



Department of Justice

Robert M. Duncan, Jr.
United States Attorney
Eastern District of Kentucky

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, Nov. 12, 2020
www.usdoj.gov/usao/kye

CONTACT: Gabrielle Dudgeon
PHONE: (859) 685-4887
E-MAIL: gabrielle.dudgeon@usdoj.gov

California Man Sentenced to 120 Months for Attempted Online Enticement of a Minor

FRANKFORT, Ky. – A California man, Michael John Davidson, 31, was sentenced to 120 months in prison on Thursday, by U.S. District Judge Gregory Van Tatenhove, after previously being convicted by a federal jury of attempted online enticement of a minor to engage in sexual activity. The jury reached its verdict after approximately one hour of deliberations, following a day and a half trial.

According to testimony at trial, on February 20, 2019, Davidson contacted an individual, who self-identified as a 15-year-old female living in Franklin County, Kentucky, using the KiK messenger internet application on his cellular telephone. The person Davidson contacted was, in reality, an investigator with the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General's Cyber Crimes Branch. From February 20-22, 2019, a conversation between Davidson and the investigator took place on the KiK messenger. Eventually, the Defendant turned the conversation sexual activity, and transmitted several images of himself.

The conversation between the Davidson and the investigator resulted in a planned meeting for sex, on February 22, 2019. On February 22, 2019, Davidson drove from Jamestown, Kentucky, to Frankfort, Kentucky, in order to meet the investigator and engage in criminal sexual activity. When the Davidson arrived at the agreed-upon meeting place, he was arrested by law enforcement.

Davidson was convicted in May 2020.

Under federal law, Davidson must serve 85 percent of his prison sentence and will be under the supervision of the U.S. Probation Office for 20 years, following his release. In addition to the prison sentence, Davidson was also ordered to pay \$5,100 in special assessments.

“The importance of the law enforcement efforts to protect children from online sexual predators cannot be overstated,” said Robert M. Duncan, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. “The defendant used the internet to knowingly plan to have sex with someone he believed was a 15 year old girl. Fortunately, because of the excellent work of law enforcement, he was identified and arrested. His federal prison sentence is deserved, and serves as

a warning for those who would engage in similar conduct.”

“Investigators with our Cyber Crimes Unit work to stay one step ahead of cyber predators who target children,” said Attorney General Cameron. “As children spend more time online during the pandemic, these efforts and partnerships with law enforcement are more important than ever. I appreciate the work of our Department of Criminal Investigations, U.S. Attorney Duncan, and the Louisville Field Division of the U.S. Secret Service in this case.”

Robert M. Duncan, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Ralph Gerds, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service Louisville Field Division; and Daniel Cameron, Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, jointly announced the sentencing.

The investigation was conducted by the United States Secret Service and Kentucky Attorney General’s Cyber Crime Branch. The United States was represented in the case by Assistant U.S. Attorney Erin M. Roth and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney James T. Chapman.

This case was prosecuted as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse, which was launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. 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.

— END —