



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Carter M. Stewart
Southern District of Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2010
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CONTACT: Fred Alverson
614-469-5715

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER SENTENCED TO 150 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR COERCION AND ENTICEMENT OF A MINOR

COLUMBUS – Michael Uberstine, 54, of Brook Park, Ohio, was sentenced in United States District Court here today to 150 months in prison for coercion and enticement of a minor, after attempting to elicit sex from a cyber task force officer posing as a 15 year old female.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio and the agencies participating in the Franklin County Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, announced the sentence handed down today by United States District Judge George C. Smith.

Uberstine pleaded guilty on May 5, 2010 to one count of coercion and enticement for using the Internet to attempt to persuade, induce or entice an individual who has not attained the age of 18 years, to engage in unlawful sexual activity.

According to the statement of facts filed in court, a task force officer patrolling the Internet encountered Uberstine in a Yahoo chat room, while posing as a 38 year-old female (“Molly”) who has a 15 year-old daughter (“Abby”). Uberstine chatted with “Molly” and “Abby” and inquired about meeting with the 15 year-old “Abby” for the purpose of engaging in sex. Uberstine expressed that he was concerned of being caught having sex with “Abby,” indicating he knew it was unlawful and that he could be arrested, but he persisted in trying to arrange a meeting to engage in sex with both “Molly” and “Abby.”

On April 6, 2010, Uberstine arranged to have “Molly” and “Abby” travel to meet with him two days later at the Damon’s restaurant in Middleburg Heights, OH, at approximately 5:00 PM. Uberstine arrived at the agreed location and was taken into custody on April 8, 2010. He has been in custody since his arrest.

Uberstine was previously convicted in June of 2008 in Wayne County, Ohio, of Importuning a Minor to Engage in Sexual Activity, and was a registered Tier I sex offender at the time of his arrest in this case.

Judge Smith ordered Uberstine to spend 13 years on supervised release, a form of probation, after he serves his federal prison term. Judge Smith also recommended Uberstine be placed in a Bureau of Prisons facility that provides sex offender treatment and that he receive such treatment while incarcerated.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. 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.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

Agencies participating in the Franklin County Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, led by Franklin County Sheriff Jim Karnes' office, include the police departments from Westerville, Upper Arlington and Columbus, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Stewart commended the investigation by Task Force agents, the Cuyahoga County deputies and Ohio ICAC officers for their participation in Uberstine's arrest in Middleburgh Heights, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Hunter, who prosecuted the case.

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