

Ferrelview Man Pleads Guilty To His Role In Natinowide Child Porn Ring **News**

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Posted on : 2014/3/5 4:33:35

Raymond M. Appling, 31, of Ferrelview, Mo. pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner to four counts of producing or attempting to produce child pornography.



Under the terms of today's plea agreement, Appling will be sentenced to 40 years in federal prison without parole. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

By pleading guilty today, Appling admitted that he took pornographic photos and video of four child victims, which he shared with others.

According to today's plea agreement, FBI agents had identified two suspects in Colorado and in San Diego, Calif., that linked Appling to the child pornography ring. Detectives with the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department executed a search warrant at Appling's residence on Feb. 8, 2012, and seized computers, computer media and a camera. In an interview with the detectives, Appling identified a third member of the child pornography ring located in Pennsylvania. The other members of the child pornography ring are being prosecuted in those jurisdictions.

Appling admitted that he took a child victim, identified as Jane Doe #1, to visit the San Diego suspect, whom he knew had a sexual attraction to minors. Appling also took pornographic photos of Jane Doe #1 when she was eight years old.

Appling also took photos of a second child victim, identified as Jane Doe #2. Appling took photos of Jane Doe #1 and Jane Doe #2 together in the shower. Jane Doe #2 also told investigators that she had met the San Diego suspect at Appling's home.

Appling took photos of a third child victim, identified as Jane Doe #3, while she was asleep on his couch. A series of photos depicts Appling moving Jane Doe #3's clothes so that she is exposed, and Appling touching her.

Appling also produced a movie of a 12-year-old victim, identified as Jane Doe #4, while she was undressing and getting ready to take a shower.

A forensic examination of Appling's computers, cameras, and computer media determined that an external hard drive had been wiped and reformatted. There was evidence on the external hard drive which indicated that videos with a sexual theme (including child pornography) were once on the hard drive. Evidence indicated that some of the movies that were once on the external hard drive were sent through the use of an encrypted instant messaging program. In addition, a large number of Yahoo! messenger chat fragments were recovered from several log files from Feb. 4, 2011 through July 5, 2011. In many of the chats the participants (including Appling and the other suspects) stated that they were actively engaged in sexual abuse and/or child pornography. There were also several unidentified participants engaged in the online chats.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Teresa Moore. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the FBI.

Project Safe Childhood

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.