



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**FORMER AIR FORCE SERGEANT PLEADS GUILTY TO  
FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGE**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court, Christopher Garcia, 34, of Clovis, N.M., pled guilty to receipt of a visual depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales, Curry County Sheriff Matt Murray, and Acting Special Agent in Charge Dennis A. Ulrich, II, Homeland Security Investigations.

Garcia was charged in July 2012, in a six-count indictment with three counts of receipt of child pornography, and three counts of possession of child pornography. According to the indictment, Garcia received and possessed child pornography between Dec. 12, 2011 and Jan. 17, 2012, in Curry County, N.M. During that period, Garcia was a sergeant with the U.S. Air Force assigned to the 16<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Squadron at Cannon Air Force Base.

This morning, Garcia pled guilty to Count 2 of the indictment, a receipt of child pornography charge. Garcia's plea agreement states that Garcia was charged as the result of an undercover investigation that began in Jan. 2012, and targeted those who possess, receive and distribute child pornography. As a result of the investigation, a search warrant to seize computers and computer-related media was executed at Garcia's residence on Jan. 17, 2012.

In his plea agreement, Garcia admits that, while the search warrant was executed, he voluntarily participated in a recorded interview during which he acknowledged that he had been downloading and viewing child pornography for approximately two years. Garcia also acknowledged that a forensic examination of his computers and computer-related media disclosed thousands of images and videos consistent with child pornography.

At sentencing, Garcia faces a term of imprisonment of not less than five years and not more than 20 years. Garcia also faces up to a lifetime of supervised release, and will be required to register as a sex offender. Garcia has been in federal custody since his arrest on July 26, 2012, and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

The case was investigated by the Curry County Sheriff's Office, Homeland Security Investigations and the New Mexico Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Charlyn E. Rees. It was brought as part of Project Safe

Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, 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 <http://www.justice.gov/psc/>.

The case also was brought as a part of the New Mexico Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force's mission, which is to locate, track, and capture Internet child sexual predators and Internet child pornographers in New Mexico. There are 64 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies associated with the ICAC Task Force, which is funded by a grant administered by the New Mexico Attorney General's Office. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact federal or local law enforcement.

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