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Tradesman Who Turned to Child Abuse Material After Porn Addiction Escapes Jail

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— Categories: Crime



A tradesman who developed an addiction to extreme pornography has avoided prison after being caught with disturbing images of child sexual abuse. Callum Robins, 34, was sentenced at Durham Crown Court this week after pleading guilty to three charges of making indecent images of children.

Police executed a search warrant at Robins' home in Percy Terrace, Houghton-le-Spring, on April 6 and seized a Huawei mobile phone. The device contained multiple images of young children, some of whom were aged between four and ten, and appeared to be in visible

distress. Prosecutors confirmed the material included five category A images, the most serious level under UK law, along with seven category B and four category C images.

The court heard that Robins had used Telegram and WhatsApp messaging apps to access and view the material. Some of the images had been stored in the phone's gallery, while others had been retrieved from thumbnail previews. Deliberate search terms had been used, and although some files had been deleted, they were recovered during the investigation.

During a police interview, Robins admitted to participating in a group chat focused on adult pornography with around 150 global members. He claimed to have seen child abuse content there, but could not explain how the material ended up saved on his phone. He also told officers he was not in the area when the images were downloaded, a claim later disproved by evidence gathered in the investigation.

The prosecution, led by Annelise Haugstad, outlined how the content had been deliberately accessed and some of it downloaded to Robins' device. She confirmed that the child victims in some of the images were clearly in emotional distress.

Robins was represented in court by defence barrister Tabitha Buck, who said the defendant had no prior convictions and had pleaded guilty on the day his trial was due to start. Buck told the court that Robins was battling addiction issues at the time of the offences, stating: "He owned his own business and was working as a roofer and in cladding. He had a partner and three children and was the sole provider for the family. He resorted to drinking alcohol and taking cocaine. He was quite addicted to adult pornography and was becoming desensitised to that and was seeking more extreme sources."

Judge Robinson imposed a 10-month prison sentence, suspended for 18 months. Robins was also ordered to carry out 80 hours of unpaid work and complete 30 days of rehabilitation activity requirements. Additionally, a five-year Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO) was put in place, and he must register as a sex offender for the next 10 years.

The sentencing has raised concerns once again about how courts handle offences involving child abuse material, particularly in cases where the offender cites personal struggles such as addiction. While the offences were committed during a period of substance misuse, the deliberate nature of the searches and the content involved led to a serious investigation by law enforcement.