



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Incident Location:** 100 W. Illinois, Urbana

**Date/Time of information Release:** August 16, 2024, 11:59 p.m.

**Date/Time of Incident:** August 6, 2024, 3:15 p.m.



**LURING OF A CHILD, INDECENT SOLICITATION OF A MINOR**

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On August 6, 2024, at approximately 8:35 p.m., the Urbana Police Department received a call from the mother of a female middle school-aged child. She reported that her child had reported that as she was walking home from the Urbana Middle School around 3:15 p.m. earlier that day, a white male with a brown beard with some grey, and wearing a baseball hat driving a white pickup truck, stopped his vehicle as the student was walking on the sidewalk. The driver then asked the student if she needed a ride. The student rejected the offer. The driver then asked the student if they wanted to make some money. The student again said “no!” and fled on foot to a safe location.

At the time the incident was reported to the police department, the student's mother was provided with inaccurate guidance regarding how to proceed. Specifically, she was informed that no further action could be taken due to the minimal description of the suspect and vehicle provided, as well as the amount of time that had elapsed since the incident had taken place. However, an officer should have been dispatched to investigate the matter immediately following her report.

Following the incident, a member of the public made a social media post expressing frustration and anger over how the incident was handled. The Urbana Police Department responded to the post by providing some information about what had been learned thus far. Portions of the police department post were inaccurate, unprofessional, and inappropriate. The social media post has since been removed. The Chief of Police has personally met with the family and the victim to discuss the matter, and to address and apologize for the initial failure to respond and for the Department’s social media post.

Detectives were assigned to the case and have since been investigating the incident and looking for evidence. The victim was interviewed by detectives and provided information that focused their efforts on a potential offender. On August 16, 2024 at approximately 10:07 p.m., Urbana Police Department detectives arrested Hunter W. Simmons, a 34-year-old Seymour man for one count of luring a minor and one count of indecent solicitation of a minor. Simmons was transported to the Champaign County Satellite Jail and left in the custody of corrections staff.

Despite this arrest, Urbana Police Department patrol officers will provide extra patrol to the area of the Urbana Middle School campus moving forward.

Chief Larry D. Boone said, *“While we are an organization comprised of humans who make mistakes, we cannot and should not make mistakes when it comes to the handling of incidents involving the most vulnerable members of our society. We apologize to the victim, their family, and the public generally.”*

Urbana Police ask that anyone who has additional information please call 217-384-2320. Arrangements can be made for information to be shared privately. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous may also submit tips to Crime Stopper by phone at 217-373-TIPS (217-373-8477); online at [373tips.com](https://373tips.com); or the “P3 Tips” mobile app.

Citizens are reminded that information provided to Crime Stoppers is entirely anonymous, with no caller ID tracking or recorded conversations. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards of \$5,000 for tips leading to an arrest in any homicide case, \$2,500 for tips resulting in the arrest of a suspect in a firearm-related felony, and up to \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of individuals responsible for other crimes.

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