

Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 19, 2012
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DANSVILLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ENTICING A MINOR TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that William F. Chappell, 42, of Dansville, N.Y., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge David G. Larimer, to enticing a minor to engage in criminal sexual activity. The charge carries a minimum penalty of 10 years in prison, a maximum penalty of life, a fine of \$250,000 or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Marisa J. Miller, who is handling the case, stated that between March 2009 and May 2009, the defendant enticed a child who had not yet reached 18 years old to engage in sexual activity. Chappell utilized a cellular phone and, through a series of text messages and exchanges, persuaded the child to engage in sexual activity. As a result of the defendant's conduct, the child produced more than one image of child pornography. Chappell knew that the child was not yet 18 years old when he communicated with and enticed the child.

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 plea was the culmination of an investigation on the part of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of James C. Spero and Officers of the Dansville Police Department, under the direction of Chief Charles Perkins.

Sentencing is scheduled for January 16, at 10 a.m. before Judge Larimer.

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