Beat: News

Jacksonville Couple Sentenced To Federal Prison For Child Sexual Exploitation

Samuel and Deborah Templeman

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USPA NEWS - U.S. District Judge Marcia Morales Howard has sentenced Samuel Christopher Templeman (47, Jacksonville) to 13 years and 4 months in federal prison for conspiring to sex traffic a child. Deborah Lynn Templeman (51, Jacksonville) was sentenced to 6 years in federal prison for possession of child sexual abuse material. The court also ordered the defendants to serve 10-year terms of supervise release, register as sex offenders, and forfeit several cellphones that were used in the offenses. The Templemans had pleaded guilty on June 21, 2021.

According to court documents, the Templemans had custodial rights over the child victim from the time of her birth until July 2019. The child victim had begun using heroin in 2018. Samuel Templeman had a long-term addiction to opioid pills, and the child victim and Samuel Templeman began regularly using heroin and crack cocaine together. The child victim also began engaging in sex acts for drugs at the direction of a pimp.

In July 2019, the Templemans' custodial rights were terminated and they were court-ordered not to have contact with the child victim. The child victim was placed into foster care, but ran away. Around late August 2019, Samuel Templeman received an inheritance of approximately $26,000. The child victim thereafter agreed to live with the Templemans. Ultimately, the Templemans and the child victim spent the $26,000 inheritance by the middle of October 2019, primarily on illegal drugs for Samuel Templeman and the child victim.

After the inheritance money was exhausted, the only legitimate income for the Templemans and the child victim was Deborah Templeman's bi-weekly salary, which would be spent 1-2 days after receipt. During the remaining 12-13 days of each two-week period, the only income that the Templemans and the child victim generated was derived from the child victim engaging in sex acts for money and occasional panhandling. The majority of the money the child victim made by engaging in commercial sex acts was then spent on illegal drugs, with a portion of the money going toward food, hotel rooms, and other basic expenses.

On December 11, 2019, a detective from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office traveled to Deborah Templeman's place of employment to attempt to recover the child victim. The detective waited for several hours for the child victim to return. While the detective was there, she overheard phone conversations in which Samuel Templeman informed Deborah Templeman that he was taking the child victim to a "date" – a common slang term for an appointment for the child to have sex for money – and that he would then come pick up Deborah Templeman from work. When Samuel Templeman returned to Deborah Templeman's workplace at the end of the day, he was arrested, and the child victim was rescued. Deborah Templeman was also subsequently arrested.

A review of the cellphones used by the Templemans and the child victim during the timeframe of these events revealed that Deborah Templeman's cellphone contained visual depictions of the child victim engaging in sexually explicit conduct. Deborah Templeman admitted that she was aware these visual depictions were stored on her phone.

"Human trafficking is modern day slavery and even more troubling when it involves a child victim. This was an incredibly disturbing investigation that demonstrates how devastating human trafficking can be in our communities," said Sherri Onks, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI Jacksonville Division. "In this instance, the child victim was exploited and placed in grave danger by those who had custodial control and should have been providing care and protection. This case demonstrates the commitment by the FBI, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and the United States Attorney's Office to never rest while individuals like this continue to exploit innocent children."

This case was investigated by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Laura Cofer Taylor and Special Assistant United States Attorney Erin Wolfson. The asset forfeiture was handled by Assistant United States Attorney Mai Tran.

This is another case 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.justice.gov/psc.

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