



Department of Justice

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OREGON MAN FOUND GUILTY OF SEXUALLY ABUSING CHILDREN AT ORPHANAGE IN CAMBODIA

EUGENE, Ore. – A federal jury found Daniel Stephen Johnson, 40, of Coos Bay, Oregon, guilty today of repeatedly sexually abusing children who lived at an orphanage operated by the defendant in Cambodia. The verdict marks the end of the second foreign sexual exploitation trial held in the District of Oregon.

Johnson was convicted on six counts of engaging in illicit sexual conduct in a foreign place and one count each of travel with intent to engage in illicit sexual conduct and aggravated sexual assault with children.

“The despicable nature of this defendant’s conduct is beyond understanding. Whether you are abusing children in this country or abroad, you will be pursued and held accountable in a court of law,” said Billy J. Williams, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon. “The fact that this defendant abused children under the guise of being a missionary and orphanage operator is appalling.”

“Daniel Johnson’s promises of charity and a better life were nothing more than lies as he dragged these children into his dark world of abuse,” said Renn Cannon, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in Oregon. “This case should serve as a warning to those predators who believe they can hide their crimes – whether here at home or half-a-world-away. We will always stand with the victims, and we will always work to bring justice in their names.”

According to court documents and information shared during trial, between November 2005 and his arrest in December 2013, Johnson systematically and repeatedly molested children who lived at an unlicensed orphanage he operated in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. To date, nine Cambodian victims—who ranged in age from seven to 18 years old at the time of abuse—have disclosed Johnson’s abuse or attempted abuse.

Victims describe a pattern of molestation that includes, among other things, Johnson making them perform oral sex on him and anally raping them. Multiple victims said they were, on numerous occasions, awoken to Johnson abusing them. Following the abuse, Johnson would sometimes provide his impoverished victims with small amounts of money or food. On one occasion, Johnson gave a victim the equivalent of \$2.50 in Cambodian currency.

In 2013, a warrant was issued for Johnson's arrest on an unrelated case by officials in Lincoln County, Oregon. Local law enforcement officers worked with the FBI to locate Johnson overseas. The FBI in turn worked with the U.S. Department of State to revoke Johnson's passport based on the Oregon warrant. Through the work of the FBI, Action Pour Les Enfants, a non-governmental organization dedicated to ending child sexual abuse and exploitation in Cambodia, and the Cambodian National Police (CNP), Johnson was located in Phnom Penh.

On December 9, 2013, CNP arrested Johnson. Based on disclosures made by children at the orphanage, Cambodian officials charged Johnson and detained him pending trial. In May 2014, Johnson was convicted by a Cambodian judge of performing indecent acts on one or more children at the orphanage and sentenced to a year in prison. Following his release from prison, Johnson was escorted back to the U.S. by the FBI.

Based on the sexual-abuse allegations against him, the FBI undertook a lengthy investigation of Johnson. During the course of their investigation, agents interviewed more than a dozen children and adults who had resided at the orphanage. Many of the interviews were audio- and video-taped and, in several instances, conducted in Cambodia by trained child-forensic interviewers. Some victims were interviewed multiple times before disclosing Johnson's abuse.

Johnson was indicted by a federal grand jury in Eugene, Oregon on December 20, 2014 on one count of engaging in illicit sexual conduct in a foreign place. Seven additional charges were added by superseding indictment on May 17, 2017.

While in custody awaiting trial, Johnson made multiple efforts to tamper with witnesses and obstruct justice. Johnson contacted his victims online, encouraging them to lie and offering money and gifts. One message, sent via his relative's Facebook account to an adult in Cambodia, discussed visiting a victim's family and encouraging them to convince the victim to retract their statement, potentially in exchange for \$10,000. Another message explains the need for a victim to say they were under duress and "pushed by police" to thumbprint a document.

Johnson faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and is subject to a 30 year mandatory minimum. He will be sentenced on Wednesday, August 22, 2018 before U.S. District Court Judge Michael J. McShane.

This case was investigated by the FBI. It was prosecuted by Jeffrey S. Sweet and Ravi Sinha, Assistant U.S. Attorneys for the District of Oregon, and Lauren E. Britsch, Trial Attorney for the Justice Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section. Amy E. Potter, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon, assisted with the prosecution.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Launched in May 2006 by the U.S. Department of Justice and led by United States 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, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

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