

Beat: News

Man Sentenced to 70 Years for Multiple Child Pornography Offenses

Keegan Richardson of Seal Cove, Maine

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USPA NEWS - A Seal Cove man was sentenced April 28th in federal court for three counts of production of child pornography, one count of transportation of child pornography and one count of possession of child pornography, U.S. Attorney Darcie N. McElwee announced.

U.S. District Judge Lance E. Walker sentenced Keegan Richardson, age 28, to 70 years in prison and a lifetime of supervised release. He was also ordered to pay \$29,000 in restitution. Richardson pleaded guilty on October 4, 2021.

"These cases shock the conscience," Judge Walker said in handing down the sentence. "It is impossible to overstate the harm the defendant has inflicted on [these children] and, by extension, to an unknown degree, on the community at large. What is just punishment for terrorizing [these children] and marketing that terrorism to strangers over the internet?"

According to court records, on July 6, 2020, Richardson entered a private internet chat group and began communicating with an undercover FBI agent. This chat group was known to the agent as a place where people met, discussed and traded original child sexual abuse material of underage children and links to child pornography. Richardson confirmed that he had access to a female minor and shared multiple sexually explicit images of the minor with the agent. A search warrant was obtained for Richardson's residence and phone, and he was arrested. Investigators later learned that he had access to two additional minors. On his phone, a forensic examiner found multiple sexually explicit images of the three minors that Richardson had taken with his phone. Additional child sexual abuse material involving different minors was also discovered.

The FBI, the Hancock County Sheriff's Office, the Maine State Police, and the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency investigated the case.

"Holding those who engage in child exploitation enterprises and create child sexual abuse material accountable is and will remain a top priority for the Justice Department, the FBI and our office," McElwee said. "Keegan Richardson not only preyed on children, he callously violated three children who trusted him, causing lasting and profound damage. I can think of no greater violation, and I commend the FBI for their quick action to protect those children from further harm."

Project Safe Childhood: This case was brought 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 Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, 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.justice.gov/psc.

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

Source: Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Maine press release from April 28, 2022.

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