

Russia Wants to Punish Couple

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Russia will seek tougher punishment for an American couple convicted of the involuntary manslaughter of a 7-year-old boy they adopted from Chelyabinsk, authorities said Saturday.

Michael and Nanette Craver of York county, Pennsylvania, were sentenced in a U.S. court on Friday to the 19 months they have already spent in prison for the 2009 head-injury death of their adopted son Nathaniel, formerly Ivan Skorobogatov.

Russia's Investigative Committee said in a statement that it will seek an international arrest warrant for the Cravers and prove that the murder was brutal and premeditated.

"That's the opinion the prosecutors in the U.S. court stick to, and the Investigative Committee fully shares it," according to the statement.

Prosecutors had argued that the boy died from repeated blows to the head, but offered no theory at the trial about which parent delivered them.

The Cravers insist that the boy suffered from fetal alcohol syndrome and attachment disorders. They claimed that he ran headlong into a stove the night before they found him

unconscious.

Defense lawyers said the couple had taken Nathaniel to numerous doctors and therapists because of the bizarre "self-abuse" that left him badly bruised. Prosecutors, though, said they often failed to follow through on the treatment and therapy.

Russia's Foreign Ministry criticized the verdict as "shocking" and irresponsible. Russian authorities say that at least 17 Russian children have died in domestic violence incidents in their American families.

A Tennessee woman stoked tensions last year when she sent an allegedly violent 7-year-old boy she had adopted back to Moscow alone — with a note about his problems.

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