

# **Sex Abusers of Children Are Facing Deportation; Agents Target Foreign-Born Criminals**

The Washington Post

March 23, 2004 Tuesday, Final Edition

Copyright 2004 The Washington Post

**The Washington Post**  
washingtonpost.com

**Section:** Metro; B04

**Length:** 606 words

**Byline:** Tom Jackman, Washington Post Staff Writer

## **Body**

---

A dozen men convicted of **sex** crimes against **children** were arrested in the Washington area last week and **targeted** for **deportation** under a new national program aimed at **foreign-born sex** offenders, Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials said yesterday.

The men were rounded up after federal **agents** launched a review of the 11,000 people registered as convicted **sex** offenders in Virginia. The **agents** were looking for those who had committed crimes specifically against **children** and were not U.S. citizens and therefore eligible for **deportation**, according to Kevin Delli-Colli, acting special **agent** in charge of the Washington Immigration and Customs office.

The 12 arrests, along with seven in the Richmond and Tidewater areas, were part of a program called "Operation Predator."

The program culls through **sex**-offender registries to find possible deportees and has arrested about 2,180 **foreign-born child sex** offenders nationally since July, said Frank Figueroa, the program's national coordinator. Nationwide, there are about 304,000 people listed on **sex**-offender registries, Figueroa said.

Of the 19 arrested, eight were found in Northern Virginia and four in the District, Delli-Colli said. Immigration and Customs officials, members of a new, combined agency under the Department of Homeland Security, declined to release the names of those arrested or their convictions yesterday. The 19 detainees came from 15 countries.

People who are not born in the United States but obtain a green card, which grants legal residency, can be **deported** if they are convicted of an aggravated felony. Those who become U.S. citizens cannot be **deported**.

Delli-Colli said the program was created to protect **children** from people who might become Internet **child** pornographers, **child sex** traffickers or simply repeat offenders. "Through Operation Predator," he said, "we are systematically identifying and apprehending those who pose threats to our **children**."

All 50 states have mandatory **sex**-offender registries, which require convicted **sex** offenders to provide their home address to state police in the state where they live, regardless of where they were convicted. The registries often are called "Megan's List," in memory of 7-year-old Megan Kanka, who was murdered by a convicted **sex** offender in 1994. Her death led to federal legislation requiring states to maintain the registries.

## Sex Abusers of Children Are Facing Deportation; Agents Target Foreign-Born Criminals

In many cases, when sex offenders are foreign-born and eligible for deportation, local authorities notify Immigration and Customs. The offenders are held until after they have served jail or prison time.

Delli-Colli said hundreds of the foreign-born offenders uncovered during the recent Virginia search were in the deportation system.

Using the federal Cyber Crimes Center in Fairfax, an arm of the new combined immigration agency, along with resources of the Virginia State Police, teams of immigration agents and state troopers found 19 child sex offenders on Virginia's registry who were eligible for deportation. Four were in the country illegally, making them eligible for immediate deportation without a hearing, Delli-Colli said.

The other 15 offenders had legal resident status, but the severity of their crimes made them candidates for deportation. They will face deportation proceedings and are being held without bond.

Delli-Colli said he did not know why the 19 offenders hadn't already been referred to immigration officials for possible deportation. In some instances, the offenders might have been released from custody before they could be detained, officials said.

The convictions of those arrested last week dated from the mid-1990s to 2001.

## Classification

---

**Language:** ENGLISH

**Publication-Type:** Newspaper

**Subject:** IMMIGRATION (91%); ARRESTS (91%); SEX OFFENSES (91%); DEPORTATION (90%); CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS (90%); SEXUAL ASSAULT (90%); CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE (90%); CRIMINAL OFFENSES (90%); SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE FORCES (90%); CHILDREN (89%); PASSPORTS & VISAS (78%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); CHILD ABUSE (78%); MURDER (78%); LAW ENFORCEMENT (78%); POLITICAL DETAINEES (78%); CYBERCRIME (78%); PORNOGRAPHY (78%); FELONIES (78%); JAIL SENTENCING (78%); CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS (78%); US FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (77%); POLICE FORCES (77%); PRISONS (77%); NATIONAL SECURITY (73%); SEX TRAFFICKING (73%); CHILD PORNOGRAPHY (73%); INTERNET CRIME (73%); CHILD TRAFFICKING (73%)

**Organization:** US DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (55%)

**Industry:** CYBERCRIME (78%); INTERNET CRIME (73%)

**Geographic:** RICHMOND, VA, USA (72%); VIRGINIA, USA (94%); UNITED STATES (95%)

**Load-Date:** March 23, 2004