



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Texas

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COMBINATION OF CHAT ROOM AND CHILD PORN IS TICKET TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR EAST TEXAN

(Marshall, Texas) A Hughes Springs, Texas, man was sentenced to 92 months in federal prison today for using a computer to entice a minor to engage in sex and possession of child pornography. **BOBBY JOE GRIFFIN**, 41, was sentenced by United States District Judge T. John Ward.

Griffin was charged by a federal grand jury last September with two counts of using a computer to entice a minor to engage in sex and six counts of possession of child pornography. According to evidence presented in court, in March 2003, Griffin met two minor girls online in a "chat room." He engaged them in online conversation and told the girls he was 21-years-old. After talking to them on several occasions, Griffin convinced the girls to leave their home and meet with him on a deserted state highway for the purpose of returning to his residence and engaging in sexual activity with him. The minors met with Griffin on March 30, 2003. Upon seeing Griffin, the minors did not believe that he was 21 years of age, became frightened, and refused to get in his vehicle. Over the next few days Griffin continued to communicate with the minors over the Internet. The mother of one of the minors discovered the communication and alerted authorities. Law

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enforcement officers then arranged for the mother to pose as one of the minors and communicate online with Griffin. A second meeting was arranged for April 9, 2003. When Griffin showed up to pick up the minor, he was met by an officer of the Upshur County Sheriff's Department. Officers subsequently seized Griffin's computer and discovered several hundred images of child pornography. Griffin entered guilty pleas on January 28, 2004.

Matthew D. Orwig praised the diligent work of the Upshur and Cass County Sheriffs' Offices and the FBI, "There is nothing more precious than our children. The officers and agents on this case are to be commended for their actions." Orwig also encouraged parents to be extremely cautious of their child's Internet use, "Don't ever let your guard down when your child is using a computer. Sexual predators will use every tactic imaginable to lure your child."

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Upshur County Sheriff's Department and the Camp County Sheriff's Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Barry Bryant prosecuted the case.

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