



Department of Justice

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Madison County Man Sentenced to 240 Months for Production of Child Pornography

FRANFORT, Ky. — A Richmond, Ky., man, Scotty Dale Johnson, 51, was sentenced on Thursday, to 240 months in federal prison, by U.S. District Judge Gregory Van Tatenhove, for production of child pornography.

According to Johnson's plea agreement, he created a Snapchat account, where he purported to be a teenage female. Using that account, Johnson then friended teenage boys, some of who he knew in real life and some he met online and engaged in sexual chatting with the boys. One victim, known by Johnson, was persuaded, induced, enticed, or coerced to send sexually explicit images of himself, via Snapchat, believing he was corresponding with a teenage female. The victim became suspicious that the account was fraudulent and eventually reported it to law enforcement.

Law enforcement eventually obtained a warrant for the Snapchat account and discovered that Johnson was corresponding with over 1000 different individuals, including several minor males. Johnson admitted that he attempted to, or did, persuade, entice, or coerce at least eight additional minor victims to produce sexually explicit images.

Johnson pleaded guilty in March 2021.

"This disgraceful conduct involved both predatory deception and sexual exploitation of a minor," said Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "Sadly, this case serves as a stark reminder of the serious risks minors face when online. That means we must all be diligent in protecting them and demonstrating safe online activity. Due to the work of our enforcement partners, fortunately, this case can also serve as a warning to those who engage in this conduct: the consequences will likely be a significant prison sentence."

"This case demonstrates the grave dangers that children face online, where predators can pretend to be anyone in order to target the most vulnerable among us," said Special Agent in Charge Jodi Cohen, FBI Louisville. "With this sentencing, we have removed a dangerous child predator from our community, and a clear message has been sent that those who seek to exploit children will be held accountable."

Under federal law, Johnson must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence. Upon his release from prison, he will be under the supervision of the U.S. Probation Office for life.

United States Attorney Shier; Special Agent in Charge Cohen; Col. Phillip Burnett, Commissioner, Kentucky State Police; and Chief Joe Monroe, University of Kentucky Police Department, jointly announced the sentence.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI, KSP, and the University of Kentucky Police Department. The United States was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Erin Roth.

This case was prosecuted as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. 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.projectsafchildhood.gov.

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