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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 5, 2011
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ELKHART MAN SENTENCED TO 28 YEARS FOR PRODUCTION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

South Bend, Indiana -- The United States Attorney's Office announced that:

John Harris, 46, of Elkhart, Indiana, was sentenced by Judge Robert Miller, Jr. to 326 months imprisonment and lifetime of supervised release after pleading guilty to the felony offense of the sexual exploitation of children.

The investigation into Harris's conduct began in September 2010, when law enforcement working in an undercover capacity used a publicly available peer-to-peer file sharing program to download from a user multiple video files depicting children engaged in sexually explicit conduct. The results of an administrative subpoena issued to the internet service provider of the user identified the subscriber as John Harris. A federal search warrant was subsequently obtained and executed at Harris' residence in Elkhart, Indiana, where law enforcement found child pornography on his computer.

In his plea agreement Harris admitted that during August 2009, he induced and enticed Jane Doe No. 1, a minor, to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct. Specifically, he took sexually explicit photographs of Jane Doe No. 1 using his cell phone. He admitted that Jane Doe No. 1 was a minor that was under his care or supervisory control. Furthermore, one or more of these sexually explicit photographs of Jane Doe No. 1 were transmitted to another minor, Jane Doe No. 2 by texting them to her using his cell phone. The sentence was also based on the defendant's inducement and enticement of Jane Doe No. 2 and another minor, Jane Doe No. 3, to produce child pornography. It was further aggravated by the defendant's feigning incompetence for over a year, and his having placed images of acquaintances online that showed their faces superimposed on top of nude bodies.

This case was the result of an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Custom Office of Homeland Security Investigations. This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney John Maciejczyk.

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.