



Department of Justice

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Ashland Man Convicted of Distributing and Possessing Child Pornography

ASHLAND, Ky.- An Ashland, Ky., man was convicted on Friday by a federal jury in Ashland for charges related to child pornography.

After one hour of deliberations, following a three-day trial, the jury convicted 70-year-old Adam Fonso Childers of distributing and possessing child pornography.

According to testimony at trial, Childers was identified as being in the top 10 list of individuals sharing child pornography in Kentucky via a peer-to-peer file sharing program. An investigation was initiated and, between October 5-6, 2020, Childers was found to have distributed multiple files of child pornography using the peer-to-peer file sharing network. A search warrant was then obtained for Childers' home. The search revealed that, over decades, Childers had acquired multiple forms of media found to contain child pornography. This media included magazines he acquired in the 1970s, binders of printed materials, multiple disks, seven external hard drives, and a desktop computer. In total, Childers possessed hundreds of thousands of images and videos of child pornography, include depictions of minors under the age of 12 engaged in sexually explicit activity.

Childers was indicted in March 2022.

"Not only did the defendant possess thousands of images of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, but he was also prolific in sharing them with others," said Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "Combatting this despicable conduct is a core priority for our office and is critical to protecting our communities' vulnerable youth. We commend the dedicated efforts of our law enforcements partners; without it, this prosecution would not have been possible."

"Children are one of the Commonwealth's most precious resources, yet one of its most vulnerable. Every year, thousands of minors fall victim to online predators seeking to exploit their innocence," said Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge, FBI Louisville Field Office. "Through dedicated work by FBI Louisville and our law enforcement partners, Mr. Childers' conviction ensures that at least one predator will no longer cause irreparable harm to our society."

“Children are amongst the most valuable assets in our community, the Ashland Police Department will continue to proudly stand in defense of children and pursue those persons who foolishly attempt to exploit them,” said Chief W. Todd Kelley, Ashland Police Department.

U.S. Attorney Shier; FBI Special Agent in Charge Cohen; Col. Phillip Burnett, Commissioner, Kentucky State Police; and Chief W. Todd Kelley, Ashland Police Department, jointly announced the conviction.

The investigation was conducted by FBI, KSP, and the Ashland Police Department. The U.S. Attorney’s Office was represented in the case by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Erin Roth and Mary Melton.

Childers will appear for sentencing on May 8, 2023. He faces a maximum of 20 years in prison on each count of conviction. However, the Court must consider the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the applicable federal sentencing statutes before imposing a sentence.

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.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

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