



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

**B. Todd Jones,
United States Attorney**

**Jeanne F. Cooney
Director of Community Relations
(612) 664-5611
email: jeanne.cooney@usdoj.gov**

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, May 13, 2011
WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/MN

Red Lake man indicted for sexually abusing two girls

A 21-year-old Red Lake man was recently indicted for allegedly sexually abusing two girls while on the Red Lake Indian Reservation. On May 2, 2011, Byron Keith Kingbird, Jr., was charged with one count of sexual abuse of a minor and one count of abusive sexual contact. Kingbird was arraigned earlier today in federal court in the District of Minnesota.

The indictment alleges that between January and February of 2009, Kingbird engaged in sexual contact with a girl younger than the age of 12. In addition, it alleges that during the same time period, Kingbird engaged in a sexual act with a second girl who was between the ages of 12 and 16. According to a law enforcement affidavit filed in the case, on January 14, 2010, the Red Lake Tribal Police Department was notified of a sexual abuse complaint filed by one of the victims. During the course of the police investigation, the second victim reported the sexual contact.

If convicted, Kingbird faces a potential maximum penalty of life in prison on the charge of abusive sexual contact and a potential maximum penalty of 15 years on the charge of sexual abuse of a minor. All sentences will be determined by a federal district court judge.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Red Lake Tribal Police Department, with assistance from the Family Advocacy Center in Bemidji. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David P. Steinkamp.

Because the Red Lake Indian Reservation is a federal-jurisdiction reservation, some of the crimes that occur there are investigated by the FBI in conjunction with the Red Lake Tribal Police Department. Those cases are prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.