defendant about the child's unresponsive condition. Neither called 911 for help despite knowing the child had difficulty breathing for at least 45 minutes. When the defendant arrived home and finally called 911, the co-defendant told her to lie to the police and state that the child's biological father injured the child.

The defendant was arrested on November 27, 2020, and arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Grover Koon. Her co-defendant, Moscharis, was arrested on November 23, 2020. Both defendants were remanded to Chester County Prison without bail.

Anyone with information is urged to call Chester County Detectives at 610-344-6866 or Westtown-East Goshen Detective Russel Weaverling at 610-692-9600.

This case is assigned to Deputy District Attorney Erin O'Brien.

If you suspect child abuse contact ChildLine at 800-932-0313.

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Approved for release by Deborah Ryan, District Attorney