



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000**

Release #247-2006
www.queensda.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2006

CONTACT: KEVIN RYAN
NICOLE NAVAS
MERIS CAMPBELL
(718)286-6315

D.A. BROWN: FATHER PLEADS GUILTY TO MANSLAUGHTER
DEATH OF SEVEN-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER

To Be Sentenced to 10 Years In State Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Rockaway resident who had beaten his seven-year-old daughter on two successive nights in October 2005 and then failed to get her medical attention has pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the case. The daughter – Sierra Roberts – was transported by ambulance to a local Queens hospital the day after the beatings as a result of a 911 call and was pronounced dead shortly after her arrival.

District Attorney Brown said, “The defendant has admitted to causing the death of his 7-year-old daughter by beating her on two occasions and thereafter failing to seek medical attention for her. The defendant – the child’s natural father – was awarded custody of the child when she was three-years-old. She had previously been living with foster parents who had raised her since birth. The defendant’s attack on his innocent and vulnerable daughter was both heartless and heartbreaking and, in addition to serving a lengthy prison term, the defendant will also have to live the rest of his life knowing that he robbed the child of all the possibilities that life holds.”

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Russell Roberts, 43, of 72-21 Hillmeyer Avenue in Rockaway, Queens, who had formerly been employed as a stock person. The defendant pleaded guilty earlier today to first-degree manslaughter before Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert C. Hanophy who indicated that he would sentence the defendant to ten years in prison on December 13, 2006.

The District Attorney said that the defendant, in pleading guilty, admitted that while at home on the evening of October 23, 2005, he repeatedly slammed his knee into his daughter’s abdomen, and that, the following evening, he bent his daughter over a bed, placing her abdomen against the edge of the bed, and then repeatedly and forcefully beat her buttocks with a belt. The defendant acknowledged that even after slamming his knee into the child’s abdomen and seeing her visibly in pain he failed to get medical attention for her.

District Attorney Brown said that a 911 call alerted authorities to the situation on October 26, 2005. The child was then taken by ambulance to Peninsula General Hospital where she was pronounced dead shortly after her arrival.

Assistant District Attorney Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney’s Special Victims Bureau prosecuted the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Donna Marie Golia, Child Advocacy Center Coordinator, under 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.

#

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