



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY
MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Thomas D. Gibbons
State's Attorney

157 North Main Street
Suite 402
Edwardsville, Illinois 62025

Voice: 618 692-6280
Facsimile: 618 296-7001
www.madco-sa.org

Contact: Stephanie Smith
618/692-6280; @MadisonCoSAO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 1, 2014

Media Advisory

WHO: Madison County Assistant State's Attorney speaking to 8th and 9th grade students about the dangers involved in "sexting"

WHEN: Tuesday, December 2, 2014; multiple presentations beginning at 8:22 a.m. until 1:37 p.m. (NO PRESENTATIONS between 11:00 – 12:34)

WHERE: Madison Jr/Sr High School, 600 Farrish St., Madison, IL 62060; 618.501.6267

SIGNIFICANCE: Assistant State's Attorney Lauren Heischmidt will be speaking to 8th and 9th grade students at Madison Jr/Sr High School on the dangers of sexting. The presentation will provide students with statistics on teens and sexting and those criminal statutes and penalties associated with sexting and child pornography. Additionally, high-profile cases will be discussed with the students in order to provide them with real-life examples. The Illinois School Code provides for an internet safety education curriculum to be utilized in Illinois Schools (720 ILCS 5/27-13.3).

Last year, State's Attorney Tom Gibbons announced the creation of a Children's Justice Division within his office in an effort to better coordinate his office's response to cases involving the children of Madison County. One of the goals in creating the division was to be more pro-active and communicate with children about important issues such as sexting. As a result, State's Attorney Gibbons began reaching out to local schools in order to teach children about the consequences involved in sexting. Gibbons hopes that if students are informed of the possible consequences of sexting, they will be equipped to make better decisions. "Sexting can be an extremely harmful action with devastating results," said Gibbons. "We hope that by talking with students now, we can stop dangerous and potentially criminal behavior." He added that most students do not realize that if they send an explicit photo via text or an app, they can be charged with a crime.

Assistant State's Attorney Amy Gabriel heads the Children's Justice Division and she, along with Assistant State's Attorney Heischmidt who oversees the juvenile delinquency docket, are speaking to students throughout Madison County during the 2014-2015 school year. "Our intent with these presentation is to provide the kids with a reality check about their behavior while emphasizing that their actions often have very serious consequences," said Gabriel.

Earlier this year, Gabriel and Heischmidt spoke to students in several districts including Granite City, Collinsville, Bethalto and Madison. Information on future presentations will be provided once scheduled.

###