

Chester County District Attorney's Office

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NEWS RELEASE

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FORMER DOWNINGTOWN WEST FOOTBALL COACH CHARGED WITH CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The Chester County District Attorney's Office announces the arrest of Kenneth Walls, 77, of Downingtown, for the sexual abuse of a child, now 12-years-old, from 2020 to 2022. The defendant, a former staff football coach at Downingtown West High School, recently volunteered as a coach for the football team.

The defendant is charged with multiple counts of aggravated indecent assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, and related charges. He is held at Chester County Prison on \$100,000 cash bail set by MDJ Ann Feldman.

DA Deb Ryan said, "The child victim in this case showed tremendous courage by telling a mandated reporter at her school about this awful abuse. The defendant engaged in a common pattern of child predators: he lavished the child with gifts, took her shopping, and made her feel special. In fact, he was grooming her and her family by duping them into thinking he was a kind and generous man. These despicable criminal violations will have life-altering consequences for this child and her family, and we will do everything possible to get justice for them."

DASD Superintendent Robert O'Donnell said, "Each day that parents send their children to school, they entrust our district with their safety. As a district, we take that responsibility seriously and will continue to work with our staff, students,

families, law enforcement and community to maintain a safe educational environment for all children.”

The allegations in the complaint are the following¹:

On Nov. 3, 2022, Chester County Detectives learned that a 12-year-old victim told a staff member at her school in another county that the defendant had been sexually abusing her on numerous occasions for the past two to three years. The victim told investigators that the sexual abuse happened at the defendant’s house in Downingtown.

Detectives discovered the victim sometimes stayed at the defendant’s house and that he bought her a cell phone, hoverboard, and ear pods. He would text and call the victim multiple times a week. The victim told detectives that the defendant took her out for meals, shopping, and to fairs or carnivals.

Chester County Detectives are investigating. Senior Deputy District Attorney Erin O’Brien is the assigned prosecutor. A preliminary hearing is set for Nov. 16, 2022.

Call Childline at 1-800-932-0313 if you suspect a child is being abused.

Learn to recognize, react to, and report child sexual abuse by taking a free virtual Stewards of Children workshop. Contact County Coordinator Elisa Mendoza at emendoza@chesco.org or 610-344-5576 for more information.

Approved for release by Deborah Ryan, District Attorney

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