

Department of Justice

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FORMER TEACHER SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS IN PRISON FOR PRODUCTION AND POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

BUFFALO, N.Y.--U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Timothy Bek, 25, of West Seneca, N.Y., who was convicted of production and possession of child pornography, was sentenced to 360 months in prison followed by lifetime supervised release by U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Maura K. O'Donnell, who handled the case, stated that the defendant, a former teacher at a number of area schools, posed as a female teenager on a social networking website. Bek used the fictitious identity to make contact with underage victims, some of whom were students in the schools where Bek taught. Once contact was made, the defendant persuaded the victims to take explicit photos and videos of themselves. Bek further convinced the victims to send these images over the internet and via text messaging. The images of these underage victims were subsequently found on computers owned by the defendant.

The images were discovered by law enforcement during the execution of a search warrant in connection with the arrest of the defendant's brother, Jason Bek. In December 2011, Jason Bek pleaded guilty to coercion and enticement of a minor and receipt of child pornography and was sentenced to 144 months in prison.

"This case shines a bright light on a very serious problem," said U.S. Attorney Hochul. "Our children can encounter danger each and every time they log onto a computer or pick up a cell phone. Predators can be highly educated, cunning, extremely manipulative and willing to go to any lengths in order to target and destroy the innocence of a child. For these reasons, it's crucial for parents to be vigilant in monitoring exactly what their kids are doing online and on the phone. Social media provides many great benefits but it also attracts

those seeking to victimize children. The bottom line, the best defense is to be proactive and prevent such would be criminals from gaining access to our children."

Online Tips for Parents:

1. With summer right around the corner, and extra time of their hands, some kids will undoubtedly be spending more time on the computer. Parents need to monitor that computer usage, including time spent online and the Web sites their children are visiting.
2. It is a good idea to keep the family computer in a common area rather than in a child's bedroom.
3. Parent should discuss with their children what is appropriate to post online and what is not, such as information about themselves and pictures.
4. Parents should know what other access their children may have to a computer such as the library and friends' houses.
5. Parent must encourage their children to let them know if they are approached by a stranger online, someone they don't know, especially if they are scared or confused.

For more information, parents can visit netsmartz411.com.

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 United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The sentencing is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Cyber Crime Task Force, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christopher M. Piehota, the West Seneca Police Department, under the direction of Chief Edward Gehen, the Cheektowaga Police Department, under the direction of Chief David Zack, and the Niagara County Sheriff's Department, under the direction of Sheriff James Votour. CEOS Attorney Keith Becker assisted in the prosecution of the case.

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