



# Department of Justice

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## **MAN WHO POSSESSED THOUSANDS OF IMAGES AND VIDEOS OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON**

RENO, NV -The man charged in March with conspiring to possess and distribute thousands of images and videos of child pornography, was sentenced today to 10 years in prison, announced Daniel G. Bogden, United States Attorney for the District of Nevada.

Michael T. Burns, age 45, of Reno, Nevada, pleaded guilty in May to possession of child pornography. U.S. District Judge Edward C. Reed sentenced him today to 120 months in prison, the maximum period possible under federal statute, to be followed by three years of supervised release. There is no parole in the federal system, and inmates must serve the majority of their sentence in the custody of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons. By agreement of the parties, Burns' sentence was increased because the materials involved prepubescent minors, portrayed sadistic or masochistic conduct, and involved more than 600 images.

"The Department of Justice is committed to fighting child pornography and protecting children from trafficking and other forms of exploitation," said U.S. Attorney Bogden. "The explicit and vulgar nature of the images and videos in this case was particularly disturbing. I am satisfied that the maximum sentence imposed against Mr. Burns was necessary and just."

Early this year, Burns was targeted as part of an undercover investigation resulting in charges against 27 individuals in the United States, Canada, Australia and Great Britain. The focus of the investigation was a group of individuals who used sophisticated computer software programs and tools to create a worldwide network for sharing child pornography with a reduced risk of apprehension by law enforcement. The worldwide network/internet chat room was being used to facilitate the trading of graphic images of child pornography – including live streaming video of adults sexually molesting children and infants.

Burns was identified as one of several persons who had sent visual images of minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct over the Internet. In March 2006, agents served a search warrant at the defendant's residence at 149 Burns Street in Reno. They seized a computer, related hard drives, disks and components. Agents determined the defendant's computer contained in excess of 30,000 individual images and 700 video clips of child pornography. Some of the videos were as long as one hour in length. The images included children under the age of 12 being victimized, and some of the molestation portrayed was sadistic or masochistic in nature.

Prosecuting crimes against the exploitable is a top prosecution priority for the United States Attorney's Office in the District of Nevada. Between January 1, 2002, and June 30, 2006, 140 defendants have been charged in the District of Nevada with crimes ranging from receipt and possession of child pornography, interstate travel with intent to engage in a sexual act with a juvenile, and using a computer to entice a juvenile to have sex. Most of those charged have been convicted and sentenced to significant periods of imprisonment.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created 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 was investigated by U.S. ICE and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Ronald C. Rachow.

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