

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

43-YEAR-OLD PRUNDALE MAN CONVICTED OF MOLESTING 4-YEAR- OLD DAUGHTER AND 10-YEAR-OLD STEP-SON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced that on Friday, September 1, 2016, David Jon Thomas, 43, of Salinas was convicted after a 3 week trial before the Honorable Judge Larry E. Hayes for sodomy on a child 10 years of age or younger and 4 counts of lewd acts on a child.

On March 31, 2014, a 4-year-old girl disclosed that during a recent visitation with her father, David Thomas, while using the bathroom he made her touch his genitals. The Monterey County Sheriff's Department interviewed the child at the Bates Eldridge Clinic at Natividad Medical Center in Salinas. The interview using a child-friendly environment and special interviewing techniques designed for more detailed statements, allowed the child to disclose more information about the sexual abuse.

On August 16, 2014, a week after Thomas' then current wife had separated from him and moved out of the home, her 10-year-old son disclosed multiple acts of sexual abuse by David Thomas. In a forensic interview conducted shortly thereafter, the boy disclosed how Thomas would send his mother away from the home on shopping errands and then sexually molest him. The boy said he was afraid of Thomas so he complied and did not share what was happening earlier. Thomas often struck him and yelled at him while they lived together.

The case was investigated by Deputy Brian Baugh and Detective Kim Smith of the Monterey County Sheriff's Department and assisted by District Attorney Investigator Jackie Meroney and District Attorney Investigator Christi Gunter. The child victims were supported by Monterey County District Attorney's Victims Unit's advocate Alma Sanchez and Odie, a courtroom comfort dog. Thomas will be sentenced by the Honorable Judge Larry E. Hayes on October 13, 2016. Thomas faces up to 85 years to life in state prison.