

# **\* NEWS RELEASE \***

## **SALINAS MAN SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS, 8 MONTHS PRISON FOR CHILD ABUSE, EVADING POLICE AND ABSCONDING**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Date: February 17, 2015**

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**Deputy District Attorney**

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Salinas resident Luis Fuentes, age 33, was sentenced to 8 years and 8 months prison after pleading guilty to felony charges of child abuse, evading officers, and failing to appear in court while on bail, as well as a misdemeanor charge of resisting officers. He also admitted that he had a prior strike conviction for participating in a criminal street gang and that he had a prior prison term. Because of these enhancements, he will have to serve at least eighty percent of his sentence. He was sentenced by Judge Pamela L. Butler.

On December 31, 2014, CHP Officer Charles Rodriguez observed Fuentes committing a Vehicle Code violation as he was driving on a residential area of north Salinas where the posted speed limit was 25 miles per hour. When Officer Rodriguez attempted to perform a vehicle stop, Fuentes fled at speeds reaching 80 miles per hour. He failed to stop at a stop sign, ran a red light, lost control of his vehicle when he struck a raised curb, went through a fence and crashed into a house. He had an unrelated 11-year-old girl in the car with him whose safety was endangered by his flight from police. Both Fuentes and the distraught girl abandoned the car and attempted to flee. Officers caught Fuentes as he tried to climb a fence.

Fuentes was out of custody on bail and failed to appear in court for his September 18, 2015 sentencing hearing. The court issued a no bail warrant and Fuentes was taken into custody on January 21, 2016 by Salinas police officers who were serving a search warrant. He subsequently entered a plea in a new felony case for failing to appear while on bail and admitted he had suffered a prior strike conviction.

The case was investigated CHP Officer Charles Rodriguez.