



## U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Arkansas*

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CONTACT: Bud Cummins  
United States Attorney  
501-340-2650

### **GREENWOOD MAN PLEADS GUILTY: ATTEMPTING TO ENTICE MINOR TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL CONDUCT**

**Little Rock** - Bud Cummins, the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, announced today the guilty plea of Steven Gossett, 31, of Greenwood, Arkansas. Mr. Gossett pled guilty before the Honorable William R. Wilson, Jr. to one count of attempted enticement of a minor to engage in sexual conduct in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2422(b).

In June 2004, Steven Gossett, utilizing the screen name "follower24," approached a person he believed to be a 14 year old female in a Yahoo® chat room. During the first conversation, Gossett engaged in a sexual conversation and discussed meeting for sexual contact.

For the next few weeks, "follower24" continued to communicate with a person he believed to be a 14 year old female. In the chats Gossett would discuss sex, what he wanted to do with her sexually, and solicited her to take sexually graphic pictures of herself and mail them to him.

During each chat Gossett discussed wanting to have sex with the person he believed to be a 14 year old female and requested that she travel to Fort Smith, Arkansas for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity. A meeting was scheduled for August 9, 2004 at the Wal-Mart in Fort Smith. Gossett told her what he would be wearing, what type of vehicle he would be driving, and stated that he would bring condoms.

Unknown to Gossett, the person with whom he was scheduled to meet on August 9, 2004 was not a 14 year old female at all, but instead an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. On August 9, 2004, Gossett arrived at the Wal-Mart as previously arranged and was arrested. He was wearing the clothing previously described, driving the vehicle he stated he would be driving, and condoms were located in the vehicle.

A sentencing date has been set for July 27, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. before Judge William R. Wilson, Jr. Gossett faces a sentence between 5 and 30 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and not more than 5 years supervised release according to the Sentencing Guidelines.

“Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced on February 15, 2006 the creation of an initiative called “Project Safe Childhood,” stated Cummins. “Across the country, federal agents and prosecutors will vigorously pursue any case involving exploitation of children.”

This case was investigated by the Innocent Images Task Force of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and was prosecuted by Karen Whatley, Assistant United States Attorney.

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