

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Sorrell v. State

2026 OK CR 16 (Court of Criminal Appeals of the State of Oklahoma 2026) · No. F-2025-17 · Decided April 30, 2026

SUMMARY

The Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed Lonnie Keith Sorrell's convictions for three counts of lewd or indecent acts with a child under twelve. The court held that testimony supporting the victim's credibility was improperly admitted as preemptive bolstering because the victim's credibility had not yet been attacked by evidence, but concluded the error did not affect Sorrell's substantial rights. The court also rejected his challenge to consecutive sentences and found no abuse of discretion.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Criminal Appeals of the State of Oklahoma
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Lumpkin, Presiding Judge; Musseman, Vice Presiding Judge; Lewis, Judge; Hudson, Judge; Rowland, Judge
JURISDICTION	Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals
DECIDED	April 30, 2026
DOCKET	F-2025-17
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Sorrell appealed his jury convictions and sentences from the District Court of McClain County, challenging alleged prosecutorial bolstering and the consecutive nature of two sentences.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Prosecutorial-misconduct claims are reviewed in the context of the entire trial, considering the prosecutor's conduct, the strength of the evidence, and the arguments of defense counsel. A claim that the trial court abused its discretion in ordering sentences to run consecutively is reviewed for abuse of discretion.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published precedential opinion of the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals
PARTIES	Lonnie Keith Sorrell v. The State of Oklahoma

TOPICS

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the prosecutor improperly bolstered the credibility of the complaining witness by eliciting opinion testimony about her truthfulness before her credibility had been attacked by evidence.
2. Whether the trial court abused its discretion by ordering the sentences on Counts 1 and 2 to run consecutively based on the jury's notation of "minimum" on the verdict forms.

HOLDINGS

1. Testimony from the school counselor and great-grandmother that supported WB's credibility constituted improper bolstering because WB's character for truthfulness had not been attacked by evidence before the testimony was introduced.
2. The improper bolstering did not affect Sorrell's substantial rights and therefore did not warrant relief.
3. The trial court did not abuse its discretion by ordering the sentences on Counts 1 and 2 to run consecutively.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“*Statements by the attorneys are not evidence . . .*” (§10)

“*The jury received no instruction regarding the running of sentences. Thus, the jury could not have intended something it knew nothing about.*” (§16)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Sorrell was convicted of three counts of lewd or indecent acts with a child under twelve involving WB, his young granddaughter. Before WB testified, a school counselor and WB's great-grandmother gave testimony indicating that WB was truthful concerning the abuse allegations, and the defense argued that this testimony improperly bolstered WB's credibility. The evidence also included consistent accounts WB gave to other witnesses, testimony concerning possible motivation to fabricate, and evidence that Sorrell attempted suicide after being confronted about the abuse. The jury assessed twenty-five years' imprisonment on each count and wrote the word "minimum" on the verdict forms; the trial court ordered Counts 1 and 2 to run consecutively.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

A jury convicted Sorrell of three counts of lewd or indecent acts with a child under twelve. The McClain County District Court entered judgment and sentence, ordering the sentences on Counts 1 and 2 to run consecutively. Sorrell appealed to the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals, which denied both propositions of error and affirmed the judgment and sentence.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Simpson v. State, 2020 OK CR 9, 465 P.3d 227
- Mitchell v. State, 2010 OK CR 14, 235 P.3d 640
- Sanders v. State, 2015 OK CR 11, 358 P.3d 280
- Nickell v. State, 1994 OK CR 73, 885 P.2d 670
- Jackson v. State, 12 Okl.Cr. 406, 157 P. 945
- United States v. Sherman, 171 F.2d 619, 622 (2d Cir. 1948)
- Young v. State, 2000 OK CR 17, 12 P.3d 20
- Dodd v. State, 2004 OK CR 31, 100 P.3d 1017
- Riley v. State, 1997 OK CR 51, 947 P.2d 530
- Rodriguez v. State, 2025 OK CR 22

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