



# **JOHN H. CRANFORD, JR.**

District Attorney  
Coweta Judicial Circuit

**MONIQUE F. KIRBY**  
Chief A.D.A.

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 19, 2020

On February 14, 2020, after a four-day trial, a Meriwether County jury found Mario Dante Clemons, 31, of Manchester, guilty of one count of Rape, two counts of Aggravated Child Molestation, two counts of Child Molestation and one count of Enticing a Child for Indecent Purposes. After the verdict, Kennedy was sentenced by Superior Court Judge Travis Sakrison to three life sentences running concurrently, followed by twenty years on probation with Sex Offender Conditions.

Assistant District Attorney Tim Marlow prosecuted the case with great care for the 10 year old victim, and worked tirelessly to get her justice. Assistant Chief Chris Jones of the Manchester Police Department led the investigation of this case, which was the product of the professionalism and coordinated work of the Upson Regional Medical Center, Twin Cedars Child Advocacy Center, the Department of Family and Children Services, and the Manchester Police Department.

This case shows the enormous value of the multi-disciplinary teams working in each county to ensure children are protected, thorough investigations are completed by all agencies, and victims of child sexual abuse receive all the counseling and treatment they need. We are thankful for the jury paying close attention to the evidence and conveying through their verdict that the victim's voice was heard. In addition, we are thankful to the jury for holding this defendant accountable for his crimes against this young child.

At trial, the evidence demonstrated the need for family members to pay close attention to changes in the behavior of their children. In September 2019, this 10 year old victim's grandmother noticed that the child was acting differently and asked about it. The victim then out-cried to her grandmother that the defendant, her mother's boyfriend, had sexually abused her. The child's mother then promptly took the child to Upson Regional Hospital and then to the Child Advocacy Center, where a SANE examination found physical evidence to support the child's outcry. The Child Advocacy Center also interviewed the victim in a non-suggestive way to ensure that this child gave an accurate and credible account of her abuse. The Manchester Police Department did an outstanding job in bringing the investigation together so all of the evidence could be conveyed clearly to the jury.

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