



Department of Justice

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CALIFORNIA MAN SENTENCED TO FOUR YEARS IN PRISON FOR ATTEMPTING TO EXTORT CHILD PORNOGRAPHY FROM MINOR

WASHINGTON – A Fremont, Calif., man was sentenced yesterday to four years in prison and to pay a \$20,000 fine for possessing child pornography and attempting to extort additional child pornography images of an underage girl whom he harassed via the social networking website Facebook, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Melinda Haag of the Northern District of California.

James Dale Brown, 28, pleaded guilty on Feb. 2, 2011, before U.S. District Court Judge Phyllis J. Hamilton in the Northern District of California. In pleading guilty, Mr. Brown admitted that from December 2008 through April 2009, under the username “Bob Lewis,” he repeatedly contacted a girl he knew to be 14 years old via her Facebook webpage. Prior to contacting the victim, Brown had obtained a revealing photograph of the victim. Brown informed the victim that he had this photograph, and others, and suggested that he would delete all the pictures of her “from the Internet” only if she sent him a video of herself engaging in sexually explicit conduct. To force her to send such a video, Brown threatened to expose explicit images of the victim then in his possession to the victim’s friends, who were also minors. Despite Brown’s consistent harassment, the victim resisted his efforts for several months. To carry out his threats, on April 18, 2009, Brown sent two Internet links to the victim’s friend, also a minor, which directed the victim’s friend to an explicit image of the victim. On April 23, 2009, FBI agents executed a search warrant on Brown’s Fremont residence. Brown was arrested on Aug. 26, 2010.

This is the first case involving the attempted extortion of a minor for child pornography via a social networking website, such as Facebook, to be prosecuted in the Northern District of California.

The case was prosecuted by Trial Attorney Mi Yung Park of Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) in the Justice Department’s Criminal Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Joshua Hill of the Northern District of California. The case was investigated by the FBI.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys’ Offices and the Criminal Division’s CEOS, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and

prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

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