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## 34-year-old grandma charged with leaving kids alone while she gambled

April 9, 2014 | By Brittany Wallman, Sun Sentinel

A 34-year-old grandmother was arrested after police say she left her four kids and a grandchild while she went to the casino.

Crystal Hernandez, a relatively new resident of Pompano Beach, was ordered held on \$5,000 bond. All five kids were taken away by officials, because of the condition of the home.

A neighbor called law enforcement officials when she found the five kids, ages 2 to 12, walking around asking for food, according to the legal complaint.

She was arrested at her home at 9:23 p.m. Tuesday. Police said she didn't appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Broward Sheriff's Deputy Matthew McGee said the smell of urine and feces in the house was overwhelming, and "almost unbearable to stand," he wrote in his report.

In court Wednesday, Broward Judge John "Jay" Hurley told Hernandez that McGee found "feces on the kitchen counter, along with feces on the floor."

"Huh-uh," she said, shaking her head in disagreement.

McGee's report said that "dirty clothes were thrown around the residence, along with old food."

The cupboards contained no food, he said, and there was "minimal" food in the refrigerator.

Because of that, the children were all removed from the home by BSO's Child Protective Investigations Section.

Hernandez lives in southwest Pompano Beach and moved there about three months ago, Hurley said.

She was charged with five felony counts of child neglect without great harm.

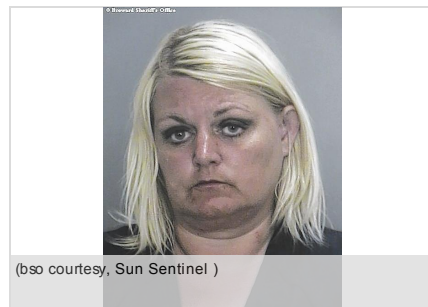
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