

Judge sentences Samson man for molesting child

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A Samson man won't be released from prison until he's nearly 80 years old after a judge sentenced him Wednesday for molesting an 8-year-old girl.



**Gregory
Hornsby**

Gregory Hornsby, 49, of South Broad Street, was convicted earlier this year of felony first-degree assault and felony sex abuse of a child less than the age of 12. Assistant District Attorney Stephen Smith said Circuit Court Judge P.B. McLauchlin handed Hornsby a 30-year prison term for each of the convictions, which he said were to be served concurrently with each other. But Smith said Hornsby will serve the entire 30-year sentence because, according to state law, there is no early release from prison when the victim is under the age of 12 in a sex crime.

"I'm satisfied that he will be 79 years old when he gets out of prison, and he will not victimize any more children," Smith said. "There have been many accusations against this man in the past, but there was never a strong case. This time he got caught in the act."

Hornsby was also convicted of stabbing the 8-year-old girl's older brother with a pair of scissors after he attempted to stop the sexual assault, which happened in July 2007. The 18-year-old suffered a cut just above his eye that Smith said injured the teen's orbital nerve. The scissor assault left the teenager with permanent partial blindness in one eye.

Smith said Hornsby faced 15 years to life in prison for each charge because he had two prior felony convictions, which included felony marijuana possession and felony assault.

"I'm satisfied he's going to pay for his crimes," Smith said. "The kids are safer in Samson now."