



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000**

Release #230-2006
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2006

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE
(718) 286-6315

D.A. BROWN: BABYSITTER PLEADS GUILTY
TO MANSLAUGHTER IN DEATH OF 13-MONTH-OLD TODDLER

To Be Sentenced to 10 Year State Prison Term

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Corona woman who duct taped the mouth of a 13-month-old child in her care last May before violently shaking her and throwing her to the floor has pleaded guilty as charged to manslaughter in the case. The child, who suffered bleeding on the brain, died two weeks later of blunt force trauma and shaking of the head. The defendant is expected to receive a 10-year prison term when sentenced next month.

District Attorney Brown said, "The defendant has admitted to violently shaking a young toddler like a rag doll and throwing her to the floor. Shaken Baby Syndrome is the leading cause of child abuse deaths each year. Its victims are innocent and helpless children, often injured by those charged with protecting them. These tiny victims are often impaired for life or killed. Caregivers of children should heed the important message that these cases unfortunately bring to our attention – never, under any circumstances, shake a baby. The defendant must now live the rest of her life knowing that her actions resulted in the death of a child and robbed that child's mother of seeing her baby grow up."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Dolores Guzman, 31, of 108-31 46th Avenue in Corona, who rented a room in her apartment to the child's mother and three children. Guzman, who babysat the youngest child when the mother went to work, pleaded guilty yesterday afternoon to first-degree manslaughter before Queens Criminal Court Judge Pauline Mullings who indicated that she would sentence the defendant to ten years in prison on November 21, 2006.

The District Attorney said that the defendant admitted in court yesterday that on May 9, 2006, she became angry when the child – 13-month-old Andrea Lopez Palacios – began to play with a strip of duct tape that she had cut to bind some wires and that she then placed duct tape over the child's mouth, and possibly her nose, for up to a minute. Later, when the child refused her bottle, the defendant, in anger, violently and forcefully pushed the child to the floor, causing her to land on the back of her head and lose consciousness. The defendant admitted that she then shook the child.

The child was taken later that day to Elmhurst General Hospital's emergency room in full cardiac arrest, with no heartbeat and not breathing. She remained in full arrest for at least ten minutes and required life-saving measures – including three injections of epinephrine – in order to revive her.

At first, the defendant told authorities that the toddler's injuries were the result of her jumping on a bed and then falling off. However, visual observations by medical personnel noted that there were no external injuries and that the defendant's account was inconsistent with the nature and severity of the child's injuries. The child was subsequently diagnosed with Shaken Baby Syndrome when tests revealed that the toddler had suffered acute subdural hematoma (bleeding on the brain), retinal hemorrhages, brain edema (swelling) and widespread and permanent anoxic brain injury, which results from oxygen deprivation. She remained in the hospital on a ventilator and unresponsive to her environment until her death on May 22, 2006.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Ramon Munoz, of the New York City Police Department's 110th Detective Squad, under the supervision of Lieutenant Edward Rudder, and by Assistant District Attorneys Donna M. Golia, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, and Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief.

Assistant District Attorney Marjory D. Fisher, Chief of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

#