http://www.dnronline.com/update/new-former-missionary-admits-to-molesting-boy/article_f3c90248-0b5d-11e8-a5e8-7336e5f6e3a8.html

HOT TOP STORY

NEW: Former "Missionary" Admits To Molesting Boy

Pete DeLea Feb 6, 2018

A Harrisonburg man accused of molesting children while doing missionary work in Haiti pleaded guilty Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Harrisonburg.

James Daniel Arbaugh, address unknown, 40, entered a guilty plea to felony coercion or enticement of a minor.

Judge Elizabeth Dillon scheduled Arbaugh's sentence for June 13.

He faces up to 30 years in prison.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeb Terrien told Dillon that the investigation began when Rockingham County Social Services received a report from a counselor at the Family Life Resource Center in Harrisonburg.

He said Arbaugh disclosed the abuse during a Sept. 11 counseling session. Under Virginia law, health care providers are required to report suspected child abuse to social services.

Social Services called the Harrisonburg Police Department, which contacted federal agents.

Arbaugh told federal agents he produces movies to teach people in Haiti about Jesus.

He said he traveled to Haiti between 2009 and 2017.

"Arbaugh indicated he used his missionary work in Haiti to build friendships with the minors," according to a criminal complaint filed in district court. "Arbaugh acknowledged that he groomed the minors in Haiti by engaging in minor sexual activities with them so that one day they would be open to more."

During Tuesday's hearing, Arbaugh told Dillon that he molested a boy in Haiti. Arbaugh said the boy was younger than 12 years old. Prosecutors say the victim is a roughly 5-year-old boy.

On Sept. 15, Terrien said, Arbaugh allowed police to look at his laptop, which contained a picture of the boy.

Terrien said Arbaugh told police that the boy is the son of a pastor at a church in Haiti and that Arbaugh would stay with the family when he visited,

A witness corroborated the statement, prosecutors say.

A special agent with U.S. Homeland Security arrested Arbaugh on Nov. 15.

He is being held without bond at the Central Virginia Regional Jail in Orange.