

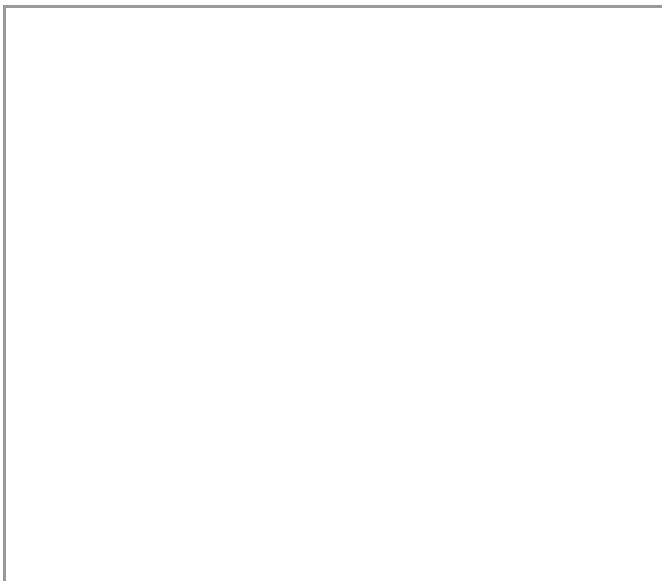
# Former police officer gets prison for sexual contact with girl

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Updated: 3/02 6:41 pm Published: 3/02 5:37 pm  
SEARCY, AR – A former Searcy police officer and middle school resource office has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for sexual contact with a 16-year-old girl.

State Police arrested Hamilton Riley on February 23rd of 2010 when he climbed through a window into the bedroom of the girl, his student, at 1am. The judge said Riley’s relationship with the 16-year-old started with text messages when she was in the 8th grade.

Before the judge handed down Riley’s sentence on Thursday, he asked him if he wanted to say anything. Riley said “no sir” and that is the only thing he said during the whole hearing before learning his fate.

On sentencing, the judge said Riley committed a heinous offense against a vulnerable child.

Chris Raff, the prosecuting attorney, said of Hamilton, “He was a predator and he was at the worst place of all: At a junior high school covered with a uniform, wearing a gun, and wearing a badge. It was a horrible situation,”

Inside the courtroom, Raff said there is more than just one victim in this case. He said there is a whole community of victims, including students, parents, and other police officers impacted by Riley’s actions.

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"This young girl, the victim, her life will never be the same. She will be impacted by this forever, as will her parents, so it affected people all across the board," said Raff.

Both prosecutors and defense attorneys called this case very unique. “I’ve never seen that before. I hope I never see it again, and I hope this sentence helps insure that,” said Raff.

Riley pled guilty to the crime on February 11th, the Friday before he was scheduled for trial. Riley’s attorney asked the judge for probation instead of jail time. The attorney declined to comment on the sentence.

Riley resigned from the police force on the day of his arrest.

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