



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**FORMER AIR FORCE SERGEANT ARRESTED ON  
FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES**

ALBUQUERQUE – Yesterday afternoon, Christopher Garcia, 33, of Clovis, N.M., was arrested on an indictment charging him with child pornography offenses. Garcia made his initial appearance in federal court this morning, and is scheduled to be back in court on July 30, 2012 for arraignment and a detention hearing. Garcia is temporarily detained until then.

Yesterday, a federal grand jury returned a six-count indictment charging Garcia with three counts of receipt of a visual depiction of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, and three counts of possession of matter containing visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. The indictment alleges that Garcia received and possessed child pornography between Dec. 12, 2011 and Jan. 17, 2012, in Curry County, N.M. At the time of the offenses alleged, Garcia was a sergeant with the U.S. Air Force assigned to the 16<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Squadron at Cannon Air Force Base.

The maximum penalty for a conviction on each receipt of child pornography count is imprisonment for not less than five years and not more than twenty years, and the maximum penalty for a conviction on each possession of child pornography count is ten years of imprisonment. If convicted, Garcia also faces up to a lifetime of supervised release and would be required to register as a sex offender.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Garcia was charged based on an investigation by the Clovis County Sheriff's Office, Homeland Security Investigation and the New Mexico Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Charlyn E. Rees, and was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice 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, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <http://www.justice.gov/psc/>.

The case also was brought as a part of the New Mexico Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force's mission, which is to locate, track, and capture Internet child sexual predators and Internet child pornographers in New Mexico. There are 64 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies associated with the ICAC Task Force, which is funded by a grant administered by the New Mexico Attorney General's Office. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact federal or local law enforcement.

Charges in indictments are only accusations. All criminal defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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