



JACKSON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

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OPERATION UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT SCORES 14 ARRESTS

(Jackson Township, Ohio) – A joint law enforcement effort leads to the arrest of 14 following a four-day undercover operation targeting sexual predators in Stark County.

In a proactive effort to address adults attempting to meet children for sex, an undercover investigation was organized by the Jackson Township Police in cooperation with ICAC (Internet Crimes Against Children Federal Task Force), the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Stark County Sheriff's Office and a number of other local state and federal partners.

The team of law enforcement officials conducted an effort in which undercover investigators engaged in online chats with child predators, which spanned from January 31st through February 3rd of 2020. The investigators were communicating under online personas of children ranging from 12-15 years of age.

The adult sexual predator and the online child persona organized a meeting at a location where the child would be alone in order to engage in sexual acts discussed throughout the online chat. The individuals arrested during the 4-day operation believed the individual on the other end of the chat was a minor child. These offenders are preying on the vulnerability and curiosity of these children to victimize them not through force or coercion or the promise of money, but by simple grooming techniques and pretending to be interested in them. Often, offenders will introduce the topic of sex to the child within the first ten minutes of finding out the age of the child and use the child's immaturity or inexperience to their advantage.

Stark County Law Enforcement lead by the Jackson Township Police wanted to send a strong message to child predators. *"If you target children in Stark County or in Jackson Township, law enforcement will work together to identify and prosecute you to the full extent of the law for your despicable act of attempting to engage in sex with a child,"* said Chief Brink. *"Children are precious and need to be nurtured and protected, we will continue to proactively protect our children and not wait for them to be violated by such repulsive individuals."*

"These kinds of acts will not be tolerated in our communities," added Stark County Sheriff George T. Maier. *"Our children are our most precious commodity and we will work diligently to see that their innocence is protected. Those who attempt to engage in illegal/immoral acts towards a child will be held accountable."*

Jackson Township Police Department would like to thank the following agencies for their assistance during the planning, preparation and execution of this successful operation: Stark County Sheriff's Office, Stark County Prosecutor's Office, Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC), Ohio State Highway Patrol, Federal Bureau of Investigation (Canton Resident Agency), Uniontown Police Department, Perry Township Police Department, Massillon Police Department, Wooster Police Department, United States Secret Service (Cleveland Division) Streetsboro Police Department, Carrollton Police Department, Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU), Canton Police Department, and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Adult Parole Authority (APA).

The individuals arrested during this operation are being processed through Stark County. For additional information contact Chief Brink at 330-834-3963.