

Former Massachusetts Track Coach Pleads Guilty To Possessing Child Pornography

A former Wellesley High School assistant track coach, who is also a former Harvard University track coach, pleaded guilty Monday in federal court in Boston to possession of child pornography.

Walter Johnson, 71, of Framingham, pleaded guilty to one count of possession of child pornography. U.S. District Court Judge Leo T. Sorokin scheduled sentencing for Sept. 10, 2019.

In January 2017, an investigation began into child pornography being traded by a Craigslist user. The investigation led to Johnson, a track coach at Wellesley High School and a former Harvard University track coach. During a search of Johnson's home in Framingham, images and videos of child pornography were found on his computer and on a thumb drive hidden in his bedroom. He was arrested on scene and subsequently indicted by a federal grand jury.

The charge of possession of child pornography provides for a sentence of no greater than 20 years in prison, a minimum of five years and up to a lifetime of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling and Peter C. Fitzhugh, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston, made the announcement today. Assistance was provided by the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task forces from Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and the Framingham Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Anne Paruti, Lelling's Project Safe Childhood

Coordinator and a member of the Major Crimes Unit, is prosecuting the case.

The case is brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the DOJ's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.