

OHIO COURT OF APPEALS, SEVENTH APPELLATE DISTRICT

In re J.C.

2026-Ohio-818 · No. 25 JE 0018 · Decided March 11, 2026

SUMMARY

The Seventh District Court of Appeals of Ohio affirmed a juvenile court judgment adjudicating J.C. delinquent for sexual imposition under R.C. 2907.06(A) and (C). The court held that sufficient evidence supported the finding of sexual contact and the required purpose of sexual arousal or gratification, and that the adjudication was not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Ohio Court of Appeals, Seventh Appellate District
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Katelyn Dickey; Carol Ann Robb; Mark A. Hanni
JURISDICTION	Ohio Court of Appeals, Seventh Appellate District, Jefferson County
DECIDED	March 11, 2026
DOCKET	25 JE 0018
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	J.C. appealed from a juvenile court judgment finding him guilty of sexual imposition, adjudicating him a delinquent child, and sentencing him to a minimum of 90 days of probation after a contested hearing.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For sufficiency, the court viewed the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution and asked whether any rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements proven beyond a reasonable doubt. For manifest weight, the court reviewed the entire record, weighed the evidence and reasonable inferences, considered witness credibility, and asked whether the trier of fact clearly lost its way and created a manifest miscarriage of justice.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published and precedential
PARTIES	J.C. v. State of Ohio

TOPICS

- criminal procedure
- evidence
- appellate procedure
- standard of review

PRACTICE AREAS

juvenile delinquency

criminal procedure

criminal evidence

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether sufficient evidence supported J.C.'s adjudication as a delinquent child for sexual imposition under R.C. 2907.06(A) and (C).
2. Whether the adjudication for sexual imposition was against the manifest weight of the evidence.

HOLDINGS

1. The evidence was sufficient for a rational trier of fact to find beyond a reasonable doubt that J.C. committed sexual imposition, including sexual contact with the victim that J.C. knew would be offensive or as to which he was reckless, and that the contact was made for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification.
2. The adjudication was not against the manifest weight of the evidence because the juvenile court did not clearly lose its way in resolving conflicts and crediting the State's witnesses.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"When a court reviews a record for sufficiency, '[t]he relevant inquiry is whether, after viewing the evidence in a light most favorable to the prosecution, any rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements of the crime proven beyond a reasonable doubt.'" (§ 10)

"In determining whether a criminal conviction is against the manifest weight of the evidence, an Appellate court must review the entire record, weigh the evidence and all reasonable inferences, consider the credibility of witnesses, and determine whether, in resolving conflicts in the evidence, the trier of fact clearly lost its way and created such a manifest miscarriage of justice that the conviction must be reversed." (§ 10)

"A conviction "does not require proof of actual arousal or gratification." (§ 24)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

At Stanton Elementary School, J.C. and the victim were seated with other juveniles at a lunch table when J.C. allegedly said, "Give me those balls," and reached down toward the victim's private region. The victim testified that J.C. grabbed his arm and tried to touch his private parts, while an investigating detective testified that the victim and at least one other juvenile reported the touching and that two juveniles heard J.C.'s statement. J.C. denied touching the victim's private parts and claimed he was tickling the victim on the side and stomach, but the juvenile court credited the State's evidence.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

A delinquency complaint charged J.C. with third-degree-misdemeanor sexual imposition under R.C. 2907.06(A) and (C). After a contested hearing, the Jefferson County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division, found J.C. guilty, adjudicated him delinquent, imposed probation and related conditions, and entered judgment on August

20, 2025. J.C. timely appealed, challenging the sufficiency and manifest weight of the evidence; the Court of Appeals affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- State v. Maxwell, 139 Ohio St. 3d 12, 2014-Ohio-1019, 9 N.E.3d 930, ¶ 146
- State v. Jenks, 61 Ohio St. 3d 259, 574 N.E.2d 492 (1991)
- Jackson v. Virginia, 443 U.S. 307, 99 S. Ct. 2781, 61 L. Ed. 2d 560 (1979)
- State v. Thompkins, 78 Ohio St. 3d 380, 387, 678 N.E.2d 541 (1997)
- State v. Hunter, 131 Ohio St. 3d 67, 2011-Ohio-6524, 960 N.E.2d 955, ¶ 119
- State v. DeHass, 10 Ohio St. 2d 230, 227 N.E.2d 212 (1967)
- Davis v. Flickinger, 77 Ohio St. 3d 415, 418, 674 N.E.2d 1159 (1997)
- State v. T.D.J., 2018-Ohio-2766, ¶¶ 46-48
- State v. Biros, 78 Ohio St. 3d 426, 447 (1997)
- State v. Ruschak, 2025-Ohio-2303, ¶¶ 12-15
- State v. Pokhrel, 2024-Ohio-3073, ¶ 44
- In re D.S., 2005-Ohio-1803, ¶ 19
- In re Anderson, 116 Ohio App. 3d 441, 443-444, 688 N.E.2d 545 (1996)
- State v. Mundy, 99 Ohio App. 3d 275, 289, 650 N.E.2d 502 (1994)
- State v. Cobb, 81 Ohio App. 3d 179, 610 N.E.2d 1009 (1991)
- State v. Meredith, 2005-Ohio-062, ¶ 13
- In re Whitlock, 2008-Ohio-4672, ¶¶ 1, 24
- State v. Breland, 2004-Ohio-7238, ¶ 24
- State v. Armstead, 2021-Ohio-4000, ¶ 14
- State v. Slusarczyk, 2024-Ohio-4790, ¶ 66
- In re Redmond, 2007-Ohio-3125, ¶¶ 2, 9-12