http://www.KSCBNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=3345

3 Adults, 2 Minors Charged With Child Porn

Three area boys and two juveniles have been charged with Distribution of Child Pornography after a nude photo of an underage girl was allegedly sent to others, according to officials.

District Attorney Mike Boring explained that the charges stem from an incident that occurred more than a year ago. In that incident, a student at Texhoma High School allegedly sent a nude photo of herself to her boyfriend's cell phone. He then reportedly sent that photo to an unknown amount of people. Officials are unsure of how many people actually received the photo then sent it themselves.

Specific details of the incident could not be released as the court ordered the case to be sealed.

"The investigation is ongoing," Texas County Sheriff Rick Caudell said. "We are still in the middle of the investigation. More could develop."

Boring said that since there is really no applicable law in Oklahoma dealing with sexting, the only charge they can go by falls under child pornography statutes.

"The legislature has no laws dealing with the sexting issue," Boring said in an interview with The Guymon Daily Herald. "It all falls under charges relating with child pornography."

Child pornography is a felony in Oklahoma and if convicted, one must register as a sex offender for lifetime.

"The statutes on child pornography are extremely tough," Boring added. "I don't know what we are going to do with these cases."

As the investigation continues, authorities estimate more people could be charged. The girl who sent the original photo could also be charged.

People who simply received the photo and deleted it immediately without sending it will more than likely not be charged, Boring said.

"We are using a common sense approach there."

He recommends that if anyone receives an unwanted photo that could be child pornography, he or she should delete it immediately.

"It's a serious deal," Boring said. "I wish people understood the gravity of what they are doing with their phones."

"Parents need to be aware," said Sheriff Caudell. "It is happening locally."

It's happening now, and according to Boring, this is not the first time. He said that just last year there were two other incidents of the same type.

"I want the public to know that if you do this kind of stuff, you can go to jail," Boring said.

Texhoma High School is meeting Monday to discuss the case and what they can do to prevent this from ever happening again. Guymon Public Schools recently instated a policy and educational program dealing with the rising issue.

Copyright Guymon Daily Herald