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BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS
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NUMBER OF PERSONS PROSECUTED FOR COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN NEARLY DOUBLED BETWEEN 2004 AND 2013

WASHINGTON — The annual number of persons prosecuted for commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) cases filed in U.S. district court nearly doubled between 2004 and 2013, increasing from 1,405 to 2,776 cases, the Bureau of Justice Statistics announced today.

During the period, a CSEC crime was the most serious offense or lead charge for 37,105 suspects referred to U.S. attorneys for investigation. Suspects referred for the possession of child pornography (72 percent) accounted for the majority of all CSEC suspects, followed by those suspected of child sex trafficking (18 percent) and child pornography production (10 percent).

Most suspects arrested for CSEC crimes were male (97 percent), were U.S. citizens (97 percent), were white (82 percent), had no prior felony convictions (79 percent) and were not married (70 percent). CSEC suspects had a median age of 39 years, and more than half (56 percent) had no more than a high school education.

Of the 36,080 suspects with a CSEC lead charge in matters that were concluded by U.S. attorneys from 2004 through 2013, 60 percent were prosecuted in U.S. district court, 36 percent were declined for prosecution by U.S. attorneys and 4 percent were disposed by U.S. magistrates. Nine out of 10 adjudicated CSEC cases resulted in a conviction from a guilty plea. Trials led to a conviction in 4 percent of CSEC adjudications.

Nearly all (98 percent) CSEC defendants convicted in U.S. district court received prison time. This was higher than the percentage of persons sentenced to federal prison in all other major offense categories, including property (63 percent), public order (64 percent), violent (91 percent), weapon (92 percent), drug (93 percent) and immigration (96 percent) offenses. Prison sentences for defendants convicted of CSEC offenses were among the longest in the federal justice system. Between 2004 and 2013, the mean prison sentence for convicted CSEC defendants nearly doubled, increasing from 70 to 139 months.

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Findings are based on data from BJS’s Federal Justice Statistics Program, with source data provided by the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts and U.S. Sentencing Commission.

The report, *Federal Prosecution of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Cases, 2004-2013* (NCJ 250746), was written by William Adams and Abigail Flynn of the Urban Institute for BJS. The report, related documents and additional information about BJS’s statistical publications and programs can be found on the BJS website at www.bjs.gov/.

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The Office of Justice Programs, headed by Acting Assistant Attorney General Alan R. Hanson, provides federal leadership in developing the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice and assist victims. OJP has six bureaus and offices: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART). More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.