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5 South Florida men part of 255 child predator arrests, say federal agents

Operation iGuardian nabs 58 suspects in Florida; 61 victims identified

July 16, 2013 | By Brett Clarkson, Sun Sentinel

Federal authorities on Tuesday confirmed the identities of the five suspects arrested in South Florida as part of a five-week operation against accused child sex predators.

Operation iGuardian netted 255 arrests of suspected child predators in the continental U.S., Puerto Rico and Mexico — including 58 arrests in Florida and five in South Florida, said U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Miami spokesman Nestor Yglesias.

The arrests are part of a "disturbing trend" in which child sex predators are increasingly meeting kids online and in some cases, "sextorting" them into sending obscene images of themselves, according to a press release issued Monday by ICE.

"Child abusers prowl social media looking for opportunities to force young people into sexual exploitation through guile, deceit, and extortion," ICE Director John Morton said in the release.

A total of 61 victims were identified during the course of the operation, investigators said.

Yglesias confirmed that the South Florida suspects include former Hebrew school teacher Theodore Nusbaum, 64, of North Bay Village, who is accused of having child porn on his desktop computer, and Thomas Edler, 48, of Weston, who allegedly took pictures of a nude boy.

Nusbaum was taken into custody June 18 while Edler was arrested June 19. Both of those arrests were previously announced by ICE.

Among the other South Florida suspects: Jorge Berkowitz, 50, and Ivan Bladimir Maldonado, 24, Yglesias said. Both face numerous charges each, according to Miami-Dade court records.

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In [Broward County](#), Andres Moreno, 37, of Dania Beach was arrested on June 18. He faces 42 child pornography-related charges, Broward Sheriff's Office booking records show.

Elsewhere in the state, the Orlando Sentinel confirmed four other Floridians rounded up in the operation: Sanford-based missionary Warren Scott Kennell, Patrick Air Force Base employee Alan James Ender, Daytona Beach man Thomas Mickey Turner, 65, and Kevin Porter, 26, of Melbourne.

In a Washington press conference on Monday, investigators said Operation iGuardian was carried out between May 28 and June 30 by ICE's Homeland Security Investigations and the multi-agency Internet Crimes Against Children task forces across the country.

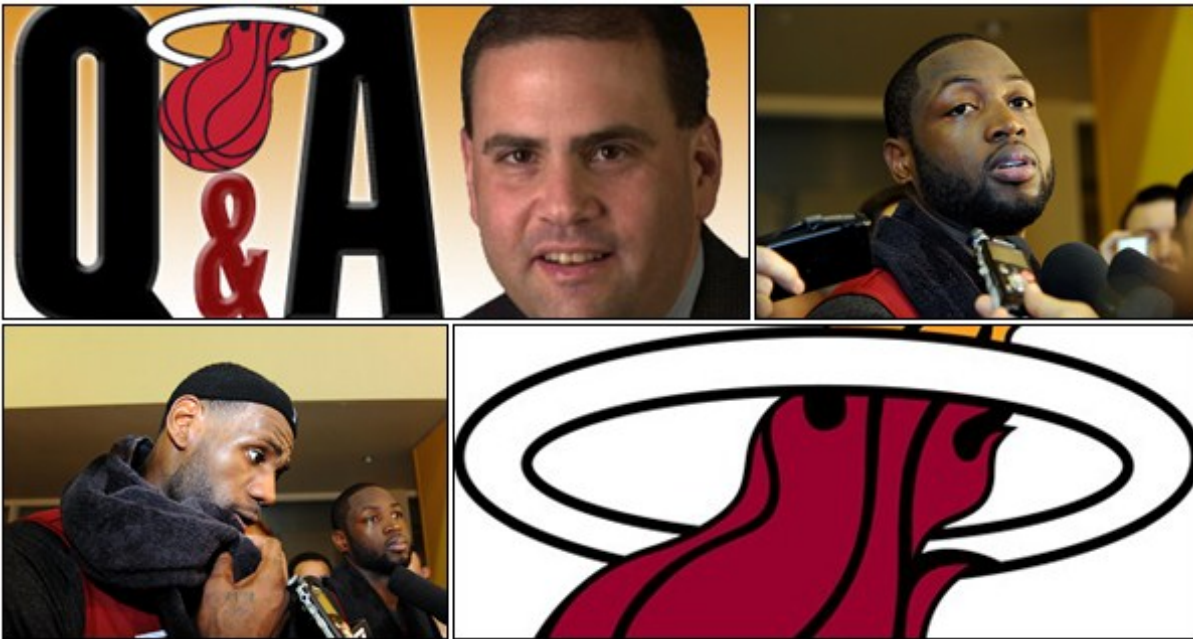
Investigators identified three "significant" suspects from the 255 arrests. They include a former high school cheerleading coach in Puerto Rico, a 33-year-old Monterrey, Mexico, man who allegedly posed as a teenage girl online to solicit pictures from minors, and a former middle school teacher from Glendora, Calif.

ICE officials declined on Tuesday to release a list of the remaining arrests in Florida.

"U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations cannot release the names of all 58 individuals arrested in Florida due to potential prosecutorial, investigative and jurisdictional concerns," Yglesias said in a statement. "Cases already included in the agency's press outreach have been vetted through our law enforcement partners, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Florida State Attorney's Office."

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