

# Man gets 18-year prison term for molesting Glen Ellyn girl

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Buzz up!

A former homeless man will have a permanent address for the next 18 years for molesting an 8-year-old Glen Ellyn child after her family offered him shelter, a judge ruled Tuesday.

DuPage Circuit Judge Kathryn Creswell sentenced Anthony P. Jackson to the prison term on predatory criminal sexual assault charges. Jackson pleaded guilty to the felony last summer.

Prosecutor Joseph Lindt said Jackson assaulted the child April 30, 2007, after taking her into the basement of a house on the 600 block of North Park Boulevard while watching her as her two siblings played video games.

The child's parents knew Jackson for almost a year while both lived in homeless shelters. A builder had allowed the family to live in the house until it was torn down. The child's parents offered to let Jackson and his ex-wife stay with them temporarily.

The girl's parents wrote a letter to the judge explaining the harm their once-trusted friend inflicted upon their innocent child.

"This case has turned our lives upside down," they wrote. "He ruined her innocence and traumatized her. She is still in counseling and probably will be for some time. She talks about it every day. She has nightmares. She wakes up screaming."

They added: "We thought we knew him. We trusted this man with our children and this is the thanks we get. We never imagined he would do something like this."

Jackson faced six to 30 years in prison. Lindt sought a 22-year prison term. The defense attorney, Tony Coco, a senior assistant DuPage County public defender, asked for a six-year sentence.

Coco noted Jackson's difficult past. Jackson grew up in foster homes. He was molested as a child. A psychological evaluation showed he had some brain damage and low intelligence.

But the judge could not ignore Jackson's criminal past. He had two prior stints in prison and still was on parole for a 2004 burglary when this crime occurred. None of his earlier crimes were sex related.

Jackson apologized Tuesday for hurting the child and said he had no excuse for his behavior. He asked for help in prison to deal with his mental issues.

He has remained in the DuPage County jail since May 1, 2007, on a \$1.25 million bond. He must serve 85 percent of the 18-year prison term before being eligible for parole.