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**FAR ROCKAWAY MAN CHARGED WITH ASSAULT
OF FIANCEE'S TWO-YEAR-OLD SON**

Child Diagnosed With Shaken Baby Syndrome, In Critical Condition

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Far Rockaway man has been charged with first-degree assault and endangering the welfare of a child for allegedly shaking his fiancée's two-year-old son and causing him to sustain life-threatening injuries, including brain damage.

District Attorney Brown said, "According to the charges, the defendant violently shook a helpless and defenseless, perfectly healthy two-year-old boy for whom he was supposed to be caring. The child was gravely injured and may remain in a vegetative state for the rest of his life."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Walter Sanderson, 35, of 331 Beach 32nd Street in Far Rockaway. Sanderson was arraigned last night in Queens Criminal Court on charges of first-degree assault and endangering the welfare of a child. He was ordered held on \$200,000 bail by Judge Joseph Zayas. The defendant faces up to 25 years in prison if convicted.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, two-year-old Bryan Wilson was fine and playing normally when his mother, Latoya Short, left for work at 8:10 a.m., Sunday morning, leaving her son in the care of her fiancée, Walter Sanderson. At about 8:30 a.m., according to the charges, Sanderson told police he found the child unresponsive on the living room floor and suggested he probably fell off of the couch. He called 911 and the child was taken to St. John's Episcopal Hospital and then transferred to Long Island Jewish Hospital. Doctors at the hospital said Bryan is suffering from bleeding on the brain and in both eyes, as well as oxygen deprivation to the brain and cerebral swelling. The injuries are consistent with the non-accidental trauma of shaken baby syndrome and not consistent with the defendant's account of how the child became injured.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Gary Mazzi of the 101st Precinct Detective Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Gemma Masterson, with the assistance of detectives from the Queens Homicide Squad and the Queens Child Abuse Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Leigh Bishop, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and Kenneth M. Appelbaum and Lucinda C. Suarez, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editors: E-version of this press release posted at www.queensda.org.