



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY MCMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Contact: Mark Plowden
803-734-3670
mplowden@ag.state.sc.us

Camden Man Pleads Guilty To Sexual Exploitation Of A Child

Columbia, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Gary Stephen Estep, 43, of 710 Ivy Bush Lane in Camden, pleaded guilty on May 18, 2005 to four (4) counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor.

The first three (3) counts were Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, Second Degree, a felony violation of §16-15-405(A)(2) of the Code of Laws, and punishable to five (5) years imprisonment with a minimum sentence required of two (2) years imprisonment. The fourth (4th) count is Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, Third Degree, a felony violation of §16-15-410(A) of the Code of Laws, and punishable to five (5) years imprisonment.

During the period March through August 2004, Estep, while living and working in Kershaw County, and knowing the content of the material, did distribute and/or transport, and/or exhibit, and/or receive, and/or sell, and/or purchase, and/or exchange, and/or solicit material that contained a visual representation of a minor engaged in sexual activity.

After search warrants were executed at his home and workplace, Estep admitted to running a file server filled with pornography on the Internet. Specifically, Estep "advertised" for child pornography in a chat room (within a channel titled "100%preteengirlsexpics"), and the charges were primarily based on his solicitation for, and distribution and exchange of, child pornography.

Forensic examination of the computer systems seized revealed an extensive collection of child pornography, including images and video files.

Judge Kenneth Goode, presiding over the General Sessions Court of Fairfield County, sentenced Estep to ten (10) years in prison, suspended to five (5) years and two (2) years probation on the first three (3) counts. On the fourth count, Estep was sentenced to five (5) years in prison. All sentences are to run concurrently.

This case was investigated by the State Law Enforcement Division, Kershaw County Sheriff's Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Secret Service, the Attorney General's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, and was prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

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