

Don't talk to strangers

Written by By Kimberly Gaona Gallup Sun CorrespondentBy Kimberly Gaona Gallup Sun Correspondent
Friday, 01 May 2015 04:12



Teen molested by Vanderwagon man

A young teenage boy is waiting for the school bus at his usual stop when a 66-year-old man pulls up and offers him a ride. No, this is not the beginning of a camp fire horror story, not even the story of elementary school staff teaching "Stranger Danger." This is actually the beginning of a horrific incident that occurred to a local high school student April 21, here in Gallup.

The teenager, whose identity will not be released, later told police that he had accepted rides in the past from different individuals and did not think any harm would come to him. However, William Detwiler of Vanderwagon, NM had different plans for this young man.

Detwiler started asking the young man a lot of questions, according to the affidavit for arrest warrant filed by Gallup Police Department Detective Tasheena Wilson. After reportedly asking numerous personal questions, Detwiler asked the teen to remove his pants. The teen refused several times. But Detwiler persisted, the teen told police, and he got so scared he removed his pants.

He fondled the boy throughout the rest of the drive to the high school, an estimated four to five mile drive, and continued until they parked in the high school parking lot.

In respect of the teenager's identity, the Gallup Sun will not disclose the bus stop location or the school.

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The unidentified teen did manage to take out his phone and record the abuse. GPD Capt. Ricky White gave high praise for the act.

"It was awful brave of the young child to videotape the incident, it took a lot of courage, that's what helped us with this case is what the child did," White said. "And it was good investigative work by the Gallup Detectives."

The teen was able to get out of Detwiler's White Toyota SUV and go into the school where he informed the principal of what had happened. After police were called, Detwiler was called to return to the school. When he arrived at the school, he was wearing clothes that matched the video the teen had taken and he was a driving a vehicle that matched surveillance video that had been obtained by GPD Detectives.

Detwiler was taken to the Gallup Police Department and interviewed, to which he denied all of the accusations. When confronted with the video evidence, Detwiler admitted that it was him but that he didn't remember "doing that."

He was arrested and booked into the jail for Criminal Sexual Contact of a Minor and for false imprisonment. He was held on a \$10,000 cash or surety bond.

According to the New Mexico courts website, Detwiler was released on April 22, the following day. A preliminary examination hearing is scheduled at Magistrate Court on May 6 at 8:30 am, in Judge Cynthia Sanders courtroom.