

Former Whittier police officer, La Mirada Pop Warner coach sentenced for sexually abusing children

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WHITTIER - A former Whittier police officer and La Mirada Pop Warner football coach pleaded no contest Thursday to five counts of molesting five children, while victims' family members spoke of feeling betrayed by a trusted community member.

Paul Ayala, 42, of Whittier, was sentenced at Whittier court house to 24 years in state prison on four counts of continual sexual abuse of a child and one count of lewd act upon a child, according to court documents.

"We loved you," said the aunt of one of the children. "We trusted you not just with our hearts but with our most prized possessions - our children."

Ayala wept and said in a statement he was sorry.

"I was a victim, too," he said. "I know the hurt."

Ayala was convicted of sexually molesting four boys and one girl between July 2007 and January of this year, according to court documents.