



February 6, 2014

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**MADIGAN: STEPHENSON COUNTY MAN ARRESTED, CHARGED WITH  
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY POSSESSION**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today said a Freeport man was charged with multiple counts of possessing and disseminating child pornography as part of “Operation Glass House,” a statewide initiative to apprehend the most active offenders who download and trade child pornography online.

John A. Fernandez, 23, is charged with seven counts of possessing child pornography and three counts of dissemination of child pornography. All counts are Class X felonies and are each punishable by six to 30 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. He is being held in the Stephenson County Jail with a bond of \$200,000. A date for his preliminary hearing will be set at a later date.

“It is difficult to fully convey how serious a crime child pornography is. Every time an image of a child being sexually assaulted is viewed, it perpetuates the original crime and further scars these young, innocent victims,” Madigan said. “My office has been—and will continue to be—relentless in tracking down and apprehending offenders who trade these horrific videos.”

Madigan’s investigators, with the assistance of Freeport Police and the Stephenson County State’s Attorney’s Office, conducted a search of a residence in the 200 block of N. Powell Ave. and arrested Fernandez Wednesday after evidence of alleged child pornography was discovered. State’s Attorney John Vogt’s office will prosecute the case.

“We appreciate the thorough investigation the Attorney General’s office presented to us of a serious situation that will be vigorously prosecuted by our office,” said Assistant State’s Attorney Carl Larson.

“It takes hard work, and we value the cooperation with the Attorney General’s office in investigating and helping us arrest those who would perpetrate such acts,” said Deputy Chief James Drehoble of the Freeport Police Department.

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

This is the 55th arrest since Madigan launched “Operation Glass House” in August 2010 to investigate the most active child pornography traders in Illinois. In 2010, the first year of the initiative, Madigan’s investigations revealed a disturbing trend of offenders trading extremely violent videos of young children being raped. As a result, Madigan’s office has focused on apprehending offenders who are seen trading and watching extremely violent videos involving children, including infants and toddlers.

Madigan’s office, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children ([ICAC](#)) Task Force, which investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement agencies. Since 2006, Madigan’s ICAC task force has been involved in 696 arrests of sexual predators. The task force has also provided Internet safety training and education to more than 328,400 parents, teachers and students and nearly 17,200 law enforcement professionals.

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