



Internet Sex Predators Arrested

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(WSBT) Police have arrested 24 internet predators, and investigators say more arrests may be on the way.

The U.S. Attorney's Office announced the arrests during a news conference in South Bend Tuesday. 14 of the men were in U.S. District Court in Hammond on Monday; six of the men are from Michiana.

Agents and police officers posed as underaged teens in chat rooms on various sites on the internet. Eleven of the men arrested actually traveled to meeting places.

U.S. Attorney Joseph S. Van Kokkelen says the arrests show this problem has grown and parents need to be careful.

"You oughta go on them and see what they're doing; your hair's gonna stand up when you see what data they give out," Van Bokkelen said during Tuesday's news conference. "They wouldn't give it to a stranger, but they get on the internet and give it to the world."

Investigators held similar news conferences in Porter and Tippecanoe Counties. The timing of the arrests was tied to the beginning of the school year to call extra attention to the issue.

The U.S. Attorney's Office is also making a push to alert educators to the problem. A copy of a CD discussing how to keep kids safe will be sent to each school corporation in the northern district of Indiana.

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