

OFFICE OF DAKOTA COUNTY ATTORNEY
JAMES C. BACKSTROM
COUNTY ATTORNEY



Dakota County Judicial Center
1560 Highway 55
Hastings, Minnesota 55033-2392
Phillip D. Prokopowicz, Chief Deputy
Karen A. Schaffer, First Assistant
Monica Jensen, Community Relations Director

Telephone
(651) 438-4438
FAX: (651) 438-4479 (Civil Division)
FAX: (651) 438-4500 (Criminal Division)
FAX: (651) 438-4499 (Juvenile/Admin Division)
E-mail: attorney@co.dakota.mn.us

March 9, 2012

NEWS RELEASE

**NORTHFIELD MOTHER PLEADS GUILTY IN DEATH OF
HER 17-MONTH-OLD CHILD**

Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom announced that Melissa Louise Ohmann (formerly Hokanson), age 21 of Northfield, pled guilty today to Manslaughter in the Second Degree (Neglect of a Child) in connection with the death of her 17-month-old son Nicholas Arthur Miller who died on June 23, 2009. Melissa Ohmann failed to seek medical care for her son after he was injured on June 19, 2009, and the failure to do so was a contributing factor to his death. Both the Medical Examiner and a pediatric child abuse expert were of the opinion that Nicholas Miller could have survived the injuries which caused his death if prompt medical care had been sought. The two counts of Neglect of a Child were dismissed. Tylar Hokanson, her former husband and stepfather of Nicholas Miller, was convicted by a Dakota County Jury on November 25, 2010 of Murder in the First Degree (Past Pattern of Child Abuse) and Murder in the Second Degree in connection with the death of Nicholas Miller and sentenced to life in prison.

The facts pertaining to these charges are contained in the criminal complaint which can be found at <http://services.co.dakota.mn.us/ComplaintSearch>. While in custody, a mug shot may be viewed at <http://services.co.dakota.mn.us/InmateSearch>.

Judge Erica MacDonald ordered a pre-sentence investigation and psychological evaluation and set the sentencing for June 12, 2012 at 9:00 am in Hastings.

Backstrom commented: "While Melissa Ohmann did not physically injure her son or observe Tylar Hokanson physically abuse her son, it became obvious that Nicholas needed medical care in the day's following the traumatic injuries he suffered and she should have exercised reasonable care by taking him to the emergency room for medical treatment that would have prevented his death."

Backstrom praised the Dakota County Sheriff's Office for their investigation into this matter.

If you have questions, contact James Backstrom at 651-438-4438.