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Alberta's Court of Appeal has sided with a Crown prosecutor and increased the sentence for a Taber man convicted of Internet luring and child pornography charges.

The Court of Appeal sentenced Curtis David Paradee to a total of 18 months in jail, 15 months more than he was sentenced to last year by provincial court judge Derek Redman. Alberta's highest court agreed with Crown prosecutor Nadine Nesbitt that the original 90-day intermittent jail sentence for accessing child pornography and the 18-month conditional sentence for luring a child under the age of 18 were unfit sentences. Instead, the Court of Appeal sentenced Paradee to six months in jail for accessing child pornography and 12 months for Internet luring, to be served consecutively.

And while those were the sentences recommended by the Crown, the appeals court was prepared to go even higher.

"The Crown at trial and on appeal took the position that 12 months incarceration followed by lengthy probation was a reasonable sentence on the luring charge having regard to the guilty plea," Justice Marina Paperny wrote in her judgment. "In my view, a sentence in excess of 12 months would have been appropriate for this count."

She would have given a harsher sentence for the other charge, as well.

"I agree with the submissions of Crown counsel that the 90-day intermittent sentence imposed for this offence is demonstrably unfit," Paperny said. "Were it not for the position adopted by the Crown, I would be inclined to impose a sentence of 12 months."

Paradee, a father of three and former chairman of the Taber Police Commission, pleaded guilty to the charges a year ago and was sentenced May 22, 2012. Paradee admitted to posing online as a 20-year-old man and getting a 16-year-old girl to perform sex acts for him multiple times via a web cam in 2010. The girl, who can't be identified under a court-ordered publication ban, was 15 when the Internet relationship began.

Paradee's lawyer, Doug Carle, said Wednesday while he respects the Court of Appeal's decision, he still feels Judge Redman's sentence was the appropriate disposition. He suggested the higher court has set a new precedent by saying conditional sentences in these types of cases are only appropriate in extreme circumstances.

Carle said it's too early to determine whether Paradee will appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, but he thinks it's unlikely. He suggested the new sentence imposed by the Court of Appeal may actually turn out to be less onerous.

Carle pointed out that even though Paradee's original 18-month conditional sentence order subjected him to 12 months of strict house arrest followed by six months of curfew, he could, under the new sentence, be released from jail before his former conditional sentence order would have expired. He suggested the Court of Appeal's decision is based on the belief that actual jail time is more of a punishment than house arrest.

Carle's not convinced.

In her judgment, concurred by justices J. D. Bruce McDonald and Brian O'Ferrall, Paperny noted the sentencing judge focused almost entirely on the potential for Paradee's rehabilitation, to the almost complete exclusion of any consideration of the effects his conduct had on the victim.

“He touched on but did not explore the victim’s evidence and that of her parents as to the consequences this crime had on her health. It is clear from the victim impact statements that this young woman has experienced serious psychological damage, leading her to self harm, self medication and potentially self destruction. The effect on her parents has also been profoundly damaging. The sentencing judge gave surprisingly little, if any, consideration to these long-term and possibly permanent effects.”

The judgment also said a non-custodial sentence would not satisfy the principles of sentencing and would not be proportionate to the circumstances of either the offence or the offender.

“The respondent’s criminal conduct was deliberate. It was planned, and took place over a period of several months. The respondent was aware of the victim’s age. He purposely lied to her about his age in order to obtain and then maintain her trust to the point where she was willing to conduct sexual acts for him over a webcam. The circumstances of the offence, and the paramount sentencing objectives of denunciation and deterrence, demand a custodial sentence for this serious conduct.”

The Court of Appeal also increased Paradee’s probation to three years from the two years he was given at his original sentencing.