



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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NEWS RELEASE

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Sheriff Urges Parents to Monitor Social Media

A 20-year-old man from Georgia was arrested on Tuesday evening and charged with lewd and lascivious battery on a 14-year-old child he met on XBOX. The defendant and the victim have been communicating through XBOX for several months. The victim, from out of state, traveled to Palm Coast with her family for a vacation. The defendant traveled from Georgia to meet up with the victim for sex.

Deputies were alerted of the incident after the victim's family members called 9-1-1 and reported a suspicious male in the backyard with his pants unzipped. The investigation revealed that the defendant had engaged in sexual activity with the victim. The defendant, Zachary Lee Dyksterhouse of Hawkinsville, Georgia, was transported to the Flagler County Detention Facility where he remains held on \$150,000 bond.

Flagler County Sheriff Rick Staly is urging parents to monitor their children's social media accounts, email accounts, any gaming chat rooms they may be using, and all internet activity.

"Smart phones, tablets, computers, and all of the electronic methods are easily accessible to children from any device," Sheriff Staly said. "Parents should keep their kids off of social media as long as possible and, if they have computers or smart phones, parents should be checking them daily to ensure they are being used responsibly."

The Sheriff's Office recommends that parents set age-appropriate restrictions on electronic devices and limit the amount of time spent in front of screens. It is also important to have honest conversations with children about the dangers of communicating with strangers and sending photographs over the internet.

"The overabundance of ways to connect with our kids can make being a parent today a bit more difficult," Sheriff Staly said. "But I also think it needs to make parents more aware than ever of who your child is talking to and what they are saying. Don't let your child become a victim."

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