



# Department of Justice

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Eastern District of Texas

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## SMITH COUNTY MAN GUILTY OF SOLICITING MINOR

### *61-year-old Arranged Meeting with Child for Sex*

MARSHALL TX – United States Attorney Matthew D. Orwig announced today that a 61-year-old Tyler man has pleaded guilty to child exploitation charges in the Eastern District of Texas.

**ALI VAGEFI** admitted to attempted coercion and enticement of a minor before United States Magistrate Judge John D. Love today.

According to information presented in court, between July 21, 2006, and July 24, 2006, Vagefi communicated with a person he believed to be a minor within a Yahoo on-line chat room. Vagefi represented himself to be a 46-year-old male and the minor represented herself as a 14-year-old female named "Crissy" living in Murphy, Texas. Vagefi's chats with Crissy were sexually explicit and he scheduled a meeting with Crissy on July 25, 2006, in Murphy, for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with Crissy.

On July 22, 2006, Officer Kevin Carter of the Murphy Police Department was contacted by a volunteer with Perverted Justice. Perverted Justice is a private organization composed of volunteers that monitor Internet chat activities in an effort to detect and report persons utilizing the Internet for the purpose of preying upon children. This volunteer related that he was posing as a 14-year-old female child on the Internet in a chat room (using the screen name "Crissy") and that a "Mikejardi" had engaged in a sexually explicit conversation in which he was seeking to meet and have sex with Crissy. It was agreed that Officer Carter and this Perverted Justice volunteer would work together in an operation to identify and bring to justice "Mikejardi."

On July 24, 2006, the volunteer telephoned Officer Carter and reported that Mikejardi had been in the Yahoo chat room communicating with Crissy. Mikejardi solicited Crissy to meet at a convenience store in Murphy on July 25, 2006, for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity. The volunteer stated that in the on-line chat, he had asked for a stuffed toy animal from Mikejardi to be delivered at their meeting.

On July 25, 2006, Vagefi arrived at the convenience store in Murphy for the purpose of meeting with Crissy. He was in possession of a teddy bear stuffed animal and condoms. Vagefi was then arrested by Murphy Police.

Vagefi faces up to 30 years in federal prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.00. at sentencing. A sentencing date has not been set.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales launched 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 Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov/](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov/).

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Murphy Police Department and the Longview Police Department Internet Crimes Against Children Unit. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Gregg A. Marchessault.

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