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PRINCETON MAN SENTENCED FOR CHILD SOLICITATION

-Princeton-

Christopher L. Williamson, age 25, Princeton, was sentenced today in Gibson Superior Court to 540 days in the Gibson County Jail after pleading guilty to Child Solicitation and to Dissemination of Matter Harmful to Minors, both Class D felonies. Judge Earl Penrod ordered that Williamson must register as a Sex Offender and also stated the defendant will not be eligible for any work release privileges as part of his sentence.

In January of 2011 Gibson County Sheriff's Deputies, led by Deputy Brad Garnett, as part of Indiana's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, initiated a criminal investigation into Christopher L. Williamson after receiving a complaint from a 14 year old girl's parents that Williamson had solicited their daughter for sex and had sent a picture of his male genitalia to their child's cellular phone. The parents were first alerted to the problem after their daughter had confided in a family friend via Facebook that Williamson had solicited her and had sent a picture of his penis to her. A potential sexual encounter between Williamson and the victim was averted because the parents kept their child home from school when they discovered a text message that seemed to indicate Williams would pick the victim up after school. Immediately thereafter the parents notified the authorities of their concerns.

On January 3, 2011 Gibson County Sheriff's Office Detective Sergeant Deborah Borchelt interviewed the 14 year old victim, who stated that Williamson had sent her a text message by mistake. The victim stated that Williamson later sent the victim a picture of his penis to her cellular phone, which the victim deleted. On the late evening hours of January 3rd Williamson once again sent the victim a picture of his genitalia.

On January 15, 2011 Deputy Garnett interviewed Williamson, who denied soliciting the victim for sex or sending her a picture of his genitalia. Two weeks later, on January 29th while Williams was incarcerated at the Gibson County Jail on a writ of attachment, he notified a Corrections Officer that he wanted to speak with Deputy Garnett. During that second interview Williamson stated that he had some time to think and admitted that he had sent the obscene photograph of his genitalia to the 14 year old girl. Williamson stated that he had lied when speaking to Garnett before because he was scared, but now wanted to do the right thing.

Williamson stated that the picture of his penis and the picture of himself were not supposed to be sent to the 14 year old victim, but to someone else. Williamson stated that he accidentally sent a text message to the 14 year old girl's cell phone and they began texting from there. Deputy

Garnett asked Williamson about them discussing sex and Williamson replied that he never intended to have sex with the girl, but things had gotten out of hand. Williamson stated that he never had contact with the victim after Monday, January 3, 2011. Williamson admitted to using an old Facebook profile picture of his brother as the initial picture that he sent to the 14 year old girl.

Gibson County Prosecutor Robert Krieg stated that with the proliferation of Facebook, Twitter and other social networking outlets, it is likely these types of cases will only increase in the future. Krieg said it would be wise for parents to monitor their children's online activities for many reasons, including making sure their child is not speaking with an adult who is acting inappropriately.

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