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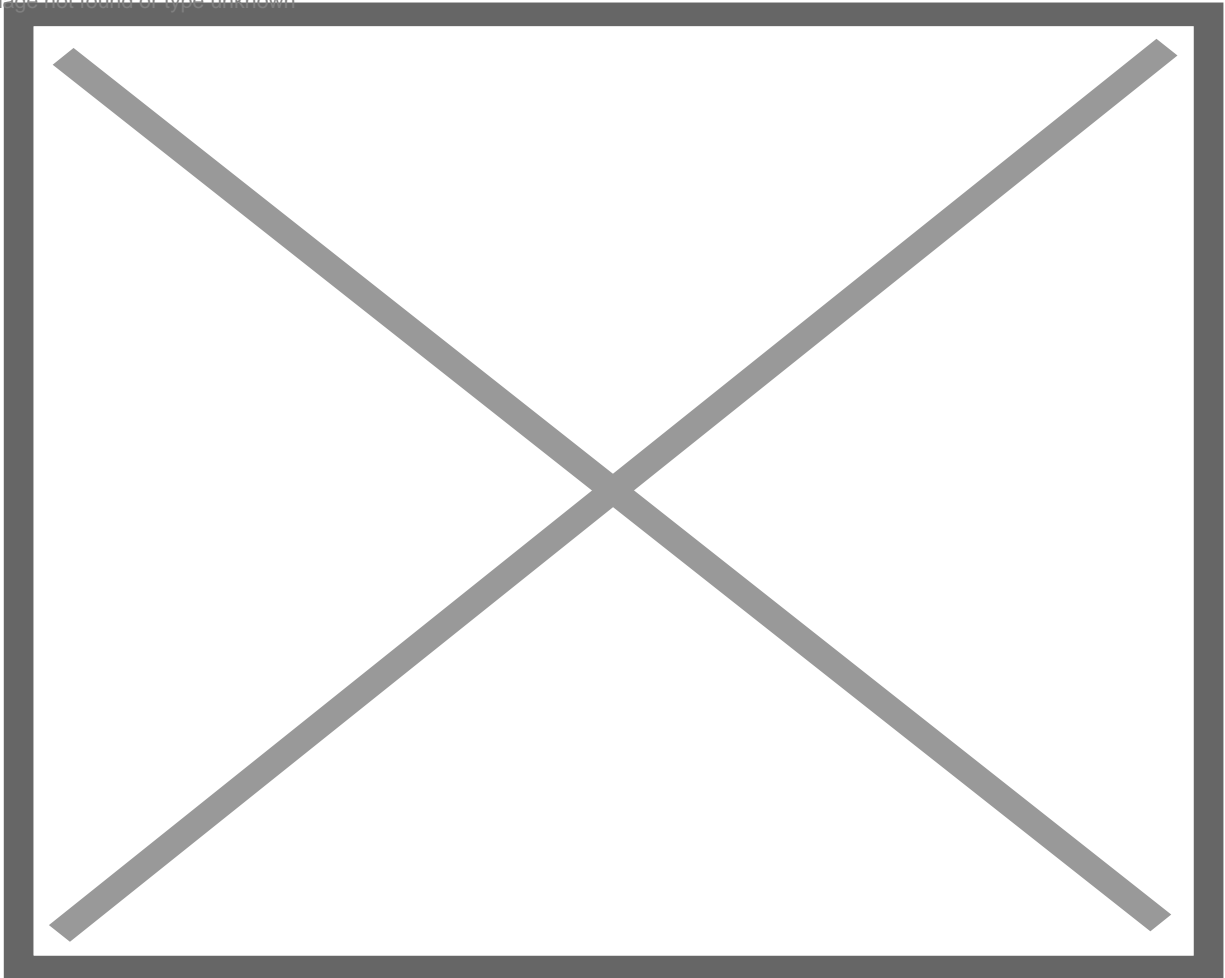
Father Charged with Child Abuse in St. Croix After Alleged Beating Leaves Bruises

Dillan Mars faces felony child abuse and domestic violence charges after reportedly admitting to “overdoing” punishment that left his 2-year-old daughter bruised. He was remanded into custody pending his court appearance

Crime / **Published On January 06, 2025 06:22 AM /**

Staff Consortium **January 06, 2025**

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Mugshot of Dillan Mars. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. CROIX — One man is facing felony child abuse charges after allegedly beating his minor daughter hard enough to leave a bruise.

According to court documents, the child’s mother presented herself to a police station on the night of December 31, 2024, to file a report. In her statement, she alleged that her former partner Dillan

Mars had injured their 2-year old daughter days earlier.

The child was in his care on December 29, the woman said, when she received a text message from Mr. Mars which indicated that he had “whooped” the little girl because she was fussy and refusing to take a shower after spoiling herself. The text message reportedly contained an admission that the child was now bruised as a result, as well as an admission that he “overdid” it.

The woman also reported receiving a text message from Mr. Mars that threatened to kill their two children. She shared the messages and photos of her daughter’s bruises with officers, and told police that this was not an isolated incident. She expressed concerns about her children’s safety while in the presence of their father, and told officers that she had also been on the receiving end of abuse from Mr. Mars.

Brought in for questioning, Mr. Mars reportedly told police that he spanked his daughter after she threw a tantrum when he attempted to bathe her. Although he noticed the bruises in the places he hit her, the girl’s father reportedly insisted that he did not hit the child hard. Mr. Mars denied ever threatening to kill his former partner or their children.

Nonetheless, police arrested and charged him with child abuse. Mr. Mars was also charged with simple assault and battery and disturbance of the peace, both as crimes of domestic violence. He was remanded into custody until his first court appearance, which was scheduled for January 3, 2025.

Although publicly available court records indicate that the advice of rights hearing for Mr. Mars did proceed as scheduled, with Magistrate Yolán Brow Ross as the presiding judge in the matter, no details on bail or pretrial release conditions have been made available to the public as of press time