



**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway  
Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit, Cherokee County  
90 North Street, Canton GA

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Notice of Conviction & Sentencing**  
**Mother Found Guilty of Abusing Own Child; Sentenced to 40 Years in Prison**  
*State vs. Candice Nicole McClure*

April 3, 2026 – District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway announces that, on April 2, Superior Court Judge Shannon Wallace sentenced Candice Nicole McClure, 35, of Lenox, to 40 years to serve in prison, following her jury conviction in a child abuse case involving her own child. Both the verdict and sentencing occurred on April 2.

After a four-day trial, the jury found the defendant guilty of one count of aggravated assault and two counts of cruelty to children in the first degree.

Charges stem from an investigation that began in April 2023 when a Cherokee County elementary school teacher reported child abuse concerns involving a student in her class. The student had disclosed to the teacher that McClure had kicked and punched the child’s legs, and “choked” the child with her hands. The teacher’s report prompted the Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) and Canton Police Department to open a child abuse investigation involving McClure.

During an unannounced visit to the home, a DFCS employee photographed bruising on the child’s leg and a patterned injury on the child’s forehead. The child was transported to Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, where medical providers documented significant bruising on the legs, as well as a patterned injury on the forehead consistent with being struck by a belt. The child later participated in a forensic interview, during which additional information was provided.

“The family was new to Cherokee County, and we believe the abuse had been ongoing before the family arrived. The schoolteachers are the heroes in this case. They recognized the signs of abuse and created a safe place for the child to come forward,” said Assistant District Attorney David Bailey, of the Special Victims Unit, who prosecuted this case on behalf of the State. “This case is a powerful example of what happens when mandated reporters unapologetically take action to protect a child.”

During the trial, jurors heard testimony from 12 witnesses for the State, including the victim, other family members, law enforcement, medical providers, child advocacy experts, DFCS personnel, and Cherokee County School District personnel. The State also introduced 20 exhibits, including a recorded forensic interview of the child, photographs of the child’s injuries, and documentation from school personnel.

The jury deliberated for about two and a half hours before returning its verdict.

At trial and during sentencing, the State referenced the defendant's prior difficulties, including medical evidence and photographs documenting injuries to the same child in another county in 2016. The child was four years old at that time.

The child delivered a victim impact statement at sentencing, accompanied by an adoptive parent, a victim advocate, and service dog Parker, who provided comfort and support. The child expressed appreciation for being "heard" by the jury and told the defendant that no one deserves to be treated in that manner. Judge Wallace then acknowledged the child's trauma on the record before imposing the maximum sentence allowed under Georgia law.

"The trauma this child experienced is heartbreaking. Instead of protecting her own child, the defendant repeatedly inflicted abuse that caused lasting harm. This conviction and sentence send a clear message that Cherokee County will not tolerate the abuse of children and will hold offenders accountable to the fullest extent of the law," said District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway. "We are grateful to all who supported this child and hope this outcome brings some measure of peace."

The case was investigated by the Division of Family & Children Services and the Canton Police Department. The prosecution was handled by Assistant District Attorney David Bailey of the Special Victims Unit.

###

*The Office of the District Attorney for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit is committed to seeking justice, acting with integrity, and collaborating with partner agencies in the criminal justice system in order to protect the citizens of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia.*

CONTACT:

Cyndi Crossland

Public Information Officer

[cbcrossland@cherokeega.com](mailto:cbcrossland@cherokeega.com)