



Philadelphia woman charged with kidnapping girl from school, raping her

By **Lateef Mungin** and **Sarah Hoyer**, CNN
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Philadelphia (CNN) -- A Philadelphia woman was indicted this week, accused of abducting a 5-year-old girl from her school by posing as her mother, raping her and leaving her barely clothed and crying at a playground.

Christina Regusters was charged Monday with aggravated assault, kidnapping, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse and several other offenses in the January incident that had police searching door to door and parents clutching their children tightly.

The little girl's ordeal began January 14 when a woman wearing a burqa -- a head-to-toe covered garment with a slit for the eyes -- went to a West Philadelphia school shortly after classes started and scribbled her name on a sign-in sheet, police said.

The woman did not show identification but said she was the child's mother and wanted to take her out for breakfast. She then proceeded to the child's classroom and asked for the girl by name.

The girl was taken to a nearby house.

Once inside the home, authorities say, the girl was told to remove her clothing and was given a black T-shirt to wear. She was blindfolded and forced to hide under a bed, they said. At some point, the girl, now 6, was sexually assaulted, police say.

A Good Samaritan

The abduction spurred a massive search.

Officers searched house to house. The city offered a \$10,000 reward.

But as night fell that Monday, the efforts to find the girl proved fruitless.

The next morning, a sanitation worker walking to his workplace near a city park heard a young girl's pleading voice.

"When I got closer, it sounded clear: 'Help, help,'" the worker, Nelson Mandela Myers, said at a January news conference.

"When I saw her under the slide, I was shocked," he said. "She was there by herself and only had a shirt on."

Myers alerted police.

He received the reward.

Regusters was arrested the next month.

She worked at a daycare that the girl attended, her lawyer Fred Harrison Jr. told CNN affiliate KYW.

But, Harrison said, Regusters was not a "major participant" in the incident -- but did not elaborate.

Questions raised

The abduction raised questions about the Philadelphia's school district protocol.

Policy requires anyone signing out a student to go to the main office and provide identification that matches a list of approved individuals, school officials said.

"It's disturbing that an adult is able to walk into a classroom and have the teacher release the child without knowing who the adult is," Fernando Gallard, a school district spokesman said at the time.

The family attorney, **Tom Kline**, says more people need to be charged.

"We look forward to the day when all those involved in this heinous crime against an innocent, precious child will be brought to justice," Kline said.