

Beat: News

Indictment Unsealed Charging Birmingham Lawyer with Child Exploitation Offense

Chase Tristian Espy

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USPA NEWS - A federal grand jury indictment was unsealed charging a Birmingham lawyer with child exploitation offenses, announced U.S. Attorney Prim F. Escalona and Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agent in Charge Johnnie Sharp, Jr.

The two-count indictment filed in the U.S. District Court charges Chase Tristian Espy, 36, with attempted coercion and enticement of a minor and possession of child pornography arising out of events that occurred from March 2021 to August 2021.

The attempted coercion and enticement of a minor charge carries a statutory imprisonment range of ten years to life and a \$250,000 fine. The maximum penalty for child pornography is 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Birmingham FBI's Child Exploitation Human Trafficking Task Force (CEHTTF) investigated the case along with the Homewood Police Department and the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA). Assistant U.S. Attorneys R. Leann White and Jonathan Cross are prosecuting the case.

The case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched by the Department of Justice in May 2006 to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

An indictment contains only charges. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

Source: Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Alabama press release June 2, 2022

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