

Three sex abuse survivors sue The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie

New York, NY (March 16, 2021 — Two sexual abuse survivors discussed mistreatment they experienced at The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie during a press conference this morning about lawsuits against the 170-year-old institution.

Greenstein & Milbauer, LLP, a personal injury law firm based in New York City, recently filed two sexual abuse lawsuits against the Poughkeepsie-based residence and Dutchess County, whose officials placed the children in the home. A third lawsuit was filed last month, and all three lawsuits accuse the home of negligence.

"All three of my clients were raped at the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie by the staff who were responsible for protecting them," attorney Robert Greenstein said today during a press conference. "How could this kind of abuse happen? Because the institution that was legally required to protect these children failed. As a consequence, some of these staffers continued sexually assaulting children until the police intervened. And how were these kids placed in these facilities? At times it was by the Dutchess County Child Protective Services."

The three plaintiffs endured criminal abuse after they were placed at The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie.

- Plaintiff #1 was approximately 12-16 years old when he was repeatedly sexually abused while a resident at The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie. It is alleged that Helen Fahy acting as an administrator of The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie groomed Plaintiff over a period of time before physically assaulting him. Two years later, Helen Fahy was arrested for having sexual intercourse with another teen and she was convicted of third-degree rape.
- Plaintiff #2 was placed in The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie when he was about nine years old. During his residency a staffer named Big Bob Buford sexually assaulted him when Buford took the youth Plaintiff to his home.
- Plaintiff #3 lived at The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie in early 2000 when she was approximately 14 years old. An employee named Tarell Heard raped and sexually assaulted her on multiple occasions. Last year, Tarell Heard was arrested for endangering the welfare of a child under the age of sixteen while working at Astor Services for Children and Families.

The three lawsuits were filed under New York's Child Victims Act which allows victims of child sexual abuse the opportunity to seek compensation and hold their perpetrators accountable. Prior to the enactment of the Child Victims Act last year, the statute of limitations would have already expired for this child sexual abuse victim. New York residents who were sexually abused as children now have until August 14, 2021 to pursue claims.

"It is my clients' sincere hope that these lawsuits will initiate fundamental change at The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie and other residential treatment centers for children so that the horrors of the past are not repeated," said Greenstein. "And we do encourage other victims to come forward with their own stories so that they can have their justice."

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