



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill  
Middle District of Florida

Tampa                      Orlando                      Jacksonville                      Ocala                      Fort Myers  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE                      CONTACT: WILLIAM DANIELS  
JUNE 23, 2011                      PHONE: (813) 274-6388  
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/flm/pr>                      FAX: (813) 274-6300

**SEXUAL PREDATOR SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 12 YEARS IN PRISON  
IN FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CASE**

Orlando, FL - U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that U.S. District Judge Gregory A. Presnell yesterday sentenced Robert A. Howard, Jr. (41, Merritt Island) to 151 months in federal prison for downloading and possessing child pornography. The court also ordered Howard to serve 15 years on supervised release, after his release from prison.

Howard was found guilty after a jury trial on February 24, 2011.

According to testimony and evidence presented at trial, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (ICE), working with the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, was notified about certain allegations regarding Howard possessing child pornography, in September 2005. Further investigation led to a search of Howard's home computer where child pornography was found. Howard admitted to downloading child pornography. Court records show that Howard had sexually abused one of his adopted daughters.

This case was investigated by the Crimes Against Children Task Force of the Brevard County Sheriff's Office and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, Cocoa Beach Resident Office. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Tanya Davis Wilson.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States 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.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

The investigation that led to this case was part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to identify, investigate and arrest those who prey on children, including human traffickers, international sex tourists, internet pornographers, and foreign-national predators whose crimes make them deportable. Launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 12,800 individuals through Operation Predator. ICE encourages the public to report suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-347-2423. This hotline is staffed around the clock by investigators. Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.