

TRUTH BEHIND RAPE HOAX LEADS TO ARREST

Man, 20, is suspected of having sex with girl he met online who lied about the encounter

PAULINE REPARD • U-T

ENCINITAS

Sheriff's detectives have arrested a 20-year-old Vista man who they say had sex with a 15-year-old Encinitas girl who initially told authorities she was raped by three men rather than admit to her parents she had gone off with someone she met on the Internet.

Jose Adrian Cano was arrested Tuesday night as he was leaving his home to meet again with the girl, sheriff's Detective Pete Carrillo of the sex crimes unit said Wednesday.

"Fortunately, he hadn't been listening to the news and didn't know about the story of a stranger-rape," Carrillo said.

Cano was booked on suspi-



Jose Adrian Cano

cion of unlawful intercourse with a minor; lewd acts with a 15-year-old and contacting a minor online with intent to commit a sex crime.

Investigators say they have evidence of three more underage victims and want any others to come forward to report contact with Cano.

He is being held in the Vista jail without bail on a federal immigration hold. Lauren Mack, Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokeswoman, said Cano is listed in the agency's re-

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CORDS as Cano-Cid and is suspected of being in the United States illegally.

Mack said Cano was arrested earlier this year by a San Diego County police agency, and federal officials returned him to Mexico without a deportation hearing.

The story the girl told her mother and sheriff's deputies on Friday set off a massive weekend manhunt and an intense media blitz, including the release of composite sketches of the supposed rapists.

The teen gave detailed descriptions of the men she claimed kidnapped her as she was walking home from San Dieguito Academy. She said she was driven around and sexually assaulted, then returned to the spot where she was picked up.

Under additional questioning Monday by a detective, the 10th-grader admitted that she made up the story to avoid telling her parents she had sex with a man she met through a social networking site.

"Her parents had warned her about staying off the In-

Protecting children from Internet predators

- Choose Internet or cell phone services that offer parental controls on children's usage.
- Use a free Web browser such as Kidzui.com or services such as McGruff Safeguard, at gomcgruff.com.
- The San Diego Internet Crimes Against Children task force has additional tips at sdicac.org.

ternet and not talking online to strangers," Carrillo said. "Unfortunately, she didn't listen."

Carrillo said investigators learned of the Boston-based site, mocospace.com, where people of any age can submit a personal profile and "hook up" with others by sharing their cell phone numbers. Carrillo said there is no monitoring to ensure minors do not fall prey to adults.

"This brings up a new fear because so many children have cell phones," said Detective Randy Avila of the juvenile crimes unit. "This goes to show, parents need to monitor their kids. You don't know who is out there."

Carrillo said the girl underwent a standard rape-kit test that included collection of DNA evidence.

He declined to say whether that DNA linked Cano to the crime.

Avila said investigators found Cano's profile and photograph on the social network site, as well as the girl's profile.

"They knew each other's ages," Carrillo said. "He was dealing with someone in high school. She was picked up and dropped off at her school."

Investigators believe Cano and the girl were corresponding for at least a month but met in person only once, on Friday.

Carrillo said the teenager will not face charges of filing a false crime report. No decision has been made about charging her family with the expense of the four-day investigation, he said.