



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Police arrest man for soliciting sex from 12-year-old girl on Kik Messenger app

Detectives are reminding parents to be aware of social media use

Howard County Police have charged a 21-year-old Prince George's County man for soliciting a police officer he thought was a 12-year-old girl using the Kik Messenger app. Vincent Paul Hill, of 2002 Lake Forest Drive in Upper Marlboro, has been charged with sexual solicitation of a minor.

The girl reported to police that she had been communicating on Kik with a user named "Vinc Hill," who was sending her sexually explicit messages and photos. After receiving the girl's report, detectives took over communication with the man, posing as the girl.

Over a period of two days, the man sent messages and photos to the detective on the victim's account. He provided enough personal information to allow the detective to identify him as Vincent Paul Hill.

Hill solicited the girl for sex acts and told her to cut school and meet him at the Harper's Choice Village Center. Officers were waiting for Hill at the designated time and location, where he was arrested. He was later released on \$75,000 bond.

Police are reminding parents to be aware of their children's use of social media. Kik offers instant messaging of texts, photos and other multi-media content. Cyber safety experts have reported that part of the app's appeal to children and teens is that it does not require the use of mobile phone numbers, so contact information cannot be tracked by parents like traditional text messaging through a mobile carrier.

The app description on iTunes reads, "You must be at least 17 years old to download this app," for "Frequent/Intense Mature/Suggestive Themes," but proof of age is not required.

Police are asking anyone else who may have been solicited by Hill to contact police at 410-313-STOP.

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