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**FORMER CORRECTIONS OFFICER SENTENCED TO PRISON  
FOR POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

CHARLESTON, W.Va – Joseph Dwayne Valentine, 41, of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, was sentenced today to 70 months in prison for possessing child pornography. Valentine, who prior to his arrest worked as a correctional officer for the West Virginia Division of Corrections, pleaded guilty to the charge in May.

The conviction stems from an investigation conducted by agents with the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. In November 2007, agents seized computers and compact disks from Valentine's home in Gauley Bridge. A forensic analysis of the computers and disks revealed hundreds of images of child pornography. Special Agent Michael Fleener testified at the plea hearing that the records found in one of Valentine's computers indicated that Valentine had purchased child pornography videos from a website being operated out of Riga, Latvia.

United States District Judge Thomas E. Johnston, who stated that child pornography should be treated as "radioactive", sentenced Valentine near the high end of the advisory sentencing guideline range while considering Valentine's service in Desert Storm and his cooperation with investigators as mitigating factors.

Assistant United States Attorney Larry R. Ellis handled the prosecution.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about cases and related activities please visit [www.usdoj.gov/usao/wvs](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/wvs) and [www.projectsafchildhood.gov/](http://www.projectsafchildhood.gov/).

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