

# Be sure you know about law enforcement sex stings

written by Sandy | August 10, 2021



*Part II of a two-part series. [Also see Part I: Be sure you know about "sex offender" scams.](#)*

By Sandy . . . Police stings of varying sorts are nothing new. Some skate very close to the edge of being entrapment, and some have crossed that line entirely. There seems to be no limit to the scenarios that law enforcement can devise in order to create more arrests.

The case of Jace Hambrick became prominent because his mother Kathleen pushed so hard for someone to listen, and finally someone did.

Jace was an immature, introverted, 20-year-old who, when he wasn't working, was online with fantasy games. That was essentially his life. He occasionally wandered through the Casual Encounters section of Craigslist and had met several women with whom he hooked up. When a person claiming to be a girl who was as into fantasy games as he was started a chat

with him, he says that when she said she was 13, he didn't believe her. He went to the address she gave and was promptly arrested and charged with attempted rape of a child – even though no child was involved.

Media pieces were written about Jace, and his mother Kathleen was invited to be on the Dr. Phil show, where she told Jace's story.

Journalist Michael Winerip, in [writing about Jace](#), was surprised that these stings target men with no criminal record or history or propensity for seeking sex with, or even having a sexual interest in, underage partners.

“An analysis of court records in Washington State stings, as well as interviews with police and prosecutors, reveals that most of the men arrested have no felony record. A strong predictor of predatory behavior is an obsession with child pornography, but at the time of their arrest, according to the State Patrol, 89 percent have none in their possession and 92 percent have no history of violent crime,” he wrote, and, “The men caught in these cases can wind up serving more time than men who are convicted of sexually assaulting and raping actual children.”

He also writes that, due to the shame associated with even an accusation of an adult seeking sex with a minor, some who have fallen victim to these stings have committed suicide.

Such is [the case of Brian Petersen](#), a 39-year-old school teacher in Texas. Brian went on a gay dating app and struck up a conversation with a man who, after some initial conversation about age, said that he was fourteen. After hearing a voice message from him, Brian concluded that this was an adult male role playing about being a youth. When he went to where they were to meet, he was arrested and charged with online solicitation of a minor. Less than two days later, Brian was dead.

About his choice to die, Brian [said in a suicide note](#) to his family, “ ‘I am deeply angry at law enforcement as they destroyed me and gave me no other solutions . . . This is the type of accusation that destroys a career and a life, no matter the outcome. I cannot live the rest of my life getting a doubting eye every time I talk to a kid near me. I will not spend the rest of my life barely surviving after losing everything. So, I choose oblivion.’ ”

In his note, he lamented, as did the journalist writing about Jace Hambrick, that these operations “. . . were not always targeted operations to catch men explicitly hunting and soliciting minors,” but instead “. . . became ‘dragnets’ that could ensnare men with no history of such desires or crimes.”

And finally, this personal report is courtesy of JEV, CSPA Media:

Florida Sex Stings are back in business. Last week it was Lake County and now its [Polk County, Florida](#). Arrests include health care workers and military service vets.

The sting is as follows: E-mail addresses found on sexual dating websites in which alleged perpetrators have signed up or logged into are submitted to the sheriff. These so-called sexually oriented dating sites are actually law enforcement websites set up to facilitate sex offender stings.

Messages come into your e-mails with chances to date others. Police are using ages of 13-14 to initiate contact, and the dialogue begins. Once anyone says yes to a date or messages with graphic dialogue, a crime has been committed. Traveling to meet up with an underage person for sexual purposes is a felony. Under Florida law, it matters not at all that no contact with an underaged person took place. Your IP address is also found by police forensics, and warrants can be obtained for further actions.

Please, please, do not use sexually oriented dating websites. Do not answer any sexually oriented text messages on any social media platform. And most of all, do not travel thinking you will be having a sexual relationship with anyone.

The fabrication of a sexual crime has been used for years in Florida. So far, constitutional battles over these "sex stings" have been argued and lost. Read the sheriff of Polk County's remarks about how these perpetrators are nasty, nasty people!

I'm not a lawyer, nor do I judge anyone here, but please follow my advice and stay away from any sexually oriented dating websites. Please.

This sounds like reasonable advice.