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Homeland Security worker charged with soliciting kids on Facebook

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A 43-year-old Department of Homeland Security worker allegedly used Facebook to solicit more than 70 area children for sexual acts, according to authorities.

Robert B. Rennie Jr., a Loudoun County resident, was charged Oct. 24 with five counts of using a computer to solicit a child under the age of 15, after a school resource officer was tipped off to suspicious activity on a Mercer Middle School student's Facebook page.

The student, a young girl, had accepted a friend request from someone she believed was a fellow Mercer student: an account under the name Kyle Kirts, according to the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office.

The girl's parents alerted school officials that "Kirts" had solicited sexual activity from the girl in conversations on Facebook, authorities said. The school in turn alerted the Sheriff's Office.

An investigation revealed that Rennie, who worked for the agency's National Protection and Programs Directorate, was the sole user of the fictitious account, which under the name Kirts had friended mostly young girls.

Authorities said Rennie would contact the girls on Facebook and ask them to use Skype, an Internet video-calling service, for sexual purposes, though it's unclear whether any of the victims followed through on his requests. Many of the girls targeted attend Lunsford and Mercer middle schools in Loudoun County.

Authorities are still investigating the scope of Rennie's efforts to solicit sexual acts on Facebook -- he also posed as a 20-year-old George Mason University student under the same fake name, Kyle Kirts, according to Loudoun County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Liz Mills.

Most of the victims are from Chantilly and Aldie, but authorities are looking at other middle and high schools in Loudoun County and other jurisdictions, she said.

She said that although she could confirm Rennie worked for the DHS, she didn't know exactly what his job was at the federal agency.

Rennie is being held at the Loudoun County Adult Detention Center without bond.

Anyone who knows a child contacted by Kyle Kirts or Rennie on Facebook is asked to call the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division at 703-777-0475.

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Robert B. Rennie Jr.