



CHESTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

TELEPHONE: 610-344-6801
FAX: 610-344-5905

THOMAS P. HOGAN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

201 W. MARKET STREET, SUITE 4450
POST OFFICE BOX 2748
WEST CHESTER, PA 19380-0991

November 5, 2018

PRESS RELEASE

**Mother Kills 5-Year Old Daughter
By Pushing Her Down Stairs,
Charged With Murder**

Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan and Parkesburg Borough Police Chief Brian Sheller announced the arrest of defendant Ciara Robinson for murder. The defendant intentionally pushed her 5-year old daughter down a set of stairs and onto a concrete landing, causing a crushing injury to the victim's head and the death of the child. The subsequent autopsy of the child victim revealed extensive bruising and scars across her body, indicative of chronic abuse.

The defendant is 25 years old. She resides in Parkesburg, Pennsylvania. She has one other child, a 2-year old boy. She worked as a home health aide.

District Attorney Hogan stated, "This little girl was severely abused, culminating in her death. No child should have to live like this. Our hearts are broken by the death of an innocent child. Working together, we will make sure that justice is served."

Parkesburg Police Chief Sheller stated, "The Parkesburg Borough Police Department and Chester County Detectives worked together immediately to address this terrible crime. We will use all of our resources to continue this

investigation and discover every piece of evidence. The Parkesburg community mourns the death of this child.”

The allegations of the criminal complaint are as follows:¹

On October 31, 2018, the Parkesburg Borough Police Department and medical personnel were dispatched at approximately 9:25 p.m. to 403 Walnut Street, Parkesburg, Chester County, Pennsylvania. Present at the residence were defendant Ciara Robinson and her 5-year old daughter, victim Amatulah “Amy” McLaughlin.

The victim was not breathing, had no pulse, and was cool to the touch, indicating that she had been dead for some time.

The Parkesburg Borough Police Department and the Chester County Detectives immediately began to investigate the death. Based on the processing of the scene, witness interviews, an autopsy of the victim, and other investigative leads, the following information was developed.

On October 31, the defendant became angry with the victim. She hit her and then intentionally pushed her down the stairs to the basement of the residence. The stairs are an 8-9 foot fall, and ends with a concrete landing. The victim struck her head when she hit the landing. After the incident, the defendant notified a friend, “I knocked [the victim] out.... She won’t wake up.... I am going to jail.”

An autopsy of the victim revealed that she died of blunt force trauma to the head, resulting in an acute subdural hematoma and extremely swollen brain. In short, the victim died from a brain bleed and extreme intra-cranial pressure.

In addition to this acute injury, the autopsy also revealed that the child had been severely beaten over a period of time. She had extensive bruises, scars, puncture wounds, and strike marks over her arms, legs, and back.

The police conducted interviews and gathered other historical information that revealed that the defendant had been beating the child victim since at least November of 2017.

¹ A criminal defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in court.

The defendant has been charged with third degree murder, voluntary manslaughter, and involuntary manslaughter for the death of the child. In addition, she has been charged with aggravated assault and endangering the welfare of a child based on the at least year-long abuse of her daughter.

The defendant's 2-year old son is unharmed and is in protective custody with a Chester County agency.

District Attorney Hogan added, "The loss of any child is a tragedy. However, it is horrific that a parent would inflict such sustained and brutal damage to her own daughter. We must protect our children."

This investigation is ongoing. Anybody with information should call Parkesburg Detective Ryan Murtagh at (610) 857-3535 or Chester County Detective Jerry Davis at (610) 344-6866. The assigned prosecutors are Brian Burack and Christine Abatemarco.

* * * * *

Approved for release:

Thomas P. Hogan