

QUESTIONS LINGER IN DAY-CARE ATTACK - SLAIN GIRL'S PARENTS HAD A CHILD-SUPPORT HEARING ON THAT DAY

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On the day 3-year-old Stefanie Belue was beaten to death **in** a Detroit **day care**, her parents had a scheduled court appearance to discuss child support payments.

Wayne County Circuit Court records indicate the hearing was scheduled for 2 p.m. Tuesday **in** front of Judge Kathleen MacDonald of the family division. Stefanie's father, Bernard Kelly, had requested that MacDonald review a Friend of the Court recommendation that he pay child support to Charleen Belue, the girl's 38-year-old mother.

Stefanie was killed around 10 a.m. **in** a home **day care in** northwest Detroit after a gunman barged inside and began shooting. She died of head trauma, according to an autopsy report, and was not shot.

The **day-care** owner, Annette Rice, 41, and Rice's niece, Sherita Griggs, 22, were shot multiple times and are **in** critical condition at Sinai-Grace Hospital **in** Detroit. Police are still searching for a suspect.

Griggs' 4-month-old son, Amari, fell from his mother's arms and hit his head, police said. He is **in** serious condition at Children's Hospital of Michigan. Kelly, 37, of Detroit said Thursday that police questioned him Wednesday evening and released him.

Police confirmed his version, saying Kelly voluntarily came to headquarters at 1300 Beaubien and was cooperative.

Kelly said the timing of the child support hearing was a coincidence and he doesn't know who would want to harm his daughter or the **day care**. He declined further comment except to describe himself as "really sad."

An April 17 ruling by the Friend of the Court ordered Kelly to pay "a reasonable amount" of support for Stefanie. The amount was not disclosed **in** court records obtained by the Free Press. Kelly asked for a review of the ruling on June 8.

Charleen Belue could not be reached for comment Thursday. Her friend, Andrea Hakeem, Stefanie's godmother, declined to discuss the child-support issues except to say that Kelly "was not a part of Stefanie's life."

Police said Thursday that a rifle was found **in** a bedroom at the **day care** after the shooting. They said the rifle, which belonged to Rice's husband, Kenneth, was locked **in** a case under a bed.

Police Cmdr. Craig Schwartz said the gun is not connected to the case **in** any way.

Karen Smith, spokeswoman for the state Family Independence Agency, said under current licensing rules, the firearm appears not to be a violation because police said it was stored securely and out of reach of kids.

Smith said the state is developing new rules that would address firearms **in** day cares.

Stefanie's funeral arrangements were pending Thursday.

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