

ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

4997 Unami Boulevard, Mays Landing, NJ 08330

Theodore F. L. Housel
Prosecutor

NEWS RELEASE

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For further information contact:
Madelaine Vitale 609-909 -7855
or 609-457-7359

MAYS LANDING – A Newark man was sentenced Wednesday to six years in prison for sexually assaulting a teenage girl in 2007, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel announced.

Robert Butts Jr., 37, was a family friend and had known the victim since she was nine years old, Assistant Prosecutor Danielle Buckley stated.

“Essentially there were two victims in this case,” Buckley stated. “Obviously the teenager was traumatized, but given the longstanding friendship that this defendant had with the victim’s mother she too was victimized.”

An Atlantic County Grand Jury indicted Butts in April 2008 on multiple counts, including sexual assault and endangering the welfare of a child. He pled guilty on July 18, 2008 to one count of sexual assault before Superior Court Judge Michael Donio.

In addition to the prison term, Butts is subject to the requirements of Megan’s Law, parole supervision for life and is prohibited from having any future contact with the victim and her mother.

The defendant admitted at the plea hearing that sometime between Jan. 1 and Jan. 15, 2007 he had sex with the victim while in Buena Borough.

At sentencing, Butts apologized to the victim and the victim's family. The mother also addressed the Court saying that she had trusted the defendant around her children and could not understand how he could do such a horrible act.

Lt. David Sherma of the Buena Borough Police Department conducted the investigation.

Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS). Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.