



Department of Justice

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UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE ANNOUNCES SENTENCE IN CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION CASE

Indianapolis man sentenced to 336 months for exploiting local minor females.

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS – Josh J. Minkler, the Acting United States Attorney, announced today the sentencing of an Indianapolis man for sexual exploitation of children, enticing minors and distribution of child pornography. Austin Williams 23, was sentenced to 336 months (28 years) by U.S. District Judge William T. Lawrence.

“This Office initiated Operation Community Watch over two years ago with an unwavering resolve to find and prosecute those who exploit our children,” Minkler said. “You are not anonymous online and if you engage in this type of behavior, you will be held accountable.”

Court documents indicate that on January 24, 2013, Austin Williams was arrested by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department and charged with the rape of a fifteen year old victim in Indianapolis. In executing a search warrant as part of their investigation, IMPD investigators searched the defendant's residence and located a cellular telephone. A search of that phone revealed hundreds of sexually explicit images depicting female minors.

A full forensic examination of the phone revealed that Williams had been engaging in a pattern of “sextortion” that targeted young women in the Indianapolis-area. Using fraudulent Facebook accounts that portrayed Williams as a young woman, the defendant would make contact with local female minors and attempt to elicit sexually explicit images from them by offering to “trade” self-made images. Often, Williams would obtain the telephone number of his victims, urging them via text messages to produce explicit images and videos of themselves.

Once these images or videos were produced and sent to the defendant, he would in many instances begin “sexting” the minors, posting the images on Facebook or threatening to do so. The victims would then be told that the only way to keep these images from being distributed to their friends and family would be through the creation of new images and videos for the defendant.

Through the use of these techniques, the defendant was able in many instances to coerce his victims into repeatedly exploiting themselves. In one troubling incident, the defendant continued to post images of a victim online even after she complied with the defendant’s requests. The victim was so distraught that she attempted suicide.

In addition, a number of victims were tricked into meeting up with the defendant, who they were told was a “brother” or “boyfriend” of the young woman they believed they were communicating with online. During these meetings, Williams would attempt to sexually assault the victims, or would actually engage in illicit sexual activity with them. In the case of his final victim, the government argued that Williams followed a fifteen year old female home after one of these arranged meetings and assaulted her outside her home.

According to Senior Litigation Counsel Steve DeBrotta and Trial Attorney Amy Larson of the DOJ Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, who prosecuted this case for the government, Williams faces lifetime supervised release when he completes his prison term.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC), a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. The greatest measure of the PSC program’s impact is the identification and rescue of child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Led nationally 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.projectsafechildhood.gov.

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