

Synagogue sued for molestation in 1999

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PROVIDENCE, R.I. --A boy molested at a Warwick synagogue is suing, alleging Temple Am David knew or should have known the molester had assaulted boys before.

Stanley Rosenfeld, 72, pleaded no contest in 2001 to molesting the 12-year-old boy starting in 1999. Rosenfeld was a religion instructor at the temple, and was supposed to be tutoring the boy as he prepared for his bah mitzvah.

The boy's lawyer, Timothy J. Conlon, said other synagogues had problems with Rosenfeld, but he was allowed to move from one to another and offend again. The suit was brought by the boy and his mother, who were identified only as John and Jane Doe in papers filed with the court.

An official at Temple Am David said he had not seen the lawsuit and could not comment.

The lawsuit says Rosenfeld told a probation officer for a 2001 probation report that he had molested boys when he was in New York, but he was never charged. The suit said Temple Am David hired Rosenfeld on the recommendation of his wife, an instructor there, without a formal interview, screening or background check.

Conlon, who handled dozens of priest abuse cases against the Roman Catholic church, said the Jewish community should be aware that sex abuse in religious institutions is more widespread than people would like to think. ■