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News Release

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Hermantown man sentenced for possessing child pornography

The federal government has made it a priority to protect children from the potential dangers of the Internet, and one example is its case against a 43-year-old Hermantown man charged, convicted and sentenced for possession of child pornography.

On Feb. 9 in Duluth, United States District Court Judge John Tunheim sentenced Jeffrey Lyle Fossum to 78 months in prison and supervised release for life. Fossum was indicted on April 11, 2007, and pleaded guilty on Feb. 28, 2008.

According to Fossum's plea agreement, on July 20, 2006, he knowingly possessed more than 600 images and video files that contained visual depictions of minors engaging in sexually explicit activity. During the execution of a search warrant of Fossum's residence, officers seized a computer and numerous compact discs that contained the material, which depicted many children under the age of 12.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Hermantown Police Department and the Minnesota Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathan Petterson.

This case is part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC), a national 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, PSC 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 PSC, visit

www.projectsafchildhood.gov.