

Teen gets probation in powdered sugar (fake anthrax) case

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WATERLOO NY- A 12-year-old boy who claimed the television show "Jackass" inspired him to put powdered sugar in a Waterloo mailbox was found to be a juvenile delinquent by the Seneca County Family Court Thursday.

According to prosecuting attorney Steven Getman, the boy, whose name was not released due to his age, was found to have committed acts constituting criminal tampering in the third degree, a misdemeanor, and sentenced to two years probation.

As part of that probation, the boy will be placed on an electronic bracelet that only allows him out of the house to attend school, Getman said.

According to Getman, the charges stemmed from an Aug. 1 incident in which the boy put powdered sugar in a mailbox at the Waterloo Post Office. It was later discovered by employees.

Because the identity of the substance was unknown at the time, authorities were initially forced to treat the incident as a possible terrorist threat. Local, state and federal authorities were brought in to investigate, Getman said.

Subsequent investigation led Waterloo Police to the boy, who told them he had put powdered sugar in the mailbox after watching an episode of the television program "Jackass." That show, which airs on MTV, features comedian Johnny Knoxville and others committing practical jokes. According to the boy, the episode he saw had the cast throwing powdered sugar in people's faces.

In addition to ordering the boy to wear an electronic bracelet, Judge Patrick Falvey directed the boy to undergo a psychological evaluation, obtain any treatment recommended, cooperate with social workers and attend school regularly. He also directed the boy to submit to a drug test, if a probation officer deemed it necessary.

If he did not behave himself in the future, Falvey told the boy, he could be brought back to court and sentenced to a state juvenile facility.

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