

da " www.news.com.au " March 11, 2010

A MAN raped his two daughters and fathered nine babies with them during 35 years of physical and sexual abuse. He escaped detection because care professionals missed numerous chances to intervene.

Agencies involved with the family repeatedly failed to take action even though the father was accused of incest on seven separate occasions, with a further 12 reported incidents of violence.

Today authorities issued an unreserved apology to the abused women.

The 57-year-old man, from Sheffield, England, was jailed for life in November 2008 after one of his daughters accused him of incest.

The man, who cannot be named, admitted 25 rapes and four indecent assaults, with the attacks beginning in 1980.

If his daughters refused his advances, they would be punched, kicked and sometimes held in the flames of a gas fire.

The case echoes of that of Josef Fritzl, the Austrian who imprisoned and raped his daughter.

Between 1975 and 2008 the family came into contact with 28 different agencies and more than 100 professionals.

A review of the case made 128 recommendations for improving understanding, practice, procedures and training into intra-familial abuse.

However, no staff were sacked or disciplined as the case was seen to be a "collective failure".

"This is a tragic and complicated case. The man responsible, who intimidated and frightened his family, was convicted of multiple counts of rape and is serving a life sentence."

The case review showed that the family **moved home 67 times** over a **35-year period** so that the father could avoid detection.

The women's brother voiced anger that his sisters had not been protected, saying: "I blame a lot of people," he said.