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NEWS RELEASE

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Nov. 19, 2015

Woman Convicted of Killing Toddler in La Puente

A 22-year-old woman was convicted yesterday of fatally beating a 2-year-old boy she babysat in 2012, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

The jury deliberated for five hours before finding Niesia Johnson (dob 6/19/93) guilty of second-degree murder and assault on a child causing death in case KA100181.

The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced Dec. 16 in Department P of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Pomona Branch. Johnson faces a possible maximum sentence of 25 years to life in state prison.

Deputy District Attorney Deborah Shaw Scott of the Victim Impact Program said Johnson babysat Atreyu M. for the child's mother on multiple weekends during the three months before his death. The boy had been with the defendant for the ten days leading up to his death, the prosecutor said.

In the early morning of July 31, 2012, Johnson was at her La Puente home with the 2-year-old boy. The defendant claimed that after she exited the shower, she found the boy hunched over and bleeding from his nose and mouth, the prosecutor said.

The defendant called out for help and a housemate dialed 911 for emergency assistance. Paramedics arrived at the residence and the child was taken to the hospital, where he later died, according to the prosecutor.

Following months of investigation into the child's death, Johnson was charged on Nov. 29, 2012, in connection with the killing.

According to court testimony, the boy's body exhibited extensive abuse including severe bruising on his face and buttocks, and whip marks on several areas of his body. Atreyu ultimately died from a subdural hematoma, the prosecutor said.

Blood found in the defendant's bathroom, bedroom and clothing linked her to the fatal beating, the prosecutor added.

The case was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.