



BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



MICHAEL L. RAMSEY
District Attorney

MARK MURPHY
Chief Deputy District Attorney

JASON WINES
Chief Investigator

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
February 10, 2021

Child Endangerment Arrests

The parents of twin 21-month-old boys, who were locked alone inside their Oroville bedroom with a wired-shut door are facing child endangerment charges in Butte County Superior Court. District Attorney Mike Ramsey said the mother and father are each facing two felony counts of Child Endangerment stemming from a joint investigation between the District Attorney's Office and the Butte County Children's Services Division from November 2020.

Ramsey said the mother, Courtney Walden, 36, and father, Frank Oliver Jr., 36, came under scrutiny in November 2020 after CSD social workers had received multiple referrals on the family regarding drug use, domestic violence and neglect of their children. Investigators from the DA's Drug Endangered Children Program and CSD social workers served a search warrant to check on the welfare of the children on November 11, 2020. No one answered the front door and after investigators entered the home they heard noises from behind a bedroom door that had been wired shut from the outside. After investigators broke in to the room, they saw the two children had been locked inside without any supervision, food or water. Ramsey said in addition to being left alone, the house was in deplorable shape and unsafe for the children. The children were turned over to the social workers.

While at the scene, Ramsey said Walden came home and claimed she had only been gone a short while. Investigators found evidence indicating she had been gone for much longer. Investigators arrested Walden for felony child endangerment. Investigators at that time were unable to locate the father, Frank Oliver Jr., and a felony warrant for his arrest was issued by the Butte County Superior Court. Ramsey said his investigators continued to work to locate Oliver, using electronic and physical surveillance, until he was found yesterday and arrested yesterday in Oroville. Investigators booked Oliver into the Butte County Jail with a bail of \$200,000. He will be arraigned tomorrow morning in court.

Walden is currently out on her Own Recognizance, with her next court date March 25, 2021.

The children remain in the care of Children's Services.

