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Prepared by: Clinton County EMA

Purpose: This briefing is a public, open-source situational awareness product intended to support local planning and partner coordination. It summarizes publicly reported information on the 764 Nihilist Group to aid threat awareness, pattern recognition, and baseline understanding for safety, security, and emergency management stakeholders in Clinton County and surrounding jurisdictions. It is not an investigative file and is not a warning message. It contains no classified, privileged, or restricted information and may be shared freely.

Clinton County Awareness Brief: **764 NIHILIST / "764 GROUP" – ORGANIZATIONAL THREAT PROFILE**

Date: 20 November 2025

PURPOSE

- Provide Clinton County (Ohio) elected officials and public-safety partners a rapid-reference overview of the online extremist network known as "764," "764 Nihilist," or "the 764 Group."
- Support situational awareness and protective planning if 764-linked activity, victims, or subjects are identified locally; not intended as an investigative file or public messaging product.

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

- 764 is a decentralized, internationally operating online sextortion and exploitation network rooted in nihilistic violent extremism and accelerationist ideology.
- The network targets minors and vulnerable individuals online, coercing sexual abuse, self-harm, and other serious violence for ideological, sadistic, and status-driven reasons.
- U.S. authorities now treat 764 as a violent extremist / terror network and a priority investigative matter, with cases active across multiple FBI field offices.
- This awareness brief is intended to be quickly readable (<5 minutes) by non-technical leaders needing immediate context in the event of local cases, threats, or media attention.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 764 is best understood as a loose, transnational network of online predators and extremists who mix child sexual exploitation, coerced self-harm, and ideological hate into a "nihilistic violent extremist" (NVE) subculture.
- Primary targets are teens and young adults—often isolated, struggling with mental health, or seeking belonging in online gaming, chat, and "edgy" meme spaces.

- Key tactics include grooming, sextortion, psychological coercion, online "challenges" that escalate harm, production of digital "lorebooks" (collections of abuse material and violence) as status currency, and threats to victims and families.
- Ideological framing blends nihilism, accelerationism, occult/Satanist and neo-Nazi themes, and hatred of institutions, but sadism and power over victims appear as primary motivators.
- For a county like Clinton County, the threat surface is almost entirely online: local youth can be victimized and local residents can participate as offenders without any physical travel, creating law-enforcement, school, and governance challenges if a case surfaces.

ORIGINS, EVOLUTION, AND LEADERSHIP

- Origins and early structure
 - 764 emerged around 2021 from the earlier "CVLT" network, itself an online extremist child-abuse ring blending nihilism, neo-Nazism, and exploitation.
 - Founder of 764 is reported as Bradley Cadenhead, a Texas teen who built a Discord-based abuse server; he was later sentenced to 80 years in prison in 2023, but the network persisted and splintered.
- Evolution and subgroups
 - After early takedowns, 764 reconstituted as a more decentralized international network, with subgroups such as "764 Inferno" operating semi-autonomously while sharing ideology and methods.
 - The group is also linked to a broader consortium called "the Com," connecting 764 actors to other cybercriminal and extremist nodes.
- Notable alleged leaders (documented in official or major media sources)
 - U.S. Department of Justice cases identify individuals including Prasan Nepal ("Trippy") and Leonidas Varagianis ("War") as leaders of a 764 Inferno subgroup accused of operating a global child exploitation enterprise using coercion and extortion of minors.
 - Recent terrorism-related charges against an alleged Arizona leader describe 764 as a network whose members target youth to encourage self-harm and potentially violence.
- Law-enforcement milestones
 - 2023: Conviction and 80-year sentence of founder Cadenhead in Texas.
 - 2021-2025: Multiple members or affiliates arrested for sextortion, child sexual abuse material (CSAM) offenses, and violent attacks in several countries.
 - 2024-2025: DOJ and international partners announce major takedowns of 764 leaders and associates, characterizing 764 as a terroristic network seeking to "destroy civilized society" via exploitation of vulnerable populations.
 - 2025: FBI publicly notes that all 55 field offices have open 764-linked investigations, underscoring the network's widespread footprint.

IDEOLOGY, NARRATIVE, AND GOALS

- Core worldview
 - Nihilistic rejection of moral norms, empathy, and institutions; glorification of cruelty, humiliation, and societal collapse.
- Ideological blends
 - Documented influences include neo-Nazism, white supremacy, antifeminism, satanic/occult themes, and misanthropic hatred of religious and ethnic minorities—often combined chaotically rather than coherently.

- Accelerationist objectives
 - Open sources describe 764's "occult accelerationist" goals as seeking social unrest and the downfall of the current world order, including the U.S. government, primarily through the corruption and exploitation of youth.
- Analytic framing
 - Ideology is used to justify and glamorize exploitation, but available reporting suggests that status-seeking and sadistic gratification, not a coherent political program, are central drivers.

MODUS OPERANDI AND TACTICS

- Online ecosystem
 - Operates via encrypted or semi-closed platforms (e.g., Discord, Telegram, gaming chats, private social-media groups), migrating rapidly when exposed.
 - Uses pseudonyms, layered vetting, and invite-only channels; members may maintain multiple handles and burner accounts.
- Targeting and grooming
 - Searches for minors and young adults in gaming, meme, and teen forums, focusing on those who express loneliness, self-hatred, or interest in "dark" content.
 - Grooming blends flattery, peer pressure, fear, and promises of belonging in a secret, elite community.
- Coercion and exploitation
 - Network uses sextortion and blackmail to pressure victims into escalating abuse and self-harm, threatening to share existing material if victims do not comply.
 - Members compile "lorebooks" or similar collections of abuse and violence, used as digital currency and status markers within the network.
- Internal status and reward systems
 - Status is linked to perceived extremity, "successes" in coercion, and contributions to shared material; some subgroups appear to rank members accordingly.
- Security and evasion
 - Uses VPNs, disposable accounts, shifting servers, and coded language to obscure identities and evade content moderation and law enforcement.
- Real-world spillover
 - Documented cases include cyberstalking, interstate threats, animal abuse, and serious sexual exploitation offenses linked to 764-branded accounts or subgroups.

MEMBERSHIP, DEMOGRAPHICS, AND RECRUITMENT

- Demographic tendencies (with caveats)
 - Many identified members are male and, in their teens, or early 20s; some are older adults acting as organizers or "mentors."
- Geographic spread
 - Cases and victims documented in North America, Europe, and other regions; U.S. and European authorities treat 764 and related networks as transnational.
- Role of psychological vulnerability
 - Recruits often present with prior trauma, mental-health challenges, social isolation, or attraction to extreme content, making them more susceptible to manipulation.
- Recruitment vectors

- Entry points include "edgy" Discord servers, extremist meme pages, online fandoms, and small invite-only chats that gradually escalate content and demands.

VICTIMOLOGY AND HARM PATTERNS (NON-GRAPHIC)

- Victim profile
 - Primarily minors (often early teens), but also vulnerable adults, targeted through social media, gaming platforms, and chat applications.
 - Victims frequently report isolation, shame, and fear of disclosure, which offenders exploit to deepen control.
- Harm patterns
 - Sexual exploitation and sextortion, including coerced production of self-abuse imagery under threat of exposure.
 - Psychological coercion into self-harm attempts or dangerous acts; in some cases, pressure to involve or harm others in the household.
 - Long-term trauma, including post-traumatic stress, depression, and suicidality requiring sustained therapeutic support.

THREAT RELEVANCE TO CLINTON COUNTY (OHIO) AND SIMILAR JURISDICTIONS

- Likely impact channels
 - Local youth victimization via remote offenders; nothing in 764's structure limits targeting to large cities or particular states.
 - Sextortion and self-harm cases could emerge through school reports, hospital presentations, or parent complaints, with 764 branding only discovered later in digital evidence.
 - Possibility of local participants who consume or distribute 764-linked material, acting as amplifiers rather than core leaders.
- Detection vectors in a county context
 - School resource officers, school counselors, and mental-health providers noticing sudden distress, withdrawal, or references to 764 or "lorebooks."
 - Parents, youth pastors, and pediatricians observing abrupt behavioral changes tied to online interactions, secrecy, or unexplained threats.
 - Local law enforcement digital-forensics teams encountering 764-branded files, servers, or handles in other exploitation or self-harm cases.
- Distinguishing evidence vs speculation
 - Current public reporting indicates widespread national activity; no specific, public 764 cases are tied to Clinton County as of this review.
 - Local risk is therefore assessed on exposure potential (online reach and youth vulnerability), not on known active cells.

RISK RATING (CLINTON COUNTY PERSPECTIVE)

- Victimization of at least one local youth by 764-linked actors (24-month horizon): Likely (70-89%) – National scale of activity, investigations across all FBI field offices, and rural/urban parity of online access suggest high probability that some local youth may be exposed or targeted over time.

- Discovery of a local subject distributing or engaging with 764-branded content: Possible (50–69%) – Many 764 arrests concentrate in larger jurisdictions, but open cases show geographically diverse offenders; local presence cannot be assumed, but is more than a remote risk.
- 764-linked incident escalating into targeted physical violence in the county: Unlikely (30–49%) – Main harm vector is online exploitation and self-harm; however, ideologically motivated crossover to offline violence remains a documented concern in related ecosystems.
- Major reputational or governance impact (high-profile case touching schools or local institutions): Possible (50–69%) – Even a single victim or offender with 764 ties can generate intense public and media scrutiny of local systems' preparedness and communication.

INDICATORS, WARNING SIGNS, AND ANALYTIC GAPS

- Indicators and warning behaviors (general, non-technical)
 - Self-identification with "764," "Nihilist," or related symbols/handles in usernames, file names, or private chats.
 - References to "lorebooks" or trading of disturbing compilations as status objects.
 - Sudden increase in secretive device use, especially at night, combined with extreme anxiety about parents or adults seeing messages.
 - Online bragging about coercing others, making them "do anything," or celebrating their suffering.
- Intelligence and data gaps
 - Exact size of 764 and its subgroups, including 764 Inferno and any successor brands.
 - Degree of overlap between 764 and other extremist or organized crime networks operating in the U.S. and abroad.
 - Comprehensive understanding of underreported victims, especially in rural or low-resource communities.
- Priority Intelligence Requirements (local)
 - Any local case involving sextortion, self-harm coercion, or CSAM where "764," "Inferno," or similar branding appears in content or communications.
 - Any indication of local actors participating in production or dissemination of 764-linked material, or attempting to recruit peers into such networks.

MITIGATION, PREVENTION, AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES (LOCAL ACTIONS)

- Parents and guardians
 - Maintain age-appropriate, ongoing conversations about online safety, coercion, and the right to seek help if threatened or blackmailed.
 - Encourage children to report suspicious or frightening online interactions; support them in filing reports to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) CyberTipline and local law enforcement.
- Schools and youth-serving organizations
 - Train counselors, SROs, and staff on sextortion and self-harm coercion indicators, including emerging networks like 764.
 - Ensure clear, victim-centered reporting pathways and post-incident support, emphasizing that victims are not to blame for being coerced.
- Law enforcement and prosecutors
 - Integrate 764 and similar NVE networks into existing threat assessment, Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC), and cyber units; coordinate early with federal partners.

- Emphasize trauma-informed interviewing and careful handling of digital evidence to minimize re-traumatization of victims.
- Local elected officials and senior leadership
 - If a 764-linked case surfaces, message calmly: focus on victim support, law-enforcement coordination, and practical prevention for families; avoid repeating slogans or imagery that amplify the group's "brand."
 - Use incidents, if they occur, as catalysts for improved digital-safety education, not for panic or stigmatizing youth.

SOURCE RELIABILITY, METHODOLOGY, AND CAVEATS

- Methodology
 - Last open-source review: 20 November 2025.
 - Source set includes: official DOJ/FBI releases; child-protection NGOs; reputable media; and research/advocacy organizations focused on extremism and online harm.
 - Core claims (e.g., network purpose, ideological description, major arrests) are supported by at least two independent reputable sources or one primary law-enforcement document.
- Caveats
 - Online extremist and exploitation networks rebrand, splinter, and migrate platforms quickly; specific names and platforms may change even if underlying behaviors persist.
 - Official cases reveal only a fraction of total activity; both harm and membership are likely under-counted due to underreporting and hidden victimization.
 - This BBP supports situational awareness and planning only; it is not an evidentiary document, intelligence estimate, or substitute for case-specific investigation and legal review.