

Man on child sex charges

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A YOUNG girl didn't speak out about years of alleged sexual abuse at the hands of a prominent Warwick man for fears she wouldn't be taken seriously, a court has heard.

In a pre-recorded police interview played to the Toowoomba District Court, the girl, now aged 18, said the man would wait until she was alone with him before touching her inappropriately.

The girl said the offending started in 2009 when she was "11 or 12" after another girl stopped riding with her and the man.

She said it "started with little things" such as touching the front of her horse's saddle and touching her leg. It escalated over the years.

She told police she couldn't remember specific dates of the offending except for one incident after she fell from a horse at the Yetman Campdraft in 2012.

The girl said the man put his arm around her while she was working in the living area of the gooseneck at the campdraft, and with the other hand touched her inappropriately.

The allegations came to light in 2012, shortly after the campdraft meet, when the girl had a fight with her parents.

It was at that point the girl stopped riding the man's horses or spending time with him, the court heard.

But it wasn't until 2014 that a formal complaint was made to police.

The man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, has pleaded not guilty to one count each of maintaining a sexual relationship with a child under 16, and indecent treatment of a child under 16.

The trial, before Judge David Searles, continues.

DAY IN THE LIFE | AMANDA SCHMIDT

Amanda finds family law quite rewarding

FAMILY law and wills and estates are where Toowoomba lawyer Amanda Schmidt's passions lie.

Both are emotional areas of the law, but she said she liked being able to help people through the difficult times that they usually experienced when they sought out the assistance provided in those areas of the law.

"It is personally very rewarding to help clients in these difficult times and to get them through their problem and out the other side," she said.

"It is even more rewarding to catch up with them a year or two later and see that they are doing very well for themselves and are enjoying life again."

The wife and mother of two (soon to be three, with the anticipated arrival of a baby in December) has worked for Kennedy Spanner Lawyers for 15 years.

She joined the firm in 2001 as a personal assistant. After studying while working she was admitted as a solicitor in 2007 and in July of 2013 she acquired ownership in the firm.

"The legal industry doesn't offer those opportunities (I had) any more and so I was fortunate enough to be one of the last to undertake the five-year clerkship," she said.

"It meant that I was training in a legal firm while undertaking the degree. When the offer was made to me I already knew that I liked the work I was involved in."

A day in her life, Mrs Schmidt said, was quite a busy one.

"Each day is very busy



We live here 'cos we love it!

LEGAL LIFE: Kennedy Spanner Lawyer director Amanda Schmidt loves her career helping people.

PHOTO: NEV MADSEN

and filled with client communication over the phone, via email and in person," she said.

"Sometimes court appearances are required. In addition to focusing each day on progressing client matters towards the goals they seek, as a director of the firm some of my day is also spent on business management although we have great employees which make that easier than it otherwise could be."

She said her time outside of work was largely spent

as a mum and wife.

"Being very busy during the week means that I love to be spending time with my family on weekends or in holidays I enjoy cooking and when the opportunity arises self-sufficient camping is a favourite activity," she said.

"It's so great to get away from civilisation and enjoy the peaceful surrounds of nature. Star gazing is ever so spectacular. Although I do need to learn how to look for a few more of the constellations."

QUICK QUIZ

■ **Favourite movie:** I have loved the Bridget Jones' movies and can't wait to go and see the current release of Bridget Jones' Baby.

■ **Favourite book:** When the Wind Changed. It was a book as a child I would have my father read to me time and time again.

■ **Favourite television show:** A Place To Call Home

Today: We feature A Day in the Life of a local resident. Tomorrow: Looking ahead with Our City, Our Future.

IN BRIEF

Fijian culture

THE Toowoomba Fijian community invites all residents to enjoy a day of celebration on Saturday, October 15. You can enjoy delicious Fijian cuisine and entertainment in true Fijian style.

It will be held at the Harristown State High School Hall from 5pm to 9pm.

Entry is \$20 per family or \$15 for a single. Phone Waqa Benito on 0406 026 635 or Jale Lovoni on 0404 761 508 for details.

Meditation basics

COME and join a meditation class with a different. Back to Basics is held on Monday nights with Daphne Fun from 6pm to 7pm. You will learn all about what meditation is and how it affects your entire being, what the chakra system is and its relationship to your body.

Call Daphne on 4630 9514 or 0411 549 337 for more details.

Pink fundrasier

PINK Ribbon Day fundraiser for breast cancer will be held at Toowoomba Queensland South West Tafe on Thursday, October 13 at 6pm.

Cost is \$25 per person and includes a smorgasbord and lots of treats. The event will be held at the Futures Training Restaurant at 100 Bridge St.

For more information phone 0450 062 837 or email diannemarshall68@gmail.com.

Thousands of Queenslanders will host a Girls' Night In to give hope to the one in six women diagnosed with breast or gynaecological cancer in their lifetime. To hold your own event, visit girlsnightin.com.au.

Club's birthday

THE Toowoomba Day View Club is celebrating its 18th birthday today.

It will be at the Regents on the Lake in Perth St, from 11am for an 11.30am start. Entry is \$25 and includes a two-course meal and raffles and lucky door prizes. RSVP to Marlene on 4636 1311.

Spring Fair 2016

A Fair to Remember

Sunday 16th October - 10:00am - 2:00pm

Highfields State Primary School - New England Highway

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