

# Former Reality TV Star Josh Duggar Sentenced to 12 Years in Child Porn Case

Former reality TV star Josh Duggar was sentenced Wednesday to about 12 1/2 years in prison after he was convicted of receiving and possessing child pornography.

Prosecutors had asked U.S. District Judge Timothy Brooks to give the maximum term of 20 years to Duggar, whose large family was the focus of TLC's "19 Kids and Counting." They argued in a pre-sentencing court filing that Duggar has a "deep-seated, pervasive and violent sexual interest in children."

TV station KNWA reported that the judge sentenced Duggar to 151 months in prison.

Duggar, whose lawyers sought a five-year sentence, maintains his innocence and has said he will appeal.

Duggar was arrested in April 2021 after a Little Rock police detective found child porn files were being shared by a computer traced to Duggar. Investigators testified that images depicting the sexual abuse of children, including toddlers, were downloaded in 2019 onto a computer at a car dealership Duggar owned.

TLC canceled "19 Kids and Counting" in 2015 following allegations that Duggar had molested four of his sisters and a babysitter years earlier. Authorities began investigating the abuse in 2006 after receiving a tip from a family friend but concluded that the statute of limitations on any possible charges had expired.

Duggar's parents said he had confessed to the fondling and

apologized. After the allegations resurfaced in 2015, Duggar apologized publicly for unspecified behavior and resigned as a lobbyist for the Family Research Council, a conservative Christian group.

Months later, he publicly apologized for cheating on his wife and for a pornography addiction, for which he then sought treatment.

In seeking a 20-year sentence, prosecutors cited the graphic images—and the ages of the children involved—as well as court testimony about the alleged abuse of Duggar's sisters.

Duggar's past behavior "provides an alarming window into the extent of his sexual interest in children that the Court should consider at sentencing," federal prosecutors wrote in their sentencing memorandum.

"This past conduct, when viewed alongside the conduct for which he has been convicted, makes clear that Duggar has a deep-seated, pervasive, and violent sexual interest in children, and a willingness to act on that interest," the court filing said.

Prosecutors also noted that Duggar's computer had been partitioned to evade accountability software that had been installed to report to his wife activity such as porn searches, according to experts.

"There is simply no indication that Duggar will ever take the steps necessary to change this pattern of behavior and address his predilection for minor females," prosecutors wrote.

Duggar has maintained that he's innocent and that he intends to appeal, his attorneys wrote in their sentencing memorandum.

"Duggar accepts that he is before this Court for sentencing and that this Court must impose a penalty," his attorneys wrote. "That is justice. But Duggar also appeals to this

Court's discretion to temper that justice with mercy." {eoa}

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