

**LOCAL & REGION**

# Two sent to prison on sodomy charges

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Two Wiregrass men were sent to prison last week on charges they sodomized children younger than 18, according to authorities.

Gary Russell, 31, of Enterprise was sentenced to 12 years in a state prison on Thursday after he pleaded blind to second-degree sodomy. According to Dale

County District Attorney Kirke Adams, Russell sodomized a 12-year-old boy for more than year before the incidents were reported to a family member.

Russell faced between two and 20 years in prison.

In a separate case, Tony Lashawn Hayes, 20, of Daleville was sentenced to serve 21 years in prison on Thursday for first-degree sodomy after a jury convicted him

of sodomizing a special needs 16-year-old on one occasion.

Adams said that sentence is to run consecutively after a 10-year-burglary sentence in Houston County in which Hayes was on probation at the time he was arrested for sodomy.

Adams praised the efforts of the victim in Russell's case for coming forward to report the abuse and encouraged others to do

the same.

"The reason we had a conviction was because the victim was brave and strong and willing enough to step up to the perpetrator," Adams said.

"Hopefully, his bravery may give others the courage they need to come forward."

David Robinson, attorney for both Hayes and Russell, declined comment Monday.