



THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



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## JUSTICE NEWS

### Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, September 15, 2015

## Retired Master Deputy Sheriff Sentenced to 20 Years in Prison for Child Pornography Charges

A retired master deputy sheriff was sentenced today to 20 years in prison for receiving, distributing and possessing child pornography, announced Assistant Attorney General Leslie R. Caldwell of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Wifredo A. Ferrer of the Southern District of Florida, Special Agent in Charge Alysa D. Erichs of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (ICE-HSI) Miami Field Division and Sheriff Ken J. Mascara of the St. Lucie County, Florida, Sheriff's Office.

Cameron Dean Bates, 50, of Port St. Lucie, Florida, was found guilty by a jury on June 11, 2015, of four counts of receipt of child pornography, one count of distribution of child pornography and one count of possession of child pornography. In addition to imposing the prison term, Chief U.S. District Judge K. Michael Moore of the Southern District of Florida ordered Bates to pay \$3,500 in restitution to a victim.

In March 2011, St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office detectives and members of the South Florida Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC) began an investigation using peer-to-peer (P2P) software. According to evidence presented at trial, investigators discovered that, between December 2010 and June 2012, several Internet protocol (IP) addresses linked to Bates in both St. Lucie County and Palm Beach County were used to download and share child pornography files. The trial evidence showed that a laptop computer recovered during a search of Bates' home contained numerous images and videos of child pornography, including at least one image depicting a child under the age of 12.

This case was investigated by the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office, the South Florida ICAC and ICE-HSI, with assistance from the Palm Beach County, Florida, Sheriff's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Reginald E. Jones of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) and Assistant U.S. Attorney Ben Widlanski of the Southern District of Florida.

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This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched by the Justice Department in May 2006 to combat the growing epidemic of child exploitation and abuse. Led by U.S. Attorney’s Offices and 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.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

15-1122

Criminal Division  
USAO - Florida, Southern  
*Updated September 15, 2015*

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