

Cottage Hills Man Enters Plea Agreement to Sexual Assault and Solicitation of Two Minor Females

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Madison County State's Attorney's Office today announced that a 39-year-old Cottage Hills man - Joshua P. Brown - pleaded guilty today to the sexual assault and solicitation of two minor females.

Brown (d.o.b. 7/17/80) pleaded guilty to Indecent Solicitation of a Child, a Class 1 felony and Aggravated Criminal Sexual Assault, a Class 2 felony. The defendant was initially charged on March 4, 2019, for the intent to commit an act of sexual penetration to the 9-year-old victim. Further investigation by the Bethalto Police Department led to the opening of a new case where the defendant was charged on May 21, 2019, with aggravated sexual assault of a 16-year-old victim.

Throughout the course of the investigation, it was determined that the defendant was in a position of trust and authority to the victims. Brown performed the lewd acts at his home beginning in January of 2018. Due to the age of the victims and the State's Attorney's desire to maintain their privacy, additional information regarding the victims will not be released.

The plea agreement was reached after consultation with the victims and their families. In cases of sexual assault, it is required that children testify at trial which can often be difficult for young victims. This plea sends the defendant to prison for a substantial period of time. Additionally, it requires Brown to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life.

Madison County State's Attorney Thomas Gibbons thanked his prosecutor, Assistant State's Attorney Kathleen Nolan, head of the office's Children's Justice Division, the Bethalto Police Department, and the Madison County Child Advocacy Center for providing immediate assistance to ensure the proper investigation and the safety of the young victims. Gibbons also recognized Fitz, the courthouse facility dog, for providing comfort and emotional support to the young victims during today's plea.

Today's plea included courageous victim impact statements shared by one victim and the mother of the victims. The statement shared by the young victim was exalted by Circuit Judge Richard Tognarelli and Assistant State's Attorney Kathleen Nolan for her bravery and eloquence which shed light to the compassionate personality of the victim. The victim said, "Many may not agree with me but I believe everyone in this world deserves happiness even the people that have taken it away from others. I hope all the evil thoughts that have clouded your mind can leave and I hope you can eventually leave prison with the intent to do nothing but good things for as long as you shall live."

Brown's guilty plea was accepted by Circuit Judge Richard Tognarelli. The defendant will be sentenced to 15 years for Indecent Solicitation of a Child and 7 years for Aggravated Criminal Sexual Assault served concurrently in the Illinois Department of Corrections. Brown will have a mandated two-year probation period following his release.