



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on August 5, 2011

72 Nabbed in Global Online Child Porn Ring

According to the agencies, arrests were made in a total of 14 countries. A total of 13 defendants have pleaded guilty so far, and four have been sentenced to prison terms of up to 30 years.

According to the website [PCWorld.com](#), the investigation began in December 2009 when the federal agencies “launched Operation Delego, targeting members of Dreamboard. Members of the online message board created a ‘massive private library’ of pictures and videos of adults molesting children, the agencies said.”



As reported by the computer news website [CNET.com](#), “Dreamboard had several rules to protect members from law enforcement authorities, the Justice Department said today. The group required all members to use screen names, and when links to child pornography were shared, they needed to be encrypted and password-protected. In addition, members could share images only with other members, and could connect to Dreamboard only through proxy servers.”

The Justice Department explained that membership in the porn ring “was tightly controlled by the administrators of the bulletin board, who required prospective members to upload child pornography portraying children 12 years of age or younger when applying for membership.” Once given access, the Justice Department said, “members were required continually to upload images of child sexual abuse in order to maintain membership. Members who failed to follow this rule would be expelled from the group.”

CNET reported that a membership hierarchy was in place within the Dreamboard ring, “allowing people in the highest membership level, ‘Super VIP,’ to access far more depictions of child pornography than those in the ‘VIP’ or ‘member’ ranks.”

Members were able to move up in the hierarchy by “providing child abuse images that the individual had produced, providing a large number of images, or providing images that had never been seen before,” the Justice Department said.

In a press conference announcing the arrests, Attorney General Eric Holder said: “The members of this criminal network shared a demented dream to create the preeminent online community for the promotion of child sexual exploitation, but for the children they victimized, this was nothing short of a nightmare.” He added that the arrests and indictments sent “a strong message to those who are willing to harm and exploit children, and who attempt to hide their activities from law enforcement. We will find you. We will stop you. And we will bring you to justice.”

Assistant Attorney General Lanny Breuer added, “Dreamboard was a self-described global ‘community’ of pedophiles dedicated to the relentless victimization and exploitation of children 12 and under. Using sophisticated methods to evade detection by law enforcement, Dreamboard members allegedly used the power and anonymity of the Internet to motivate each other to commit their horrific acts of sexual



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abuse of minors and trading in child pornography.”

Breuer said that the latest success demonstrated a “continued commitment to a strategy of targeting the most sophisticated child exploitation networks, at home and abroad. No matter how savvy online predators think they are, we will find them, dismantle their networks, and bring them to justice.”

OneNewsNow reported that while congratulating federal agencies on their success in the latest anti-porn operation, one leading conservative porn watchdog group called on investigators to look deeper into the root cause of the child-porn problem. Pat Trueman, president of [Morality in Media](#), pointed out that the Department of Justice “has refused to prosecute adult pornography on what is to many an understandable notion that they should spend all [their] time working on child pornography.”

Trueman said that for many men, the gate to child pornography is adult porn. “They start with adult pornography, even soft-core pornography,” he said. “But according to the brain science studies, the longer they’re looking at it [and] the more they ingest, the more likely they are to move to harder and more deviant material and many move to child pornography.”

According to OneNewsNow, Trueman said that “if those arrested in the sting were asked about it, investigators would likely find that is how the suspects started — on illegal adult porn. Therefore, Trueman stresses that must be challenged as well.”



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