

59-year old New Bedford man sentenced for molesting pre-teen child

"A 59-year-old New Bedford man was convicted by a Jury of Six in New Bedford District Court last week of molesting his girlfriend's pre-teen granddaughter and sentenced to serve jail time, Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced.

The district court jury convicted John Gomes on March 22 of Indecent Assault and Battery on a Person Under the Age of 14. The trial was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Victoria Bendza. Judge Joseph Harrington, Jr. sentenced the defendant to two-and-a-half years in the Bristol County House of Corrections with 18 months to serve and the balance suspended for five years. If the defendant is charged with new crimes in the next five years, he will be liable to serve another full years in jail.

In 2019, the young victim disclosed during a Department of Children and Families 51A interview that the defendant had touched her inappropriately. The girl knew the defendant as her grandmother's boyfriend, who would stay at the home. The victim stated that she was playing in the living room with her younger brother when the defendant entered the living room and began to play with them.

The victim stated that the defendant began to tickle her on her tummy. While the victim was lying on the couch watching television, the defendant laid down next to her and stuck his hand down the front of her pants and touched her. The girl stated that her mother was sleeping upstairs and her grandmother was not home at the time of the incident. The defendant had touched her for several minutes, and then

abruptly stopped was because the victim's mother woke up. The victim's younger brother was in the living room this entire time.

During the trial, both the victim and her mother testified.

"I commend the victim for her courage in testifying in this case. She was clearly believed by the jury. Unfortunately the defendant had access to the victim through a relationship with the child's grandmother. I hope she can move forward with her life," District Attorney Quinn said."