



# BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



**MICHAEL L. RAMSEY**  
District Attorney

**MARK MURPHY**  
Chief Deputy District Attorney

**JASON WINES**  
Chief Investigator

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Magalia Mothers Sentenced to Prison in Horrific Child Abuse Case**

Two Magalia mothers were sentenced to ten years and eight months each in state prison in Butte County Superior Court today. Both previously pleaded no contest to multiple charges of child abuse and witness dissuading related to their five minor children.

The ten-year eight-month sentences for **Kelsey Cabrera, 35, and Amanda Johnson, 39**, stem from years of physical and sexual abuse that were inflicted on their biological children by their co-defendant, Robert Chavez, 41. Cabrera, Johnson, and Chavez were involved in a polyamorous relationship between the years of 2021 and 2023 and were most recently living together at a home on Colter Way in Magalia, along with the minor children, who ranged in ages from 4 to 16.

Three of the minor children were the biological children of Cabrera, and two were the biological children of Johnson. None of the children were biologically related to Chavez.

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 and arrested Chavez after a four-hour standoff.

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

Butte County 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.

After the first child bravely came forward and disclosed at school, the other children were removed from the home and interviewed. The witness dissuading charge on the mothers stemmed from the day the children were removed from the home. On that day, in the presence of law enforcement officers, both Cabrera and Johnson told their children not to talk to investigators about what was happening in the home.

Ramsey stated that during the investigation, his investigators discovered evidence that not only were Cabrera and Johnson aware that the physical abuse was occurring, they were present for some of the more horrific incidents, and failed to do anything to stop Chavez.

At the sentencing hearing this morning, both Cabrera and Johnson addressed the court, stating that they did not know the sexual abuse was occurring. The prosecuting attorney, Deputy District Attorney Stephanie Roose, argued that both women were aware of sexual abuse within the home as both women had acknowledged in interviews with investigators that there was an incident where they had walked in on Chavez with one of the minor females, as well as additional incidents that raised their suspicions.

Butte County Superior Court Judge Jesus Rodriguez agreed and found that he found the women's assertions they had no knowledge of the sexual abuse not credible, due to what they had seen and heard in the home. Additionally it was clear they were aware of the physical abuse as they were present during many of those incidents.

The judge then sentenced both women to the maximum sentence of 10 years and 8 months, citing the egregious and violent level of continuous abuse suffered by the children while they were in the home, the callous nature of the crimes, the fact that weapons were used against the children and that the mothers never did anything to stop the abuse.

The co-defendant Chavez was previously sentenced to 80 years to life in prison on May 12, 2023.



Kelsey Cabrera



Amanda Johnson



Robert Chavez