



Financial Aid News

Identity Theft & College Students

Did you know?

- College students (Ages 18-29) are the number one age targeted by identity theft.
- “A Federal Trade Commission study indicates that 18-29 year olds have the most ID theft complaints.”

What is Identity Theft?

- The government describes identity theft as, “all types of crime in which someone wrongfully obtains and uses another person’s personal data in some way that involves fraud or deception, typically for economic gain.”

Why are students targeted?

- In an interview with CBS, financial author Dave Ramsey gives three reasons why criminals target college students.
 1. Students can simply be naive. Offers may seem great, but in actuality are scams.
 2. Students receive anywhere from 1-6 credit card offers per week. Criminals will use unshredded offers and apply for those cards using a different address.
 3. Students don’t examine financial records.

What can I do to protect myself from identity theft?

- The common rule of thumb is to PROTECT YOUR DIGITS! Being cynical when people ask for your personal information may be the key to keeping you from the perils that accompany identity theft. Cautiousness helps in the following areas.
 1. Telemarketing/ Phishing schemes- Be wary! Giving someone your digits over the phone or internet, even when it sound legitimate, can be dangerous.
 2. Public Computers/ Wi-Fi Hotspots- Erasing temporary files, disabling the auto complete features before starting, and reassuring yourself that you logged off can help.
 3. Personal Computer - Avoid sharing info on social networking sites (Facebook) such as birth date, address, and telephone number.
 4. Mail- Shred your credit card offers and old bank statements and pick up your mail as soon as possible if it is not in a locked mailbox.
 5. Order your credit Report! - Don’t be intimidated by the thought of requesting your credit report. You are eligible for one free credit report annually from each of the major credit bureaus, so take advantage of it! Check the report to make sure everything matches what you have records of. If there is something different, find out why! (www.annualcreditreport.com)

Resources:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fraud/websites/idtheft.html>

<http://www.idtheftawareness.com/docs/CollegeStudents.php>