

May 13, 2022

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MAN CHARGED WITH DISSEMINATION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul and Montgomery County State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti today announced that a Nokomis man employed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services was charged with disseminating child pornography. The case is part of Raoul's ongoing work to collaborate with federal law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement officials throughout Illinois to apprehend offenders who download and trade child pornography online.

Brett A. Wexstten, 40, of Nokomis, Illinois, was charged in Montgomery County Circuit Court with five counts of dissemination of child pornography, each a Class X felony punishable by six to 30 years in prison. Wexstten's bond is set at \$400,000, and his next court date is scheduled for May 20, 2022.

"Survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse are re-victimized every time someone downloads or shares horrific images of child pornography," Raoul said. "I will continue to partner with local law enforcement agencies and state's attorney's offices across Illinois to track down and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions."

Raoul's investigators, with the assistance of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and the Nokomis Police Department, conducted a search of a residence Thursday, May 12 on Madison Street in Nokomis and arrested Wexstten after discovering evidence of child pornography.

The case will be jointly prosecuted by Raoul's office and Montgomery County State's Attorney Andrew Affrunti.

"I am grateful to partner with Attorney General Raoul and his staff to ensure justice in this case," Affrunti said. "Anyone who abuses or exploits children in Montgomery County will be held accountable under the law for their actions."

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The case is part of Attorney General Raoul's work to investigate and prosecute child pornographers in Illinois. Raoul's office, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, runs the [Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children \(ICAC\) Task Force](#) that investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement agencies. The task force receives CyberTips, or online reports of child pornography, from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Over the last several years, CyberTipline reports have steadily increased; in fact, reports to the ICAC during 2021 increased by 42% over 2020.

In response to increasing reports of online child exploitation, Raoul announced a series of ICAC webinars aimed at giving parents, guardians and educators tools to help children and teens foster healthy online interactions. The free webinars teach parents and guardians about the social media apps children and teens may be using, how to identify signs that a child may have been a victim of online child solicitation, and more. To find out how to register for upcoming summer webinars or to view recorded webinars visit www.OnlineSafeOnlineSmart.com or email Karilyn.Orr@ilag.gov to be added to our contact list.

Illinois' ICAC Task Force is one of 61 ICAC Task Forces throughout the country and is comprised of a network of more than 285 local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies, and the task force covers 101 of Illinois' 102 counties. Since 2019, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has received more

than 19,500 CyberTips and been involved in more than 203 arrests of sexual predators. Since 2006, the Attorney General's ICAC Task Force has been involved in more than 1,780 arrests of sexual predators. The task force also has provided internet safety training and education to more than 953,500 parents, teachers and students and more than 23,100 law enforcement professionals.

Raoul reminds the public that online child sexual exploitation can be reported at www.cybertipline.com and child abuse can be reported at dcfonlinereporting.dcf.illinois.gov. In addition, local child advocacy centers can be found here: childrensadvocacycentersofillinois.org.