



## Winfield sentenced to two life terms

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Melrose — Keith Winfield, a Melrose resident and former Somerville police officer convicted of raping his then 23-month-old niece with a hot object, received two life sentences in Middlesex Superior Court in Cambridge Tuesday morning as his family and supporters cried and sobbed.

Judge Patrick Riley, who presided, said the gravity of the offenses, which Winfield committed in 2005, “weighed heavily” on his decision.

“There’s no indication in the evidence that the defendant received any sexual pleasure from these actions,” Riley said. “Rather, the severity of the injuries inflicted upon the victim can only be explained by an intent to torture her. The court must consider seriously the inhumanity of these acts.”

The judge also noted the young age of the victim at the time of the assault, saying, “She was completely helpless with no ability to fight back or protect herself.”

On Nov. 15, Winfield was found guilty on all four charges for which he’d been indicted in August 2006: two counts of rape of a child with force, one count of indecent assault and battery on a child under 14, and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon causing serious bodily injury. The abuse occurred on Oct. 13, 2005 after Winfield sexually assaulted his then 23-month-old niece, while she was in his care at his home in Melrose, according to the Middlesex District Attorney’s office.

Winfield, who has already filed an appeal, will begin serving his sentence immediately at MCI-Cedar Junction in South Walpole.

In explaining his sentencing ruling, Riley told the court that minimum and maximum sentencing guidelines — taking into account Winfield’s lack of a criminal record — called for eight to 12 years for the rape of a child by force; four to six years for indecent assault and battery on a child under 14; and three to five years for assault and battery with a dangerous weapon causing serious bodily injury.

The prosecution sought concurrent 25 to 30-year terms for both of the rape charges, nine to 10 years for the indecent assault charge, and 10 years of probation for the last charge.

Doug Louison, Winfield’s attorney, mentioned Winfield’s lack of criminal record and his client’s work as a police officer in asking for the minimum sentences, saying, “This crime that he is now convicted of is so inexplicable and so out of character with the sum of the man.”

In imposing the two concurrent life sentences, Riley said he had to consider deterrence and whether a person who committed such a crime would consider the potential consequences and therefore be deterred in the future.

“I can only conclude that a person who commits such a vicious assault on an innocent, helpless victim would not first consider the consequences of their actions,” he said. “I would also consider what it would take to rehabilitate someone who would commit these acts ... protection must be the primary consideration of this sentence.”

Riley added that because the victim is a member of Winfield’s extended family, a term of incarceration would also serve to ensure that the he has no further contact with the victim, whether intentional or inadvertent, for an extended period of time.

### The investigation begins

The case began in October 2005 when Winfield’s sister-in-law, who at the time lived in Tewksbury with her parents, dropped off her then-23-month-old daughter at Winfield’s Melrose home for babysitting by Winfield and his wife. The child remained in their care for the day and was alone with Winfield for a portion of the day, according to authorities.

An investigative team comprised of the Melrose Police Department and the Middlesex District Attorney’s Office’s Child Abuse Prosecution Division, allege that the child was assaulted by Winfield with a hot object — possibly a heated curling iron — resulting in serious burns, some of which were inside the child’s vagina and anus.

Authorities said that the child’s mother returned for her later that day and the injuries, which the mother and her parents initially thought might have been a severe case of diaper rash, worsened over the next 24 to 36 hours.

The mother brought the child to the child’s doctor the following day and was immediately referred to Children’s Hospital in Boston. Upon examination, doctors at Children’s suspected the child might have been sexually and physically abused and admitted her for treatment while notifying police and the Department of Social Services.

As the case unfolded, the child was placed in custody of the Department of Social Services. She remained hospitalized for weeks, including care received at Boston's Shriners Hospital for Children for treatment of her burns, according to Melrose Police Detective Sgt. Barry Campbell, who, along with other officers, was involved in the early investigation of the case.

When the investigation began in October 2005, Winfield, who had been hired by the Somerville Police Department on Nov. 27, 2000, was suspended from the department but was still drawing his paycheck.

"We suspended him in October 2005 with pay when the allegations were first made," Somerville Chief of Police Robert Bradley said in an interview with the *Free Press* last year. "We took his firearms, ID card and other police equipment. In March 2006, we suspended him without pay," and he was placed on administrative leave.

On the morning of Aug. 1, 2006, a Middlesex grand jury returned indictments against Winfield, which included charges of rape of a child (two counts), indecent assault and battery on a child under 14, and assault and battery with a dangerous weapon causing serious bodily injury. A warrant was subsequently issued for Winfield's arrest by Melrose police, and the defendant, accompanied by his attorney, turned himself in to Melrose police at noon that same day.

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Well I really believe he should meet with a hot curling iron daily as they pass him along among all the inmates!! Merry Christmas and thank the lord he is out of Melrose and Somerville - go ahead family defend him!!!

Melrose open to all?

4 years ago

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Please, please Melrose, can we be more proactive in riding our community of these pedophiles? Let's face it, Melrose is a community filled with children. Any of these sick individuals who reside here are doing so with one purpose, to get their fill of our innocent children. I have no tolerance for these creeps and I want them out. What can we do as a community to politely and discretely drive them out? I'm talking about the creep in the Winthrop School area, the one on Mt. Vernon Street, the one on West Wyoming... why are they allowed to stay, or better yet, why do we allow them to stay? I am tired of living in fear for my children, aren't you?

Just a thought

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