

Department of Justice

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WEBSTER MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ENTICING A MINOR

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Joshua Stewart, 23, of Webster, N.Y., pleaded guilty to using the facilities of interstate commerce to communicate with a minor in order to entice her to have sex with him. The plea, entered before U.S. District Judge Charles J. Siragusa, carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, a fine of \$500,000, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John J. Field, who handled the case, stated that on two separate occasions in 2010, the defendant used a cell phone to send text messages to a 13 year old minor to entice her into engaging in sexual acts with him.

"Here we have another case involving a young person who was victimized over a cellular telephone," said U.S. Attorney Hochul. "We continue to urge all parents and guardians to monitor the cell phone usage of all young people."

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.projectsafchildhood.gov.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, under the

direction of Special Agent in Charge James C. Spero and the New York State Police, Troop E, under the direction of Major Mark Koss.

Sentencing is scheduled for March 12, 2013, at 4:00 p.m. before Judge Siragusa.

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