

A New Albany, Indiana, man who used the Internet to induce a minor female to engage in sexual activity and transported her across state lines for illegal sexual purposes was sentenced today in U. S. District Court by U. S. District Judge John G. Heyburn, II, to 10 years in prison followed by a life term of Supervised Release, announced David J. Hale, United States Attorney for the Western District of Kentucky. The defendant, Robert L. Real, III, pleaded guilty to the charges on November 1, 2012. There is no parole in the federal system.

“The significant sentence handed down today should send a message to anyone with similar criminal intentions. If you seek to victimize a child, you will face a determined and coordinated law enforcement effort dedicated to the protection of our children,” stated U.S. Attorney David J. Hale. “We are grateful for the good work of the Louisville Metro Police Department, the Louisville Division of the FBI and the Kentucky Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. My office will continue to work closely with our federal, state and local law enforcement partners to bring those who would prey upon and victimize children to justice.”

Real, age 21, admitted that he had communicated with a 14-year-old female on Badoo.com, picked her up from her home in Jefferson County, Kentucky, and transported her across state lines to his residence in Indiana. He further admitted that at his residence in Indiana, he engaged in sexual activity with the minor, including intercourse. The next day, he left the girl at a bowling alley in Jefferson County, Kentucky. The two began their online communications in early May 2012.

The 14-year-old had been reported missing to the Louisville Metro Police Department by her parents on June 8, 2012. The minor’s parents learned that she had been communicating with an adult, “Robert” who lived in Indiana, on a social networking website called BADOO.com. The FBI Cyber Crimes Task Force was notified of the incident and initiated an investigation. More than 2,500 messages between “Robert” and the minor were recovered by law enforcement officials on the family’s computer and minor’s laptop.

Assistant United States Attorney Jo E. Lawless prosecuted the case. The Louisville Metro Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation as part of Kentucky’s Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force conducted the investigation.

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 the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc. For more information about internet safety education, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc and click on the tab "resources."