



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROJECT SAFE CHILDHOOD

EDWARDS MAN SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS FOR PRODUCING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – John F. Wood, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that an Edwards, Mo., man was sentenced in federal court today for sexually exploiting a child to produce child pornography.

James Ray Starling, 46, of Edwards, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith this afternoon to 30 years in federal prison without parole, which is the statutory maximum penalty for this offense. The court also placed **Starling** on supervised release for the rest of his life following his incarceration, and ordered him to forfeit to the government two computers, a digital camera, a cellular telephone and a film camera that were used to commit the offense.

On April 1, 2008, **Starling** pleaded guilty to using a 13-year-old girl to produce child pornography. **Starling** picked the girl up while she was walking to school on Sept. 5, 2007, and kept her in his custody, providing her with methamphetamine, marijuana and crack cocaine. When the victim's mother reported her missing, a law enforcement search ensued that lasted more than a month before the victim was located on Oct. 8, 2006, in a motel room with **Starling**. **Starling** admitted that he engaged in sexual activity with the 13-year-old girl and that he took pornographic pictures.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Randall D. Eggert. It was investigated by the St. Robert, Mo., Police Department, the Lebanon, Mo., Police Department, the Pulaski County, Mo., Sheriff's Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Project Safe Childhood

This case is being brought as part of 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.projectsafchildhood.gov/.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html