



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF KERN

CIVIC CENTER JUSTICE BUILDING
1215 TRUXTUN AVENUE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA 93301
(661) 868-2340, FAX: (661) 868-2700

JOSEPH A. KINZEL
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

CYNTHIA J. ZIMMER
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

KENNETH M. RUSSELL
ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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MEDIA ADVISORY

CONTACT:

DDA Gina Nargie
(661) 868-2340
DDA David McKillop
(661) 868-2330

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Parole Hearings Denied Parole for Convicted Child Torturer Christopher Cruz
CDC#P32608; Kern County Court Case #SC075854A

Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced that the California Board of Parole Hearings denied release to convicted child abuser Christopher Cruz. This hearing was Cruz's fifth parole hearing on March 26, 2025. Representing the District Attorney's Office was Deputy District Attorney Gina Nargie.

On January 29, 1999, a Kern County Jury found Cruz guilty of the crimes of torture and felony child abuse with personal infliction of great bodily injury. A Kern County Judge sentenced Cruz to 11 years, 4 months to life.

In 1998, Cruz moved to Ridgecrest to live with his girlfriend and her two children. One child was a four-month-old infant. The other child was 3-year-old boy. None of the children were Cruz's biological children. After approximately 1 month, Cruz's abuse of the 3-year-old victim resulted in long-term hospitalization and lifelong physical disabilities including permanent brain damage. The victim's injuries included 90 different bruises on his body, with all in different stages of healing. The victim suffered a pinching injury to his genital area. His brain scans showed subdural and retinal hemorrhaging consistent with abusive head trauma. The victim also suffered injuries consistent with blunt force trauma to his kidneys, liver, spleen, heart, pancreas, chest and neck. The doctor who treated the victim said, "there wasn't a part of his body that didn't have a bruise somewhere near it." Cruz had a history of domestic violence with the victim's mother and other romantic partners in his past.

Unlike his testimony at his parole hearing in 2023, Cruz finally admitted that he beat the victim because he was angry with the victim's mother. While Cruz continued to struggle with transparency with the BPH Commissioners and insight into his crimes, Cruz admitted that he abused the victim over the course of a month and a half. He admitted he abused the victim on 15-20 occasions during that time. Cruz said he hit the victim with belts and threw him up against the wall. Despite approximately 27 years of incarceration, Cruz at different points in the hearing still called the abuse "discipline." Cruz's commissioners also focused on Cruz's history of domestic violence, rehabilitative programming, and substance abuse history. The Kern County District Attorney's Office asked the BPH to deny parole. The BPH found that Cruz was not suitable for parole and posed a current unreasonable risk of danger to society. The Board of Parole has the option of denying an inmate parole for a period of 15, 10, 7, 5 or 3 years. Cruz's commissioners issued a three-year denial.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented; “Cruz has a long and troubling history of domestic violence and abuse - behavior he has repeatedly failed to acknowledge as wrong. The harm he inflicted on an innocent child is deeply disturbing and I firmly believe he remains a threat to society. The District Attorney’s Office supports the Board of Parole’s decision to deny his release as both appropriate and necessary.”

Christopher Cruz:

