

# I'll pay your fine, judge told abuse victim

**Frances Gibb**

A judge who offered to pay a teenager's fine after refusing to jail her for stabbing her paedophile abuser has been found guilty of misconduct.

Judge Jonathan Durham Hall, QC, told the 15-year-old girl at Bradford crown court that it would be a "disgrace to send a survivor like you to prison" even though she had stabbed the man, 56, close to his heart.

The court had been told that the paedophile had destroyed her life. "If anyone tries to force you, I will pay [the fine] myself," the judge said.

He was investigated by the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office following his comments. In a statement it said: "The lord chancellor and the lord chief justice considered this failed to demonstrate impartiality, and that his comment amounted to misconduct." The judge was given "formal advice", the lowest form of sanction.

The court had heard that the girl, who cannot be named, had stabbed her tormentor after feeling let down by the justice system. The abuser had sexually assaulted her when she was eight years old but was spared jail and given a community order. After the trial the man had harassed and bullied her, the court was told.

The girl was charged with attempted murder but her guilty plea to causing grievous bodily harm with intent was accepted. She was sentenced to a two-year youth rehabilitation order. Heather Gilmore, for the prosecution, said that the girl had been "destroyed" when her abuser was not jailed.

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