



Department of Justice

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Dallas Center Man Sentenced on Child Pornography Charges

DES MOINES, IA – On February 21, 2014, Benjamin Shelabarger, a thirty-six-year-old former resident of Dallas Center, Iowa, was sentenced by United States District Court Chief Judge James E. Gritzner to 210 months in prison on child pornography charges, announced United States Attorney Nicholas A. Klinefeldt. Judge Gritzner also ordered Shelabarger to serve five years of supervised release following the period of imprisonment.

Shelabarger's sentence was enhanced, in part, because he falsely testified during trial that a relative was responsible instead of the defendant, which the judge found constituted an obstruction of justice. Shelabarger's sentence was also enhanced because he had movies and images of very young children being sexually assaulted, used a computer, and had a large number of child pornography movies and images.

Shelabarger was originally charged in March 2013 with one count of illegally possessing child pornography, and was additionally charged with knowingly receiving child pornography when the indictment was superseded in October 2013. A jury unanimously convicted Shelabarger on both counts on November 6, 2013.

The investigation was conducted by Homeland Security Investigations, a division of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigations, Cyber Crime Unit, and the Iowa Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. The case was prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Iowa.

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