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NEW JERSEY MAN SENTENCED FOR CYBERSTALKING

PHILADELPHIA - Matthew Bean, 20, of Bergenfield, New Jersey, was sentenced today to 45 days in prison and five years probation for a case of cyberbullying that included sending sexually explicit photos of another person to that person's school on January 26, 2009 and posting them on his own online page. The defendant took part in a web chat about the victim and the photos that included references, by others, to shaming the victim into possibly committing suicide. Bean pleaded guilty to stalking on September 15, 2010.

In addition to the prison time, U.S. District Court Judge Anita Brody ordered Bean to post a message on the pertinent chat board to let people know that cyberbullying is a crime and that law enforcement will pursue those who commit it, serve five years of supervised release, and pay a fine of \$2,000.

"Technology has created new avenues for crime including many that target or involve children," said Memeger. "Today's sentence sends a message that we take crimes like cyberbullying and cyberstalking very seriously. People who attempt to harm others using the internet cannot hide in cyber space. Law enforcement will find them and seek to hold them accountable."

"We cannot, in 2011, underestimate the impact of bullying when it is enhanced by cyber means. Gone are the days of the proverbial "playground bully," as that playground has now expanded exponentially via the Internet," said Special Agent-in-Charge George C. Venizelos of the Philadelphia Division of the FBI. "The relative perceived anonymity of the Internet appears to empower individuals to say and do things they would not do in person."

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Michael L. Levy.

According to a report by the Office of Justice Program's Bureau of Justice Statistics, during a 12-month period, an estimated 3.4 million persons age 18 or older were victims of stalking. The study measured behaviors such as unwanted phone calls, sending unsolicited or unwanted letters or e-mails, following or spying on the victim, showing up at places without a legitimate reason, waiting at places for the victim, leaving unwanted items, presents or flowers and posting information or spreading rumors about the victim on the Internet, in a public place, or by word of mouth. Additional findings included that approximately one in four stalking victims reported some form of cyberstalking such as e-mail (83 percent); 30-percent of victims are stalked by a current or former intimate partner; females are nearly three times more likely to

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be victims of this crime; and nearly three in four stalking victims knew the offender in some capacity.

President Obama designated January as National Stalking Awareness Month. The Department of Justice commemorated this designation today as a means to help raise awareness about the signs and consequences of this crime. Resources and information related to stalking awareness month are located at [www.ovw.usdoj.gov](http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov) and the Stalking Resource Center's National Stalking Awareness Month website at [www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org](http://www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org).

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