Beat: News

Mental Health Therapist Sentenced to Over a Decade in Federal Prison

Pursued a Relationship with Student

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USPA NEWS - A former mental health therapist and licensed independent social worker who was employed by Polk Alternative Education Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, who pursued a romantic relationship with a fourteen-year-old student from 2019 to 2020, was sentenced today to more than eleven years in federal prison.

Miranda Breeden, age 46, from Monticello, Iowa, received the prison term after a July 13, 2021 guilty plea to one count of enticement of a minor.

At the guilty plea, Breeden admitted that between November 2019 and January 2020, she knowingly enticed a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity.

At the sentencing hearing, evidence was presented that messages between Breeden and the fourteen-year-old victim began in November 2019. In December 2019, Breeden agreed to purchase a firearm for the teenager and did purchase a firearm at Theisen's. Also in December 2019, Breeden took the victim and his minor friend to her parent's residence in Scotch Grove, Iowa, for an overnight stay where they used a hot tub, smoked marijuana, and discharged firearms. In January 2020, Breeden checked into at least two hotel rooms with the victim and his minor friends in the Cedar Rapids area, and attempted to check into a third hotel room at the Isle of Capri casino in Davenport, Iowa. During this same time period, Breeden also rented and stayed in another hotel room with the minor's brother, and his minor friend. The investigation revealed that Breeden had sex with the minor victim while in hotel rooms, inside her personal vehicle, and during school hours in her locked office. During the above described time period, Breeden was employed as the victim's mental health therapist at the Polk Alternative Education Center in Cedar Rapids.

At the sentencing hearing, the judge called Breeden's behavior "horribly egregious" and stated that providing a deadly weapon to a child was both reckless and dangerous.

Breeden was sentenced in Cedar Rapids by United States District Court Judge C.J. Williams. Breeden was sentenced to 135 months' imprisonment and fined $100. She must also serve a 5-year term of supervised release after the prison erm. There is no parole in the federal system.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc. For more information about internet safety education, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc and click on the tab "resources."

Breeden is being held in the United States Marshal's custody until she can be transported to a federal prison.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Liz Dupuich and Ashley Corkery and investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Cedar Rapids Police Department.

Court file information at https://ecf.iand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl.

The case file number is 20-CR-65.

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

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