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MEDIA RELEASE

POLICE OFFICER ARRESTED

As the result of a Highlands County Sheriff's Office investigation, James H. Parker, a Police Officer employed by the City of Avon Park, was arrested yesterday for the offense of Aggravated Child Abuse under Florida State Statute 827.03 2(a), which is a felony of the 1st degree. Officer Parker's current employment with the City of Avon Park began in February 2006 and he was employed as a Police Officer with the City for approximately twenty (20) months between 2002 and 2004. As a result of yesterday's arrest he has been placed on suspension pending further investigation.

This case continues to be investigated jointly by the Highlands County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Unit and the Special Victims Unit, along with the State Department of Children and Families and the point of contact is Sergeant Darin Hood from the Highlands County Sheriffs Office.

Please join us in praying for the recovery of the victim from her serious injuries as well as strength for her family to persevere during this extremely difficult time.