



*Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Kentucky*

PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For Information Contact
**(859) 233-2661
Extension 104**

Lexington, KY - Gregory F. Van Tatenhove, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, Andrew G. Oosterbaan, Section Chief, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, United States Department of Justice, Norman Jarvis, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, Louisville Division, and Thomas E. Kelley of the Ashland Police Department jointly announced today that **JOHN E. ESTEP**, age 54, of Ashland, Kentucky, pled guilty in federal court today to two counts of producing child pornography in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2251; one count of conspiracy to receive child pornography in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252; six counts of receipt of child pornography in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252; and one count of possession of child pornography in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252.

The defendant entered his plea of guilty while a jury was waiting to be selected for his trial, which was to begin at 9:00 this morning. The defendant admitted taking sexually explicit pictures of two eight year old females and possessing the pictures on his home computer. Additionally, the defendant acknowledged that he received numerous sexually explicit images of children over the internet from various child pornography websites.

The investigation leading up to the charges and plea was handled by Detective Scott Sexton of the Ashland Police Department, Special Agent Christopher Prewitt of the United States Secret Service and Detective Shannon Stone of the Winchester Police Department.

The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced on March 29, 2005 at 11:00 an. The defendant faces a possible sentence of up to 30 years imprisonment on counts 1 and 2; not more than 20 years imprisonment on counts 3-9; and not more than 10 years imprisonment on count 10. Based on applicable minimum mandatory sentences on counts 1-9, the defendant was advised by the Hon. David L. Bunning that his minimum sentence will be 65 years. The defendant faces up to 210 years in federal prison as a result of his plea. Additionally, after sentencing, the defendant will be transferred to state custody where he faces multiple counts of rape and sodomy of a child.

The case was prosecuted by Trial Attorney Jennifer Toritto Leonardo of the United States Department of Justice, Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and AUSA Mark Wohlander of the United States Attorney's Office, Lexington, Kentucky.