



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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PRESS RELEASE

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Magalia Man and Mothers Plead in Horrific Child Abuse Case

A Magalia man pleaded no contest in Butte County Superior Court today to multiple charges of physical and sexual abuse against five minor children, stemming from over a year of violence within his Magalia home. The biological mothers of the children, who were in a polyamorous relationship with Chavez, also pleaded no contest today to multiple felony child abuse charges relating to their failure to protect the children and for attempting to dissuade the children from testifying.

Robert Chavez, 41, pled no contest to multiple counts of rape and molest of the women's female children, ranging in ages from 4 to 16, plus a count of torture against one young boy. Chavez also admitted a count of mayhem in an unrelated case involving a former girlfriend. As a result of his plea, Chavez faces 80 years to life in state prison.

The children's mothers, **Amanda Johnson, 38**, and **Kelsey Cabrera, 35**, each pleaded no contest to four counts of felony child abuse and one count of dissuading witnesses. They both individually face up to 10 years and 8 months in state prison.

Chavez, Johnson, and Cabrera lived together at a home on Colter Way in Magalia, CA, and both women had their minor children living within the home.

The case began with a disclosure made by one of the children at school in January 2023.

After interviewing the child, investigators from the Butte County District Attorney's Office went to the Magalia home to arrest Chavez. During an initial search of the home, Chavez was not initially located, but investigators discovered he was hiding in a crawl space above the home's garage. After a prolonged standoff, involving multiple agencies, Chavez was eventually arrested and taken into custody.

Over the following weeks, the district attorney investigators conducted multiple interviews and learned the extent of the abuse occurring in the home at the hands of Chavez. Multiple incidents of sexual abuse were disclosed, as well as extreme levels of physical abuse.

Investigators also began combing through a staggering amount of evidence located within the home.

District Attorney Mike Ramsey said the abuse committed by Chavez against the minor victims was truly horrific and was easily one of the worst cases his office had seen in some time.

Ramsey noted Chavez had been physically abusing all of the children, and sexually abusing some of the female children for over a year, with incidents occurring so often that it was impossible to grasp the full extent of what the children suffered.

The children described Chavez shooting them with BB guns, beating them with whips and paddles, and punching and kicking them in their faces and bodies. Chavez would routinely take pleasure in torturing a young boy in the home, beating him until he could not stand and inflicting extensive bruising.

Chavez also burned a young girl with cigarettes to her face. Chavez would also threaten to harm the children if they ever disclosed any of the abuse.

Ramsey commended the courage the minors showed by speaking up, despite the physical, mental, and emotional abuse they suffered, and noted that the investigation would never have commenced without their bravery. The DA also praised the unwavering efforts of his prosecutors and investigators that worked “this truly awful case, which took a toll upon them despite their hardened veteran status.”

During the extensive investigation, a former girlfriend of Chavez was also interviewed. She disclosed abuse at the hands of Chavez when she dated him several years before he moved to Magalia. Ramsey said the mayhem charge stemmed from an incident where Chavez strangled her during an argument and held a hot curling iron to an intimate part of her body, leaving permanent scars.

At today’s hearing, Chavez’s attorney requested Chavez be released pending sentencing, citing “difficulties” with other inmates at the jail. The judge summarily denied the request.

Chavez is currently set to be sentenced on May 17, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

His co-defendants, Amanda Johnson and Kelsey Cabrera, are scheduled to be sentenced on May 24, 2023, at 11:00 A.M.

All three defendants are being held in the Butte County Jail without bail pending sentencing.



Robert Chavez



Kelsey Cabrera



Amanda Johnson