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State Psychiatric Hospital Worker Arrested For Abusing Child in His Care Incident Reported to NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs Hotline

ORANGEBURG, NY-- NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs Special Prosecutor Patricia A. Gunning announced today that Lincoln Wallace (2/16/82), who was employed as a Mental Health Therapy Aide at the Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center (RCPC) in Orangeburg has been arrested for allegedly abusing a child with special needs in his care following an investigation conducted by New York State Police.

The incident first came to the attention of law enforcement officials when a Program Director at the hospital, which serves children and adolescents, reported the incident to the Justice Center's Vulnerable Persons Central Register (VPCR) Hotline. A call center representative opened a case tracking file and instructed the director to call the State Police, which had not yet been notified. Justice Center investigators obtained videotape of the alleged crime, took photographs of the victim and provided other assistance to State Police investigators.

Wallace, who lives at 460 Manville Road, Pleasantville, NY, was arrested August 15, 2013 on a Misdemeanor Complaint charging him with:

- One count of Criminal Obstruction of Breathing or Blood Circulation, a class "A" Misdemeanor;
- One count of Endangering the Welfare of a Child, a class "A" Misdemeanor

According to the complaint, the defendant allegedly approached a child in his care in a threatening manner, placed the child in an inappropriate restraint, knocked the child onto a table repeatedly and refused to let go of the child when hospital staff attempted to intervene. The victim suffered injuries to his face, neck and chest that required first aid. Wallace resigned his position at RCPC. He was issued an appearance ticket for August 28, 2013 to be arraigned on the charges in Orangetown Town Court. The Rockland County District Attorney will be prosecuting the case.

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The Justice Center and its statewide hotline and incident reporting system began operations on June 30, 2013. It is staffed 24-hours a day, seven days a week by trained professionals who receive reports of allegations of abuse and neglect of people with special needs. Once a report is received by its Vulnerable Persons Central Register (VPCR) Hotline, it is logged and assessed. Serious cases of abuse or neglect are assigned to the Justice Center's investigation team or, when appropriate, to a local law enforcement agency for follow-up.

The Justice Center also maintains a statewide registry of all persons who have been found to be responsible for serious or repeated acts of abuse and neglect. Once placed on the registry, known as the "Staff Exclusion List" or SEL, they are prohibited by law from ever working again with people with disabilities or special needs.

The Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center is operated by the NYS Office of Mental Health. OMH is one of six state agencies under the jurisdiction of the Justice Center. It also oversees certain facilities or programs that are operated, licensed or certified by the Department of Health (DOH), the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), and the State Education Department (SED).

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Editor's note: In compliance with Disciplinary Rule 7-107A of the Code of Professional Responsibility, you are advised that a charge is an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.