

Man, 21, convicted in child's beating

Nov 25, 2008

BY KEITH EPPS

A Fredericksburg man who beat an 8-month-old boy nearly to death for no apparent reason pleaded guilty to two charges yesterday.

Jordan Scott Johnson, 21, pleaded guilty in Fredericksburg Circuit Court to malicious wounding and child neglect.

He will face a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison when he is sentenced Jan. 23.

According to prosecutor Travis Bird, Johnson was baby sitting the child on June 9 at the Forest Village home he shared with the child's mother, Sarah McCormsey.

McCormsey came home from work about 10:30 p.m. that night and found the child bruised and unresponsive.

The child was flown to the VCU Medical Center in Richmond, where he was on life support for four days. Bird said doctors reported that the boy would have died had he not gotten to the hospital when he did.

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Among the child's injuries were multiple skull fractures and a lacerated liver. Bird said the child has since made a "miraculous" recovery.

According to the evidence, Johnson initially denied knowing what had happened to the child.

But he later told Detective Mark Purcell that he'd gotten frustrated because the baby "wouldn't let me help him."

Bird said police don't know what Johnson meant by that statement, but said the child was not fussy or crying.

Johnson told police that he struck the child with an open hand and shook him violently until "white spit was coming out of his mouth."

Johnson said he repeatedly slammed the baby's head into the floor and threw him into a bassinet so hard that the bassinet broke.

During the interview, Johnson referred to himself as a "coward" and said he felt the child had disrespected him.

The child's mother was pregnant at the time of the attack and has since had Johnson's child.

Johnson was convicted of 11 counts of vandalism in 2006 for damaging vehicles on Wolfe Street, including two city Sheriff's Office vehicles.

He also got a suspended three-year prison term for a related attempted grand larceny charge, court records show.

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