




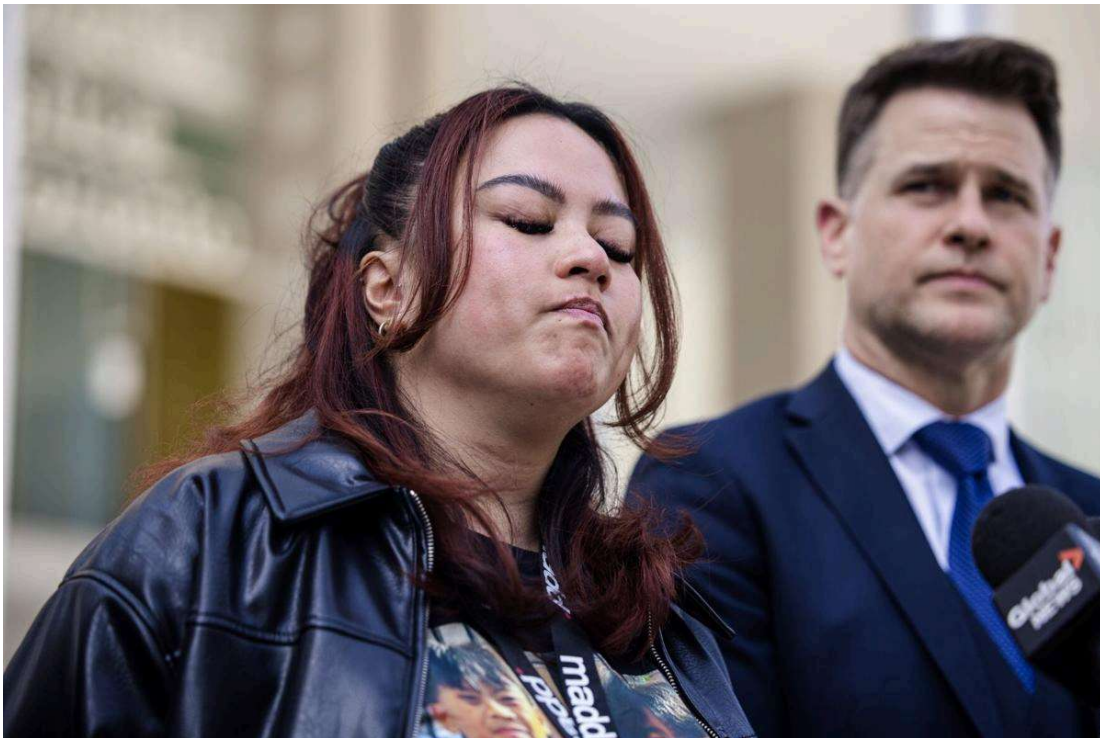
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# 'We need to strengthen our justice system': Mother of three children killed in drunk-driving crash laments driver's eight-year sentence

Ethan Lehouillier from Georgetown, pleaded guilty to three charges of impaired driving causing death and three charges of impaired driving causing bodily harm.

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Jade Galve speaks to the media after Ethan Lehouillier, the drunk driver who killed three of her children, was sentenced to eight years.

Nick Lachance/Toronto Star

By Raju Mudhar Staff Reporter

A young man who killed three children last year in a drunk-driving crash was handed an eight-year prison term Monday — a sentence the victims' mother said falls far short of recognizing the devastation caused by his actions.

In sentencing [Ethan Lehouillier](#), Toronto Justice Kim Crosbie said she had given consideration to the 20-year-old's remorse and chances for rehabilitation, but acknowledged that there will be no end to the ripple effects of his crimes.

For Jade Galve, who held her dying daughter in her arms last May, words of apology from the driver haven't been enough.

"He did give an apology, but I don't accept it, truthfully," said Galve, speaking outside the court. "He doesn't deserve a second chance. My children were killed on impact. They never had a chance.

"We need to strengthen our justice system with harsher penalties for impaired driving, so people are aware and make better decisions before getting behind that wheel."

### The deadly crash

The crash occurred in the early hours of May 18, when Jade Galve and her family were stopped near Highway 401 at Renforth Drive.

Lehouillier ran a red light and slammed into the family's van at 170 kilometres per hour, and with such force that it rolled over. His blood-alcohol level was more than twice the legal limit.



Lawyer Michael Coristine speaks to the media beside Jade Galve, mother of the three children killed by Ethan Lehouillier, who slammed into a family car last May and killed three children while driving drunk.

Nick Lachance Toronto Star

The impact immediately killed [Mya Laviña, 6](#), [Jace Laviña, 13](#), and [Ramone Laviña, 15](#). Galve and her 10-year-old child, Avery, spent five days in the hospital with multiple injuries, as did Galve's partner, Akash Paladugu, who had been driving.

[Lehouillier, who's from Georgetown, pleaded guilty](#) to three charges of impaired driving causing death and three charges of impaired driving causing bodily harm.

"Today, this courtroom is filled with mourning relatives and friends whose lives will never be the same," the judge said Monday, reading from her decision. "Mr. Lehouillier's future will be disfigured by a dreadful feeling of guilt that will never dissipate."

'We need to strengthen our justice system': Mother of three children killed in drunk-driving crash laments driver's eight-year sentence  
**'Our lives are changed forever'**



The crash claimed the lives of three members of the Laviña-Galve family, from left: Jace, 13, Mya, six, and Ramone, 15.

Provided by the Lavina-Galve family

After the sentence, Galve and her partner, Paladugu, spoke with the media. She suggested she had hoped Lehouillier would get eight years for each child's death, to be served consecutively.

Galve said that her family is relieved that this chapter is over, and said she and Paladugu are focused on Avery, the child who survived the crash.

At the sentencing recommendations in February, 35 people, including family and friends, gave victim-impact statements. Galve said that she remembered [“every single detail” of the incident](#), including holding her dying daughter in her arms [moments after the crash](#).



Ethan Lehouillier, 19, of Georgetown, Ont. appeared briefly in a Toronto courtroom in May 2025 in this file courtroom sketch.

Pam Davies for the Toronto Star file illustration

“Our lives are changed forever. Because of one selfish decision, they are not here,” she said. “Their future has been taken away from them.”

Lehouillier’s defence lawyer, Christopher Avery, called his client extremely remorseful.

“(He’s) devastated. ... He’s taken responsibility for this from the minute he was arrested,” said Avery.

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During court submissions in February, Lehouillier addressed the family of his victims, saying, “I can’t imagine what you have to go through because of me. ... I don’t have a moment where I don’t think about your family and so many innocent people who have suffered because of me.

“I am so ashamed. But I will do my best to be better and ultimately be a voice so that this doesn’t happen to another innocent family again, if I can.”

On Monday, Lehouillier wore a button-down short sleeve shirt in the prisoner’s box while the judge read her decision. His parents were in the gallery.

Assistant Crown attorney Jay Spare said case law lays out a range of between eight and 12 years for similar impaired driving cases in which people were killed.

In handing down the sentence, Crosbie said she had looked at previous cases, including Marco Muzzo, a 29-year-old who drove impaired in 2015 and killed four people and received a 10-year sentence.

Lehouillier will be prohibited from having a driver's licence for 20 years.



Raju Mudhar is a Toronto-based reporter for the Star covering breaking news. Reach him via email: [rmudhar@thestar.ca](mailto:rmudhar@thestar.ca)

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