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*****MEDIA ALERT*****

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CAREGIVER OF 2-YEAR-OLD GIRL FOUND GUILTY OF NEGLIGENCE CAUSING PERMANENT BRAIN INJURY

VANDERBURGH COUNTY, Ind. — Prosecutor Diana Moers announces that on Thursday, June 4, 2026, a jury found Kashia Blanks guilty of neglect of a dependent resulting in serious bodily injury, a Level 3 felony, and neglect of a dependent by deprivation of necessary support, a Level 6 felony. The Honorable Magistrate Judge Ryan C. Reed of the Vanderburgh County Circuit Court presided.

On June 1, 2022, a 2-year-old girl was admitted to the hospital because she was unconscious and unresponsive. It was quickly determined that she needed immediate surgery for an acute subdural hematoma to reduce swelling in her brain or she could die. The doctors were able to save her by removing part of her skull to reduce the pressure. Unfortunately, the brain trauma resulted in long-term disability such that the 2-year-old child is unable to walk or speak 4 years later and is able to use only one arm, alongside other developmental and physical deficiencies.

The child was in the sole care of her mom's girlfriend—the defendant—while her mom was at work. The defendant claimed that the child suddenly became unresponsive and that she performed CPR on the child, put a cold popsicle on her head, and tried to use Oreos to wake the child up. Importantly, she never called 911, and the unresponsive child was brought to the hospital only after the mom came home.

At trial, the defendant presented a theory that the child had fallen down the stairs two days prior to the hospitalization date, but this story was overwhelmingly contradicted by medical testimony. The State called numerous board-certified medical professionals ranging from the neurosurgeon to specialists in pediatric neuroradiology and abuse. They indicated that the cause of brain trauma was non-accidental and would have resulted in immediately noticeable symptoms. The pediatric specialists testified that the significant scope of the injuries was inconsistent with a fall down the stairs and the timeline posed by the defendant.

Deputy prosecutors Jordan Williams and Keaton Maurer held firm during a four-day trial, despite the defense offering a never-before-disclosed “fact” that the defendant's four-year-old son had pushed the 2-year-old victim down the stairs. The jury did not buy this new theory and quickly returned guilty verdicts in less than 2 hours.

Investigators who were instrumental in the prosecution and conviction included EDP Detective Vonderscher and Officer Zimmer. Prosecutor's Office staff who assisted included Jen Savage, Lisa Deutsch, and Morgan Richardville.

Prosecutor Moers had the following statement: "Even one case where a child is murdered or harmed permanently at the hands of their own parent or caretaker is too much—sadly we have many of these types of cases in our own county. In this case, a perfectly healthy baby girl has suffered permanent injuries at the hands of a caretaker. My prosecutors worked day and night to develop this case—calling in a parade of doctors and experts who used their time and expertise to help us achieve justice.

Cases involving children are difficult to prosecute. Children are an easy target because they cannot speak for themselves and many offenders will go unprosecuted—but this will not stop us from seeking justice with every piece of evidence we can gather from the 911 call to technology and medical experts. I consider it the core function of my office to keep children safe and I can promise we will not relent in this pursuit. We will be seeking the most aggressive sentence allowable by law for this violent defendant who has caused permanent harm to a child under her care. The jury saw through her story and she made a display in the courtroom acting as the victim herself when she was found guilty. I want the public to be diligent and hold other parents and caretakers accountable if they see anything suspicious or see a child who is displaying signs of trauma. No child should be abused and no child should go without swift medical care if they are injured."

The sentencing hearing is set for June 24, 2026 in front of the Honorable Magistrate Judge Ryan C. Reed of the Vanderburgh County Circuit Court. The defendant faces a possible sentence of 3 to 16 years for the neglect resulting in serious bodily injury, a Level 3 felony, and ½ to 2½ years for the Level 6 felony neglect.

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