

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **'I saw you with my own eyes': Good Samaritan's intervention, survivor testimony lead to child molestation conviction**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – On an October evening in 2017, Ivan Vidal Dawkins was at Independence Park in Charlotte with two young girls. Taking advantage of a position of trust with their family, Dawkins had offered to take the girls, ages 7 and 9, to play at the park. He thought he was alone with the children on the playground when he touched them inappropriately and began to further sexually assault the youngest child. But someone was watching. A man experiencing homelessness was nearby and saw what was happening. His voice rang out in the park.

"I saw you with my own eyes!"

Thanks to this Good Samaritan, who acted quickly to protect two children, and the testimony of two brave survivors, a jury this week convicted Dawkins of multiple sex offenses. As a result, he will spend at least 25 years in prison. The trial, which began July 19, 2021, was held in courtroom 5110 before The Honorable Hugh B. Lewis, Superior Court Judge.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Special Victims Team tried Dawkins, 47, for 1) statutory sex offense and 2) seven counts of indecent liberties with a child for crimes that occurred against the two children between 2015 and 2017. On July 28, 2021, the jury found him *guilty* as charged. Today, Judge Lewis sentenced Dawkins to 300-420 months in prison. When he is released from prison, Dawkins must register as a sex offender for the rest of his life.

As he witnessed the sexual abuse, the Good Samaritan began yelling at Dawkins. He called 911 and chased Dawkins as he ran with the children until Charlotte-Mecklenburg police arrived. At trial, the eldest child victim showed immense bravery by taking the stand. Another survivor also came forward to testify. That survivor, now an adult, told the jury about how Dawkins also molested her as a child, establishing his pattern of abuse against children. The jurors deliberated for less than an hour before reaching their guilty verdicts.

We all have a legal and moral duty to report abuse against children. To make a report of suspected abuse or neglect in Mecklenburg County, call the county's 24-hour hotline: 980-31-HELPS (980-314-3577). If a child is in immediate danger, always call 911.

During the Special Victims Team's trial session, another defendant entered a guilty plea in an unrelated case. Meaco Lawson, 34, pled guilty to 1) two counts of second-degree kidnapping and 2) two counts of assault on a female. Judge Lewis sentenced Lawson to 25-42 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, he must serve 10 months in custody.

*Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com). For updates and other information, follow @CharMeckDA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).*

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