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Press Release

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Green Bay Man Sentenced for Sexual Exploitation of Minor Children

James L. Santelle, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, announced that on July 30, 2015, Joseph J. Valdez (age: 29) of Green Bay, Wisconsin, was sentenced by Chief District Judge William C. Griesbach to 15 years in federal prison for sexual exploitation of a child in violation of Title 18 U.S.C. Section 2251(a). Upon his release the defendant will be on federal supervised release for 20 years and will have to register as a sex offender in the jurisdiction in which he resides.

Valdez used his cellular telephone to exchange texts and instant messages with hundreds, if not thousands, of underage girls across the country and in Canada. Often, Valdez held himself out as a modeling agent to entice the minors to send him naked photographs of themselves. He would then threaten to send these photographs to the girls' school administrators, parents, or threaten to release them on the internet with their home address accompanying the photographs. In response, many of the teen girls sent Valdez increasingly more graphic and sexually explicit photographs. Some of the minors threatened suicide in an attempt to stop the cycle of blackmail, though Valdez continued making further demands undeterred.

Valdez was previously convicted of sending obscene email messages to a minor in 2009, in Kewaunee County Circuit Court, following a prosecution by the State of Wisconsin. He received a sentence of probation which he violated approximately a year later by electronically corresponding with a minor.

In pronouncing sentence, Chief Judge Griesbach noted the reprehensible nature of Valdez's crime, as well as the lifelong effects that his sexual exploitation will have on an untold number of victims. The court noted Valdez's "continuous pattern of exploiting children" and declared his actions "horrendous and not to be tolerated."

The case was investigated by the Seymour Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Daniel R. Humble.

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

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