



Woman sues Jehovah's Witnesses for alleged abuse

LOS LUNAS, N.M. -

Monica Jaramillo is ready to break her silence.

She has now come forward and filed a lawsuit against the Los Lunas congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as an elder in the church she says sexually abused her when she was 8 years old. The lawsuit says he's the same man who raped her mother when she was also 8 years old, but in Indiana.

"We were taught not to go to authorities, and so I went to who's the proper authorities within the organization and then I was told to just keep it quiet," says Jaramillo's mother, Vicky Davis.

This lawsuit is the first of its kind in New Mexico, but the third filed in the U.S. by attorney Irwin Zalkin.

"We think this is sort of similar to the beginnings of the Catholic abuse story," Zalkin says.

And local attorney Terrence Revo, also representing Jaramillo in her lawsuit, says this is just the start.

"We believe there are many more [local victims]," Revo says.

We asked the church for comment but have not heard back. We are not releasing the name of the defendant in this case because he has never been charged with any crimes. We did call a number believed to be the man's, but no one answered.

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