



# Department of Justice

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Acting United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Kentucky

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## **Bourbon County Man Pleads Guilty to Producing Child Pornography**

**LEXINGTON, Ky.** - A Paris, Ky., man, Johnathan Scott Mason, 27, pleaded guilty on Tuesday, before U.S. District Judge Karen Caldwell, to the production of child pornography.

According to his plea agreement, in March 2020, law enforcement officers became aware of Mason's activity on the social media application, Kik. On this app, Mason expressed a sexual interest in children and said that he had sexually explicit images of minors that he had produced. Mason admitted that he used a minor victim to produce visual depictions of the minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct and that the depictions were then transported using the Internet.

Mason was indicted in July 2020.

Carlton S. Shier, IV, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Jerry Templet, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI); and Acting Commissioner Lt. Colonel Phillip Burnett, Kentucky State Police; jointly announced the guilty plea.

The investigation was conducted by Department of Homeland Security-HSI and KSP-Electronic Crimes Branch. The U.S. Attorney's Office was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney David Marye.

Mason is scheduled to be sentenced on April 7, 2021. He faces a minimum of 15 years and a maximum of 30 years in prison, in addition to a maximum \$250,000 fine. However, any sentence will be imposed by the Court, after its consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal sentencing statutes.

This case was prosecuted as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafchildhood.gov).

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