

United States Department of Justice

For Immediate Release

September 13, 2010 **United States Attorney's Office**
Eastern District of California

Porterville, California Woman Pleads Guilty to Sexual Exploitation of Minors

FRESNO, CA—United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner announced that Jennifer Lynn Thurman, 34, of Porterville, pleaded guilty today before Senior United States District Judge Oliver W. Wanger to four counts of sexual exploitation of a minor.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Porterville Police Department, the Fresno office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Tulare County District Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa is prosecuting the case.

According to court documents, between September 2007 and December 2007, Thurman video recorded her then-boyfriend Steven Arthur sexually molesting four minors in her residence, after administering the tranquilizer Ativan to the minors by placing it in Oreo cookies or drinks that they gave to the minors.

Thurman has been detained as a flight risk and danger to the community since her initial appearance in federal court on December 9, 2009. The court scheduled a sentencing hearing for Friday, December 3, 2010 at 1:30 p.m. before Judge Wanger. The maximum sentence for each count is 30 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and a lifetime term of supervised release. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory sentencing factors and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC), a nationwide initiative by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, PSC mobilizes federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims.