

Jersey County Man Sentenced To 40 Years In Prison After Found Guilty Of Disseminating Child Pornography

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CHICAGO – A Jersey County man - Joshua G. Eastham - was sentenced to 40 years in prison after previously being found guilty of four Class X felony counts of disseminating child pornography involving victims under the age of age 13. Jersey County Circuit Judge Allison Lorton handed down the 40-year sentence.

Raoul's office co-prosecuted the case with Jersey County State's Attorney Ben Goetten.

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul announced the decision on Friday. Raoul said the sentencing is part of his ongoing work, in collaboration with federal law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement officials throughout Illinois, to apprehend offenders who download and trade child pornography online.

Raoul's office charged Eastham after receiving a CyberTip from the mobile messaging application Kik and discovering evidence of child sexual abuse material during a search of Eastham's home on Jan. 27, 2022. Along with assistance from the U.S. Marshals Service, Eastham was apprehended and arrested the following day.

"I am pleased that this offender is being held accountable for his role in trading online child pornography," Raoul said. "Child survivors are revictimized each time one of these heinous videos or images are shared or downloaded. I appreciate the collaboration of the Jersey County State's Attorney's office and the U.S. Marshals in this case."

The case is part of Attorney General Raoul's work to investigate and prosecute child pornographers in Illinois. Raoul's office, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force that investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement agencies. The task force receives CyberTips, or online reports of child pornography, from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Over the last several years, CyberTipline reports have steadily increased. In 2022, reports to the ICAC increased by 26% over 2021.

Illinois' ICAC Task Force is one of 61 ICAC Task Forces throughout the country and is comprised of a network of more than 175 local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Since 2019, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has received more than 38,500 CyberTips and has been involved in more than 620 arrests of sexual predators. Since 2006, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has been involved in more than 2,010 arrests of sexual predators. The task force also has provided internet safety training and education to tens of thousands of parents, teachers, students and law enforcement professionals.

Attorney General Raoul also reminded the public that online child sexual exploitation can be reported at www.cybertipline.com, and child abuse can be reported at dcfsonlinereporting.dcf.illinois.gov. In addition, local child advocacy centers can be found at www.childrensadvocacycentersofillinois.org.

Assistant Attorney General Shantikumar Kulkarni prosecuted the case for Raoul's High Tech Crimes Bureau. Assistant State's Attorney Kevin Tellor prosecuted the case for the Jersey County State's Attorney's Office.