

Local News 

Manny charged in child sex abuse case

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Eyewitness News

MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS (WABC) -- In the neighborhoods of Morningside Heights and the Upper West Side where 23-year-old Richard Figueroa worked closely with small children, the charges sent a shiver.

"Horror basically. That's the ultimate violation of trust," Noel Holton-Brathwaite said.

Figueroa, a male nanny, is accused of sexually assaulting a 5 year-old boy in Morningside Heights, but sources tell us the alleged assaults involving oral sex may have begun years ago when the boy was only 2.

Sources say cops are now interviewing at least 7 other boys who Figueroa cared for over the past few years.

We did not get an answer at the door where Figueroa lived with his family in East Harlem, but his neighbors at the Wagner Houses were also horrified.

"This community is very safe. Everybody looks out for each other, but people like this living around our kids -- that's a scary feeling," Esther Carbackel said.

Eyewitness News has also confirmed that Figueroa once worked as a substitute at the Morningside Montessori School. While he got his job as a male nanny because other families recommended him, he also advertised on two internet sites, sittercity.com and care.com.

Not unlike male nanny Jonathan Then, who was arrested last year in a similar case involving several young boys, Figueroa did tout his experience. In his profile online he wrote, "I am a positive male role model and figure in a child's life... Fun, energetic, loving and reliable."

A dad in the neighborhood is one of many disgusted by the news.

"You're always wondering, sort of, second-guessing yourself you know. They say he's fine, but what if he's not. It's a little worrisome, as a parent," Phil Fabry said.

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