

## **Statement for Court Pertaining to Jeffrey Zabik**

**By Amanda Box**

It has been almost three years since the night I found out that Jeff was taking videos of me and my children during our private times. At first, it was very hard to believe that Jeff, who was a family member that we loved and trusted, was lying to us and invading our personal privacy. I was so horrified that night when Samantha said he was filming her, that I took my kids to my neighbor's house where we spent the night for protection. I realized I did not know this man and he could be dangerous. I requested that he leave my house before morning, which he did. Over the next 24 hours, I learned about spyware. I had no idea that clocks, smoke detectors, car fobs and even pens could take videos. It was a very upsetting feeling that anything around me could be a recording device. For weeks, Samantha, Andrew and I were not comfortable in our home. We did not know if Jeff would come back unexpected, if he was dangerous, and if there was spyware installed someplace that we had not found. We did not eat much or sleep. I had to use sick and vacation time at work, because I was exhausted and unable to keep my emotions controlled. Samantha and Andrew went to their Dad's house whenever they could. They struggled to focus and keep up with schoolwork. Andrew cried daily and begged to say goodbye to Jeff, who he viewed as a stepfather. There was an emptiness that was left in our lives without Jeff. We had to change some of our routines. For example, we stopped eating at the dining room table which was always a family fun time.

Jeff had lots of belongings at my house that had to be moved. I did not want him to come inside the house in fear he would somehow place more spyware. So, I had to move his stuff out to the garage and set up times for him to come and retrieve it when Sammy and Andrew were not home. I also had to be sure family or friends could be there with me for protection as I guarded my house. It was very difficult emotionally to see Jeff or even communicate with him because he appeared to be the person I loved. He wrote letters and e-mails to me that were full of lies about the accusations I had made regarding him spying on my daughter. Eventually, he sent letters full of apology and excuses for his behavior. He tried to make me feel bad for his situation. At times I felt empathy about what he must be going through, but I realized that I did not truly know him and would then become angry that he had caused so much upset for me and my children. I also worried that he could be physically dangerous, especially to my teenage daughter and her friends, one of whom he contacted via social media. During that time, I had to make some very difficult phone calls to other parents. Close friends of my children often stayed at our house on weekends and during school vacation. Sammy's closest friend often stayed with us for weeks at a time. I was sure that these children had been filmed due to the clock device in the bathroom, but I was not sure what Jeff did with these videos or if he had sexually abused any of these kids.

In hindsight, I absolutely believe that he would sexually exploit young girls if he were able to get them to comply. Jeff seemed to adore Samantha from the moment he met her when she was 9 years old. She was 10 when he moved into our house. She was 11 or 12 when he put the clock that filmed in the bathroom. He slowly became more and more attentive to Samantha and her friends. There was a slow progression of his behaviors to gain Samantha's attention. It started with him becoming interested in

her music and watching her tv shows. He moved on to buying her gifts and then eventually he would take her and her friends to concerts and special events that I could not afford. He was very focused on her personal hygiene and health. He bought her moisturizing lotions and acne creams. He gave her educational handouts on dental hygiene and even how to do self breast exams. I spoke to him several times about how he was being inappropriate with the health handouts and personal health products. He would stop for awhile, but would eventually try to give her some kind of information again, and he would explain that he was just concerned about her health. He often complained to me that Samantha would not hug him or allow physical contact and he felt like she should treat him more as a close family member. He did not give Andrew the same attention or interest, which I often commented on. He would say that he just understood Samantha and her friends better and wanted to make her happy.

Jeff's behaviors with the bathroom were a problem for me, that we fought about often. That alarm clock facing the toilet was something I disliked from the start. I moved it out and put a battery controlled clock on the wall instead, since he insisted that he needed a clock in the bathroom. But eventually he moved the alarm clock back in and claimed he liked it better and needed to be able to view it while he was using the toilet, so that he would not be late for work. At some point he started leaving pens, keys, even his wallet in a pile in the bathroom. I found SD storage cards all the time on the washing machine and sometimes on the floor. He told me that they were work related and that he often had them in his pockets. I would often get annoyed and clean up all his random stuff and put it on his bureau, but it always made it back to the bathroom. At one point, he took the shade off the bathroom window and said it was old and had mildew. Sammy wanted the shade, so I bought a new one and put it up. He took it down and put a film on the window so that we could not see out the window at night. I later learned that the film allowed a clear view at night when looking in from outside. Jeff also kept taking down the shower curtain and leaving just a clear liner. He said it gave him more light when he took a shower and he claimed that the other curtain kept getting dirty and needed cleaning. I didn't want to look at the tub and liked the shower curtain, so I bought a couple more, so that there was always one hanging. At one point, Jeff changed all the light bulbs in the bathroom to super bright LED bulbs. He said it was too dark in there. About two months before he was forced to move out, he put in a new custom-made toilet seat that had empty space in the front. He said it was more comfortable for him and gave him more room when using the bathroom. However, I assume the seat was made to allow for more graphic videos recorded by the clock spy device. I think that the only reason, Jeff got caught is because he started using larger equipment for recording. Samantha noticed a large black box with a light in the bathroom when she took a shower the night when we realized what was going on.

The police process of investigation was not familiar to me at all. I thought that Jeff would be arrested right away since he clearly is a threat to children. Since it has been so long and he is free, I fear that he has joined another family and I worry that he has successfully groomed a young minor girl. I am disappointed that his current charges do not come with more of a punishment. I absolutely believe he is a threat to children and should be labeled as a sex offender.

At this point, Andrew will not talk about Jeff and leaves the room if he comes up in conversation. Sammy becomes emotionally upset when he is mentioned. I am angry that he did what he did to my

family and will get away with it probably without spending time in jail. I am left with major trust issues and have been keeping male friends at a distance for safety.