



NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 2, 2026

FORMER WARRENS COUPLE SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR CHILD SEX CRIMES

SPARTA, Wis. – Megan M. Schmitz, 40, was sentenced to 1.5 years in prison by Monroe County Circuit Court Judge Richard Radcliffe, and Justin D. Lake, 45, was sentenced to 10 years in prison by Judge Todd Ziegler for their perpetration of child sex crimes, announced District Attorney Kevin Croninger. Following release from prison, Schmitz will be supervised by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) for 4.5 years, and Lake will be supervised for 20 years. Both will be required to register as sexual offenders.

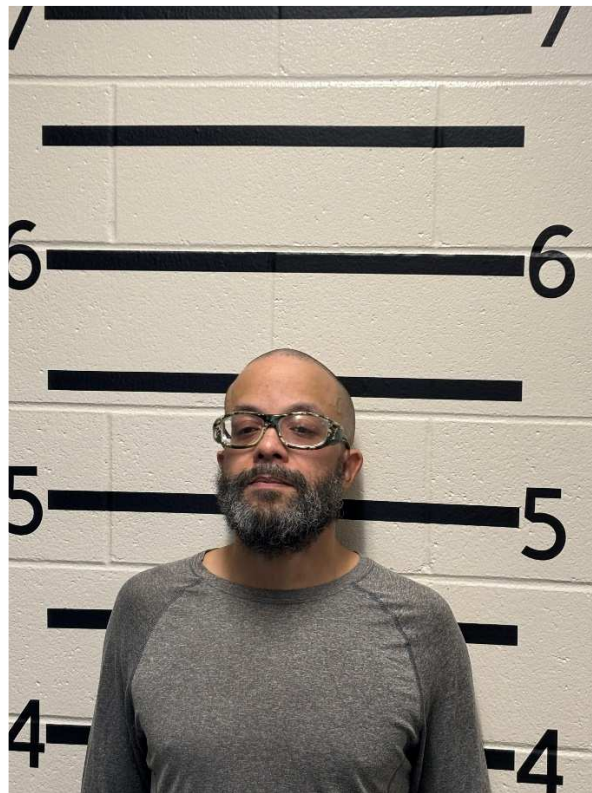
Court documents indicate Lake was charged with repeatedly sexually assaulting a child from the time the child was 8 to 10 years old. Schmitz was charged for her actions during the first assault of the child by Lake. Lake was also charged with sexually assaulting a 17-year-old child. Lake was convicted of three (3) counts of incest with a child and one (1) count of child enticement. He faced a sentence of up to 90 years of confinement. Schmitz was convicted of causing a child to view sexual activity and failure to protect a child. She faced up to 15 years of confinement.

The DOC recommended a sentence of nine (9) years for Lake and one (1) year for Schmitz. The District Attorney's Office argued Lake should be sentenced to 55 years in prison, an effective life sentence for him, citing the seriousness of Lake's repeated conduct and the danger he posed because of that conduct and his criminal history which included a conviction for manslaughter of a two-year-old child. The prosecution acknowledged Schmitz's cooperation with the investigation and prosecution strengthened the case against Lake and recommended a prison sentence of six (6) years for Schmitz.

The case was investigated by Deputy Jessica Meyer of the Juneau County Sheriff's Office and Detective John Brose of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office. They were assisted by the Juneau County Department of Human Services, law enforcement in the State of Washington, and Stepping Stones Child Advocacy Center in La Crosse. The case was prosecuted by Chief Assistant District Attorney Sarah Skiles with assistance from the trial team in the Monroe County District Attorney's Office. Skiles states, "The investigators remained committed to pursuing the truth over an extended investigation, and this case was possible because a victim had the courage to speak up. Our office will never tolerate sexual abuse of children. We are committed to aggressively prosecuting anyone that sexually assaults a child in Monroe County."



Megan M. Schmitz
Photo: Monroe County Sheriff's Office



Justin D. Lake
Photo: Monroe County Sheriff's Office

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