



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

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Former Hanover County Sheriff's Deputy Sentenced for Receiving Child Pornography

(Richmond, VA) - Gary Alan Rinehults, age 63, of Mechanicsville, Virginia, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Henry E. Hudson to 121 months in federal prison for receiving child pornography. Rinehults pled guilty to the charge on July 24, 2006. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Charlie Cunningham, Special-Agent-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Sheriff Stanley Cook, Hanover County Sheriff's Department, announced the sentence.

According to court documents, in October 2004, law enforcement officers received a report that Rinehults, who was then a Hanover County Deputy Sheriff, was sexually abusing his adoptive minor daughter. On October 29, 2004, officers executed a state search warrant on Rinehults' home, seizing his computer. A forensic examination of the Rinehults' computer revealed dozens of still and moving image files depicting child pornography.

In April 2005, Rinehults pled guilty in the Hanover County Circuit Court to several offenses involving the sexual abuse of his adopted daughter, which occurred over a four year period. He was sentenced to approximately 16 years in prison. Judge Hudson ordered that the federal sentence for child pornography run concurrently to this state time.

In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafefchildhood.gov/.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Hanover County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Elizabeth C. Wu prosecuted the case for the United States.

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