



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

## **News Release**

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### **Bloomington man pleads guilty to possessing child pornography**

MINNEAPOLIS —Earlier today in federal court in St. Paul, a 21-year-old Bloomington man pleaded guilty to possessing child pornography. Sean Michael Kratz pleaded guilty to one count of possession of child pornography. Kratz, who was indicted on August 2, 2011, entered his plea before United States District Court Judge Susan Richard Nelson.

In his plea agreement, Kratz admitted that on June 16, 2010, he possessed numerous visual depictions of children engaged in sexually explicit conduct that he obtained and shared via the Internet.

For his crime, Kratz faces a potential maximum penalty of ten years in prison. Judge Nelson will determine his sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled. This case is the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David P. Steinkamp.

Presently, the Justice Department is funding a study concerning the correlation between involvement in child pornography and the hands-on sexual abuse of children. A 2008 study (The Butner Study) published in the Journal of Family Violence found that up to 80 percent of federal inmates incarcerated for possession, receipt, or distribution of child pornography also admitted to hands-on sexual abuse of children, ranging from touching to rape.

The U.S. Department of Justice is committed to combating the sexual exploitation of children, particularly via the Internet. In Fiscal Year 2010, 2,235 defendants pleaded guilty to federal child pornography charges, 2,222 of whom were sentenced to prison. In Fiscal Year 2009, 2,083 defendants were sentenced to prison on child pornography charges. For more information about these efforts, please visit the Department's Project Safe Childhood website, at [www.projectsafchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafchildhood.gov).

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