



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth - Police Department

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DATE: 9/10/2019

SUBJECT: Two arrested for crimes relating to the solicitation of minors

BY: Ingrid Hornibrook

NATURE OF INCIDENT: Solicitation of minors

CASE NO.:

INCIDENT DATE:

INCIDENT TIME:

INCIDENT LOCATION:

[DULUTH, MN] The Duluth Police Department has conducted two separate investigations into the Solicitation of Minors in our community and in other jurisdictions in which the involved parties were identified. One of the investigations was received locally from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's Cybertip reporting system and the other from another state agency.

Over the past two weeks, two individuals were arrested; one party for local crimes and another party on a warrant for crimes committed in another State.

On August 15, 2019, **MITCHEL JEROME KASPER, 23 years old**, was arrested on Criminal Sexual Conduct, Possession of Child Pornography, and Solicitation of a Minor charges. **KASPER** was subsequently charged by the St. Louis County Attorney's Office for the following charges:

- 3rd Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct (4 counts)
- Solicitation of a Child Through Electronic Communication to Engage in Sexual Conduct (2 counts)
- Engage in Electronic Communication Relating or Describing Sexual Conduct with a Child
- Distribution via Electronic Communication Material Relating or Describing Sexual Conduct to a Child
- Possession of Child Pornography

On August 29, 2019, **LEONARD ALTON CONKLIN JR, 62 years old**, was arrested on an active arrest warrant out of the state of Florida for the charge of Lewd Acts Toward a Minor with an Electronic Device. **CONKLIN** is awaiting extradition to Florida on this arrest warrant.

As the result of the two arrests, search warrants were executed and numerous electronic pieces of evidence were seized and are being examined by the Lake Superior Forensic Technology & Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force for evidence related to these crimes and others, as well as, to identify additional victims. Due to the large quantity of information that will need to be reviewed, limited information is available regarding these investigations.

The following agencies and divisions assisted with these investigations:

Duluth Police- Patrol division, Sex Crimes and ICAC Units

St Louis County- Investigative and ICAC Units

Superior Police Department-ICAC Unit

Douglas County- ICAC Unit

FBI- Duluth Special Agents and our local FBI Child Exploitation Investigator as well as

Florida State Police- ICAC Unit

Our local Police and Sheriff Agencies would like to remind parents to speak to their children about how to prevent from becoming a victim of online solicitation as well as how to report these types of crimes locally and/or to the social media platforms you or your children are using. We strongly suggest parents and their children review tips available at www.netsmartz.org on how to protect yourself online.

If you believe you are being exploited online there are several ways to make a report. You can make a report via the social media application you are using, report the incident to your local police agency by calling 911 or to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Cyber Tipline at report.cybertip.org, or you can contact the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children 24 hours a day at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).

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