



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MAIN CONTACT
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Kayleigh Slusher was three years old when she died in January, 2014. The murder of a child by her caretakers is unfathomable, and an unspeakable tragedy for her grandmother and father. Kayleigh's death shocked and saddened the entire Napa Community.

Napa Police officers responded on two occasions to calls for service during the final days of Kayleigh's life, including a call from her grandmother. The officers saw Kayleigh in her home, but observed no reason to believe that Kayleigh was the victim of physical abuse or neglect. It seems clear now that Kayleigh's murderers intentionally concealed her physical condition from the officers, in attempt to avoid police intervention.

Tragically, Kayleigh was murdered following Napa Police Officers' last encounter with her. Kayleigh's mother and then-boyfriend were convicted of her murder and are serving life sentences in prison. Kayleigh's grandmother and father brought legal actions against the City and its police officers and the County and Child Welfare personnel. They alleged that the officers and child welfare personnel had negligently failed to protect Kayleigh from her murderers, and bore some legal responsibility for Kayleigh's death. The City and Police Department deny this, and believe that the officers conducted their investigations properly based on their training. The City believes that officers did not discover Kayleigh's physical injuries because her murderers intentionally hid them, and lied to officers, to protect themselves. While denying liability The City and County ultimately agreed to each pay \$2.5 million to settle the claims brought by Kayleigh's family. Those payments have been made, and the lawsuits have now been dismissed.

The City, the Police Department and the officers all deeply regret that they were not able to discover the truth about Kayleigh's physical and life threatening injuries, and were not able to save her life. After discovering what had occurred and arresting the



murderers, the Police Department began immediate action to ensure that the Napa Police Department would do everything possible to improve training and policies to be better prepared to protect children from abusers. Since February 2014, the Department has:

- Updated child abuse and neglect policies to ensure that every report of potential child abuse or neglect is investigated, reported to Child Welfare Services and the District Attorney, and that a written report is completed prior to the end of the officer's shift.
- Obtained additional professional training for police officers in prevention, investigation and reporting of child abuse and neglect, child exposed domestic violence and drug endangered children.
- Committed to obtain special training for police 911 dispatchers in child abuse and neglect, and risk factors for child abuse.

Kayleigh Slusher's death was a terrible tragedy. The City and County of Napa have committed to doing everything in their power to prevent and protect other children from suffering child abuse and neglect.

The Police Department and County Child Welfare Services accepts and encourages members of the public to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Such reports can be made anonymously. Reports can be made by calling 911 or contacting a CWS hot line which fields calls from the public on a 24/7 basis. If you suspect child abuse or neglect of a child, please report your suspicions by calling 911 or 707-253-4261 or toll free: 800-464-4216.

ATTACHMENT:

- Settlement agreement and release

MEDIA NOTES: Media law enforcement inquiries can be referred to Napa Police Chief Robert Plummer at 707-257-9641.