



Department of Justice

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Southern District of Texas
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FORMER MISSION TEACHER SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

[MCALLEN, TX] Pedro Calderon III, of Mission, TX, has been sentenced to prison for possessing child pornography, United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle announced today.

Calderon, 42, a former Mission I.S.D. teacher and coach for ten years, was sentenced on Monday, Nov. 26, 2007, to 46 months in federal prison without parole to be followed by a two-year term of supervised release. The final sentence imposed includes enhancements or increases in the sentencing range based upon the court finding that Calderon used a computer to download child pornography, distributed images of child pornography to at least one individual, the number of images Calderon had in his possession, and the age of the victims in the images.

In July 2006, Calderon pleaded guilty to possessing child pornography obtained via the internet and admitted he had entered into a chat room and corresponded with a girl who he believed to be 14 years old. Unknown to Calderon, the 14-year-old girl was actually an undercover police officer operating a sting operation out of Irving, Texas. Calderon and the undercover officer corresponded with one another on numerous occasions via the internet. In one such contact, Calderon sent the officer a picture of an unknown naked female child. Further investigation lead to the identification of Calderon and the execution of a search warrant at his residence in Mission, Texas. Forensic examination of the computer and computer disks seized found 28 images of children under the age of 12 engaged in sexually explicit conduct. According to the testimony by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent given in court yesterday, Calderon's computer had been "cleaned out" by a technician only three days before the execution of the search warrant. Calderon claimed he had done the "clean out" because he believed he may have become the victim of identity theft. However, the agent testified that their investigation showed Calderon had been tipped about the search warrant by a friend of a Mission Police Department employee.

At sentencing, the Government presented evidence that at least one of the still images depicted an adult performing a sexual act with a child under the age of 12 years who has been identified by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

As a condition of his two-year term of supervised release, Calderon must register as a sex offender.

Calderon, who has been free on bond since his arrest in March 2006, was permitted by the court to remain free on bond until January 4, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. when he is ordered to report to the McAllen office of the U. S. Marshals Service. At that time, he will be told to which U. S. Bureau of Prisons facility he has been assigned and to report to begin serving his sentence.

This case was investigated by officers of the Irving, Texas and Mission, Texas Police Departments and special agents of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Alex C. Lewis and Juan F. Alanis.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse, launched in February 2006 by the Department of Justice . 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/."

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