

Beat: News

San Diego Teacher and Coach Charged with Child Pornography Distribution

Used Online Name "Mr. Pickles"

San Diego, California, 20.07.2022, 12:57 Time

USPA NEWS - Daniel Dasko - a teacher's aide, substitute teacher and youth hockey coach of elementary and middle school children in San Diego - was arrested by the FBI and charged in federal court with distribution of child pornography.

Dasko was arrested at his home on July 13. He made an initial appearance in federal court on July 14 before U.S. Magistrate Judge Daniel Butcher and was ordered detained pending trial. According to a federal complaint, Dasko is charged with Distribution of Images of Minors Engaged in Sexually Explicit Conduct.

Dasko's alleged illicit activity was discovered during the course of another investigation that began in Philadelphia in July 2021, when the Philadelphia Division of the FBI received a cyber tip via the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children regarding a man who was uploading child pornography. The subject was identified as a teacher in the Philadelphia area.

FBI Philadelphia executed a search warrant on the Philadelphia subject's residence. A review of the subject's iPhone revealed numerous conversations regarding child pornography using a social media application, both trading and producing images by baiting minor victims to send nude photos or videos or to go live online and be screen-recorded. The Philadelphia subject and other coconspirators would pose as females on social media sites in order to chat with the victims.

The complaint said investigators continued their review of the communications on the social media application in order to identify additional targets. One of those targets, using the name "Mr. Pickles," was communicating with the Philadelphia subject from at least October 3, 2020 to October 3, 2021, during which time they exchanged over 3,671 messages, to include numerous of image and video files.

According to the complaint, the majority of these messages were conversations about sexually exploiting children they knew or met online. The complaint contains excerpts of some of the sexually-explicit electronic communications between the Philadelphia subject and Mr. Pickles in which they discuss their attraction to young boys.

Based on the investigation, the FBI believed Dasko was Mr. Pickles and obtained federal search warrants to search Dasko's San Diego residence and person for child exploitation crimes. On July 13, 2022, those were executed. Following the advisal and waiver of his Miranda rights, Dasko agreed to speak with agents about his online activities. He admitted he was Mr. Pickles and the user of the social media account.

Victims or anyone with information about this case is encouraged to call the FBI San Diego Field Office at 858-320-1800 or submit a tip at tips.fbi.gov. Tips can be anonymous.

"There is nothing more important than keeping our children safe from sexual abuse and exploitation," said U.S. Attorney Randy Grossman. "Social media makes this a very challenging endeavor, but we will do everything in our power to protect kids from online predators who use technology to target and trick them." Grossman thanked the prosecution team and the FBI for their excellent work in this case.

"Our children should be protected, not preyed upon," said Stacey Moy, special agent in charge of the FBI San Diego Field Office. "Crimes against children remain a priority for the FBI. We will continue to aggressively investigate any matter where persons prey on our children, and work with our partners to get these predators removed from our community."

DEFENDANT Case Number 22MJ2515
Daniel Dasko Age: 30 Carlsbad, CA

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 18, U.S.C. § 2252(a)(2) – Distribution of Images of Minors Engaged in Sexually Explicit Conduct

Maximum penalty: Twenty years in prison, five-year mandatory minimum

AGENCY
FBI

*The charges and allegations contained in an indictment or complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

Source: Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of California press release July 18, 2022

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