

Christian Radio DJ Pleads Guilty to Child-Sex Crimes

John Balyo pled guilty to charges of criminal sexual conduct for assaulting children following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Balyo, 35, was an on-air personality at Gaylord's Family Christian Radio station, WCSG. He was arrested at the Big Ticket Festival, a faith-based festival in Gaylord, Michigan, in June. The Big Ticket Festival is a ministry of White Stone Project, a Michigan nonprofit whose focus is sharing the eternal message of Jesus Christ through innovative evangelism.

According to the investigation, Balyo paid another defendant, who is the subject of a separate HSI child-exploitation investigation, to arrange sexual encounters with children. Further details about the investigation are being withheld pending the defendant's appearance in court to answer to the charges.

HSI special agents and officers with the Michigan State Police and Battle Creek Police Department arrested Balyo on charges of first-degree criminal sexual conduct. WCSG fired Balyo after the incident was revealed. His sentencing should come down in November. He will likely serve at least 15 years in prison.

"John Balyo is completely remorseful and is taking every step to reduce the trauma and misery of people having to come to court," Balyo's defense attorney, David Dodge, said in a statement. (Balyo) is proactively resolving this ... with full acceptance of responsibility."

"We sincerely grieve over these recent events, in particular the tragic impact on victims and their parents," Chris Lemke,

executive director of Cornerstone University Radio, WCSG and Mission Network News said in a statement on the WCSG website. "The WCSG family is deeply aching and know you may be hurting as well. We know that no one, absolutely no one, is immune from falling into the darkness of sin. And yet, we have hope. Those who truly follow and live for Jesus Christ know He alone has the power to restore broken lives and broken trust.

This investigation was conducted under HSI's Operation Predator, an international initiative to protect children from sexual predators. Since the launch of Operation Predator in 2003, HSI has arrested more than 10,000 individuals for crimes against children, including the production and distribution of online child pornography, traveling overseas for sex with minors, and sex trafficking of children. In fiscal year 2013, HSI special agents arrested more than 2,000 individuals under this initiative.