



# **OFFICE OF THE STATE ATTORNEY THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA**

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**JOHN F. DURRETT, State Attorney**

*Serving the Counties of Suwannee, Hamilton, Dixie, Lafayette, Taylor,  
Madison and Columbia*

April 19, 2024

## **Press Release**

State Attorney John F. Durrett announces that Tonya Nadeau, having been found guilty by a jury on two counts of aggravated child abuse by caging in March by a jury in Dixie County, was sentenced on April 19, 2024 to 30 years in the Florida Department of Corrections.

The defendant in this case, along with the father of the children, Ryan Jerrells, were proven to have locked their children in a room that was covered with the children's own urine and feces. Portions of the walls, floors and bed were covered in feces that were up to three months old. The room was covered with old diapers. The children had begun eating the drywall and beating their heads against the walls until large holes were made in the drywall. The children were left in the room for hours at a time. Both children are severely autistic and non-verbal, unable to express to teachers or other adults their living condition. After the evidence was presented, jurors unanimously found Tonya Nadeau guilty of two counts of aggravated child abuse by caging. Three days after Tonya Nadeau was found guilty by jury trial, Ryan Jerrells the father to the children plead guilty and was sentenced to 20 years in the Florida Department of Corrections.

The State of Florida was represented by Assistant State Attorney Jarrett Thomas and the Elected State Attorney John Durrett

The Honorable William Bill Blue conducted the sentencing.