



Internet Child Abduction Case Study

A Digital Manhunt of a Sophisticated Online Predator



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Savannah Childress

- 14-year-old female
- Student at South Davidson Middle School
- Mother is a 911 Dispatcher for a neighboring county
- Stepfather is a former Law Enforcement/Mechanic
- Participating in Online Classes due to Covid 19



Denton, NC



Denton, NC



- **1.98 Square Miles**
- **Population 1636**
(2010 CENSUS)
- **Home of the Threshers Reunion**
(ANTIQUE TRACTOR AND ENGINE SHOW)

February 11, 2021

- **Nicole (Mother) left for work between 5-6 am.**
- **Michael (stepdad) left between 7-8 am took his 6-year-old daughter to school, and then went to work.**
- **Savannah logged into her online class at 8:15**

February 11, 2021

- **Approx 3 pm Bus Driver passes by and Savannah was not waiting to get her sister off the bus**
- **Bus driver calls parents and returns to school with sister.**
- **Parents call a neighbor to check on Savannah**

February 11, 2021

- Neighbor finds the door open and no Savannah
- Michael picks up child from school and responds to home and searches
- Nicole calls 911@ 4:20 pm



Initial LEO Response


- Sgt R Ramsey arrived at 4:46 pm
- Searched the home again with parents
- Found several pieces of jewelry missing.

Initial LEO Response

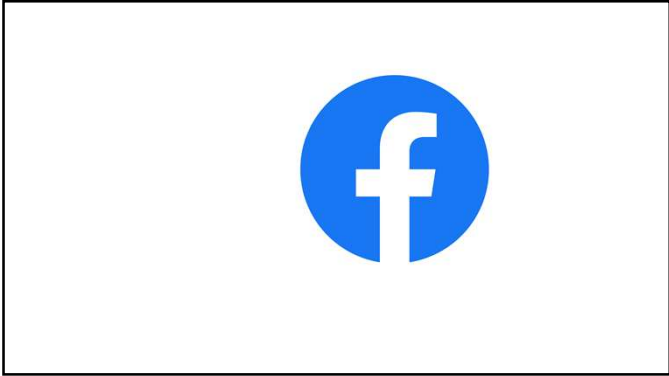
- Located Chromebook by the door with open chat conversations
- Immediately collected Chromebook and transported it to Digital Forensic Lab.
- CSI processes scene
- Collected all other media devices



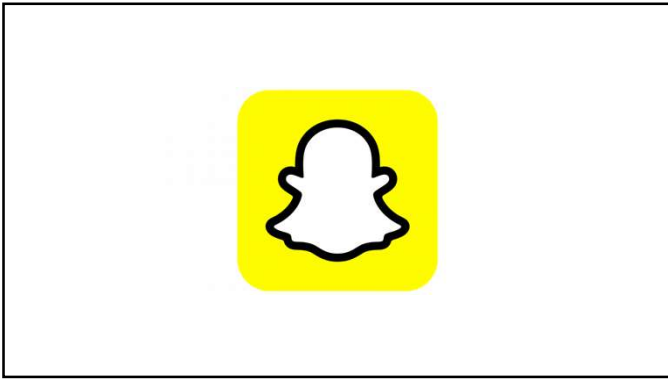
The Chromebook

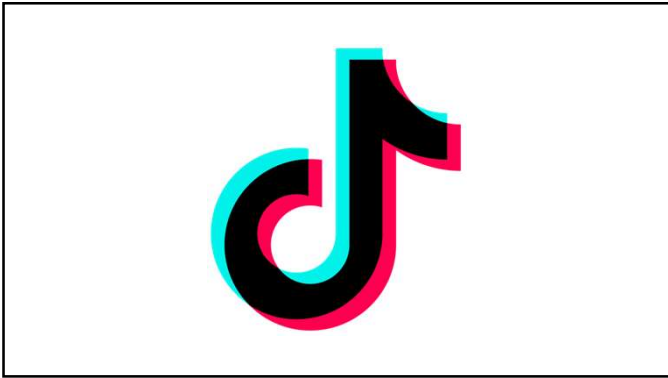


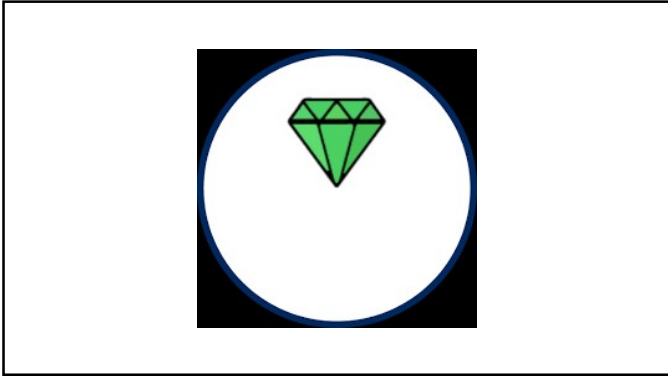
- **Chrome OS**
- **No programs stored on device**
- **No Hard Drive (Flash memory chip)**
- **Individually encrypted user accounts**
- **Must have user accounts and password to recover data**











Emerald Chat

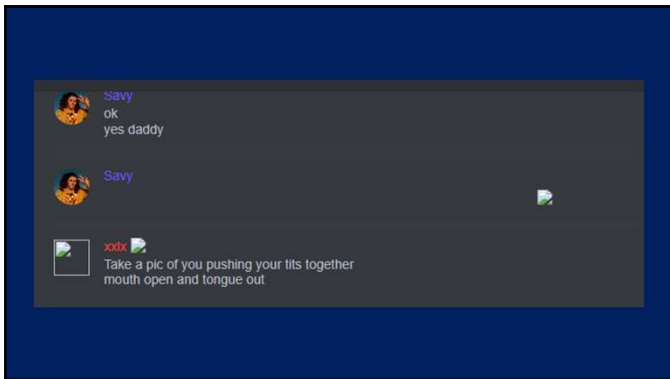


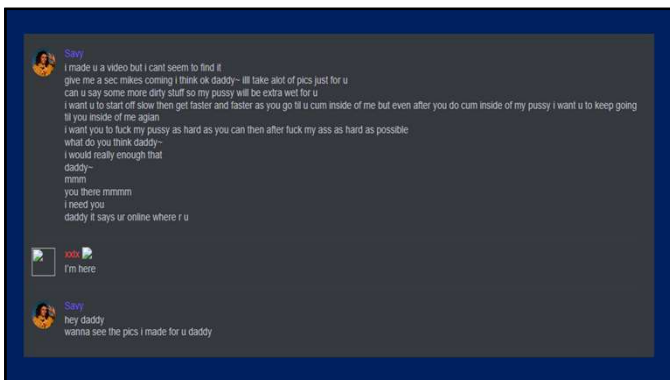
- Emerald Is The New Omegle
- Allows individuals to chat anonymously
- Hosted by Emerald Co in London England
- Has 2 employees

School Issued Device

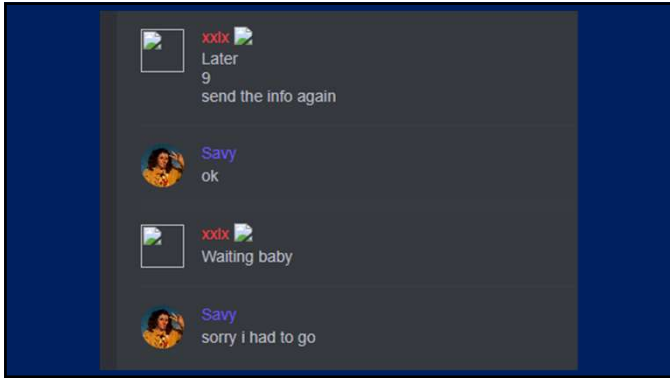
- Most school firewalls only monitor when logged into school applications
- Chromebooks allow multiple accounts
- Kids are smart and there is always a work around

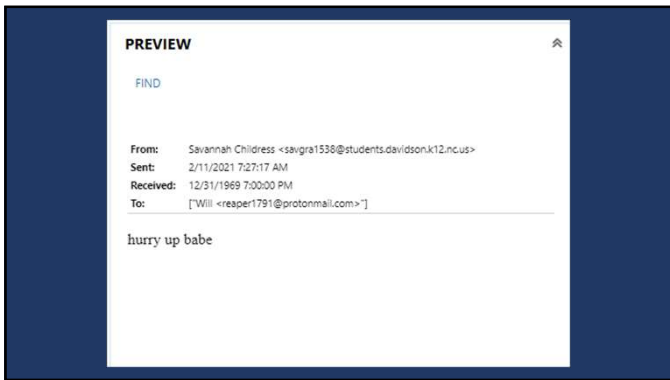












BOOTS ON THE GROUND



Interviews

- Family
- Teachers
- Friends
- Bus Driver

Amber Alert???



Amber Alert???

- The child is 17 years or younger
- The child was not taken by a parent (unless the child is in danger)
- the child is believed to have been abducted
- The abduction was reported to and investigated by a law enforcement agency.
- The child is not believed to be a runaway or voluntarily missing

PREVIEW

FIND

From: Savannah Childress <savgra1538@students.davidson.k12.nc.us>
 Sent: 2/11/2021 7:27:17 AM
 Received: 12/31/1969 7:00:00 PM
 To: [Will <reaper1791@protonmail.com>-]

hurry up babe

Suspicious Email Addresses

- **Reaper1791@protonmail.com**
- **Wh1218@protonmail.com**
- **willhedglin@gmail.com**
- **xavjones03@gmail.com (not suspect)**
- **K.williams10192005@gmail.com (not suspect)**

Proton Mail

- **Proton Mail is hosted in Switzerland (strict Swiss privacy laws)**
- **Did not comply with US legal processes (in Early 2021)**
- **End-to-end encrypted email service**

willhedglin@gmail

- **Account Deleted**
- **No data available**



Our Partners



NCSBI Criminal Apprehension Team



- Every area in Nc has a member assigned
- CAST Trained
Celluler
Analysis
Survey
Team

FBI CARD Team



- **C**hild
- **A**bduction
- **R**apid
- **D**eployment

Amber Alert (Again!!!)



If you are right and you know you are right: BE PERSISTENT!!!
Sometimes it is worth the battle!!!!

Amber Alert issued February 15

TIP LINE

- How to set it up
- Who is going to man it
- Who is going to follow up on tips



First Real Lead

February 17 First Real Lead!!!

Tip as a result of Amber Alert found Juvenile Female in Alamance County had been communicating with "Will Hedglin"

Alamance County



- ACSO Human Trafficking Task Force Made contact with 14-year-old juvenile
- Plans had been made for "Will Hedglin" to pick her up before picking up Savannah
- Alamance Juvenile backed out of plan.

Alamance County



- While communicating with the suspect, the Juvenile obtained;
- A. An image of the Suspect
 - B. An Image of the Suspect's vehicle

William Robert Ice

- 38 Year old
- Jackson Center Pa., Mercer County
- Truck Driver
- Married father of two



William Robert Ice

- **Previously Charged with solicitation in Ohio**
- **On the run from PA State Police**



Ice's Vehicle

- **Red 2002 Dodge Durango**
- **Pennsylvania Registration JLL-7659**
- **PVC Pipe mounted to the roof**
- **Caught on LPR leaving PA prior to abduction**



**PA State Police and the FBI responded to Ice's home
Interviewed wife and kids and searched house**

Info from the Ice House

- Ice ran from Sting (went home)
- Collected laptop hard drives
 - Collected all guns
- Left and a written note containing Savannah's name, date of birth, and address as well as several other's info including the juvenile in Alamance

Finally A Big Break



- On Feb 20 Ice text his wife from a new number
- Phone was purchased in Walmart in Oxford Mississippi with 2 other burners
- Video collected of Ice in the Walmart

Emotional Roller-coaster



Burner Phone went Active

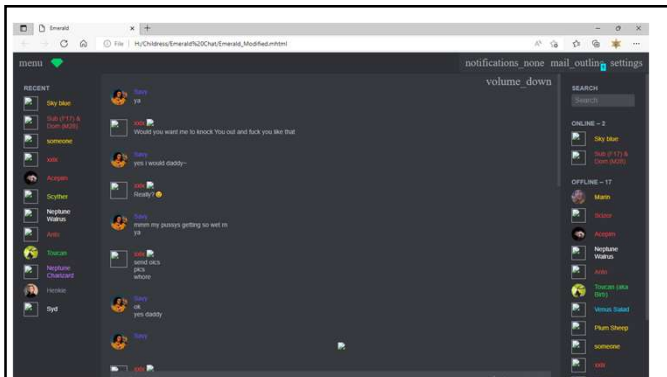


**Loves Travel Stop
I40
Palestine,
Arkansas**

McDonald's



- Take down team was getting into position when Lonoke Police Officers Brandon Ray, & Cody Carpenter approach suspicious vehicle in parking lot.
- State Police, Corporal Mark Blackerby initiates chase.
- Ice crashes into snow bank
- Savannah runs from car and Ice shoots himself








The Aftermath

- Savannah was taken to Hospital in Little Rock
- Feb 21, NCSBI flew her to Davidson County Air Port
- Transported directly to The Dragonfly House CAC for interview
- Reunited with family


















verizon 

During this investigation, investigators stopped counting after 60 exigent requests for information

facebook

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