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### Former teen counselor gets jail time

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#### *Was accused of having sex with boy, 14*

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A former counselor for troubled teens who was accused of having sex with one of her students has accepted a plea negotiation with prosecutors after turning down a similar deal last year.

Cathleen Crowley, 30, of Rye was sent to the Cheshire County jail in Westmoreland for a month as part of the deal that was finalized last week.

Crowley withdrew her first guilty plea connected to the student's accusations during a hearing last November in Cheshire County Superior Court.

The plea Crowley and her attorney, Gary S. Lenehan of Manchester, first negotiated with prosecutors would have kept her out of jail.

Judge Brian T. Tucker was expected to hand down suspended, one-year jail sentences on misdemeanor charges of sexual assault and giving alcohol to a minor.

But after hearing the case against Crowley — she was accused of giving the student alcohol and engaging in sex acts with him in her van and a hotel in Keene in 2007 — Tucker said he would reject the deal she made with prosecutors and hand down a six-month jail sentence.

Tucker said Crowley deserved to spend time in jail because of the boy's age at the time of the alleged sexual assaults and the position of authority she held over him as his counselor.

The boy's mother said previously in court that her son was 14 when Crowley became his counselor at a residential treatment program for troubled teens in the state.

"I can't understand how you live with yourself," the mother said. "I can't understand how you could use your job to access young boys."

The Sentinel does not identify alleged victims of sexual abuse.

After the first plea deal crumbled, Crowley and Lenehan went back to negotiating with prosecutors and preparing for trial.

A Cheshire County grand jury also re-indicted Crowley on two counts of felonious sexual assault. She would have faced up to seven years in prison on each count if a jury convicted her after a trial.

Tucker, meanwhile, removed himself from Crowley's case because he'd already heard her plead guilty to sexually assaulting the student and giving him alcohol.

Months of negotiations culminated last week during a second plea and sentencing hearing handled by Judge John P. Arnold in Superior Court.

Crowley only admitted during the hearing to giving the student alcohol and endangering his welfare by keeping him out all night at the Keene hotel without his mother's knowledge.

Arnold sentenced Crowley to a year in jail with 11 months suspended on the conviction for endangering the welfare of a child, a misdemeanor.

She received a consecutive, suspended one-year jail sentence on the conviction for providing alcohol to a minor, also a misdemeanor.

Both suspended sentences could be imposed if Crowley is caught breaking the law in the next five years.

Crowley was placed on probation for two years, ordered to undergo a psychosexual evaluation for sexual offenders and barred from contacting the student.

Crowley has declined to comment on the student's allegations. She is no longer employed at the residential treatment program where she met the student.

The state Division for Children, Youth and Families has substantiated an abuse finding tied to the student's allegations against Crowley, Assistant Cheshire County Attorney John S. Webb said.

The finding appears on Crowley's permanent state record and should prevent her from working again as a youth counselor or in a similar position, he said.

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