For Immediate Release
August 26, 2012

Suspect Arrested for Felony Child Abuse

Arrested Suspect; Anthony Prestero, W/M, 11/07/88 of 5434 1/2 9th Avenue North (booking photo attached)

At approximately 1:30 pm yesterday afternoon, officers were called to Bayfront Medical Center regarding a possible child abuse.

Officers met with medical staff and determined that Fire Rescue personnel had been called to 5434 1/2 9th Avenue North regarding an injured 2 year male. Rescue personnel were met outside by the Prestero who was holding the unconscious child in his arms. They were told that the child had fallen from a couch, but Prestero refused to allow them inside the residence.

The child was transported to Bayfront Medical Center where closer examination revealed the child had severe head and facial injuries that were inconsistent with a fall such as Prestero described. The child was admitted to All Children's Hospital as a trauma alert, but his condition was later stabilized.

The child’s 28-year-old mother was present at the hospital and interviewed by officers. She acknowledged that she had left the child in the custody of her live in boyfriend Prestero while she went to purchase drugs. She later received a phone call of him informing her to return home because something had happened to her son.

Prestero was interviewed by detectives and continued to claim that the child had fallen from a couch, but then later claimed that the child had fallen from a kitchen counter.

As the injuries to the child were consistent with a beating and not with the accident Prestero had described, he was arrested and charged with one count of felony child abuse.

Information released by Mike Puetz, 727-893-7550, michael.puetz@stpete.org

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