

Russian Fitness Coach Sentenced to 8 Years for Pedophilia, Denies Allegations

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A fitness coach in Russia's fourth-largest city has been sentenced to a lengthy prison term for pedophilia in a case that has drawn controversy due to security footage that critics say absolves the suspect.

A 20-minute surveillance video [showed](#) Alexei Sushko filling out paperwork on a couch in his gym while a 7-year-old girl is seen sitting on the opposite side of the couch. Yekaterinburg-based media [reported](#) that her stepfather stormed into the gym later that evening in November 2017, saying the girl claimed that a man had fondled himself and showed her his private parts.

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A Yekaterinburg court convicted Sushko for pedophilia and sentenced him to eight years in a maximum-security prison, the local edition of the Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid [reported](#) Thursday.

“This is lawful lawlessness,” his wife was quoted as saying in court after the hearing, while Sushko himself [vowed](#) to appeal the sentence.

The controversial incident has drawn the attention of ex-Yekaterinburg mayor Yevgeny Roizman, who in March criticized the trial as “savagery.”

“I was struck that the judge refused to watch the video,” he was [quoted](#) as saying by the e1.ru news website. “It shows that he didn’t even pay attention to the girl, he didn’t even reflect on who was sitting next to him.”

Prosecutors, who sought a sentence of 12.5 years, reportedly argued that the coach’s “manspreading” pose and a clipboard over his crotch hid his alleged act of masturbation. Investigators claimed the act was proven by the fact that Sushko later grabbed his cellphone with two fingers.

The convicted coach and his wife allege he was framed by his competitors.

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