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**Do You Know An Identity Thief**

**By D Campbell**

What makes identity theft the epidemic it has become? The fact that half of all victims know the person that committed the theft according to the Better Business Bureau's 2005 Fraud Survey.

Watch out for these red flags

1. Resentment

I worked for a company that handled lost and stolen credit card reports. I don't know how many times someone called and said their ex or soon to be ex spouse stole all of their financial information and went on a vengeance spending spree.

Of course it's not limited to former husbands and wives but anger is a powerful emotion. The obvious familiarity, total access to private information combined with the desire to do as much damage as possible makes this the most devastating form of id theft financially and emotionally.

No matter what the relationship, always keep a close eye on your credit and other financial information.

2. The Snoop.

The people that ask you too many questions of a very personal nature. Its easy to not think anything of it. The person may be a relative, neighbor or close friend but ask yourself (and them) exactly why do they need to know your date of birth or social? You may even catch them snooping thru your personal information.

Now it could all be perfectly innocent but with id theft the number one crime for the fifth year in a row, do you really want to take that chance?

3. Addiction

## Do You Know An Identity Thief

"I don't have any drug addicts in my family." Good deal but substance abusers are not the only people who will steal from you. Alcoholics, people addicted to porn, even compulsive shoppers are potential identity thieves.

Gambling and pornography on the internet are billion dollar industries. According to Jim Vaules, an identity theft expert for Lexis Nexis, "You see a lot of internet gambling and pornography sites being charged to stolen cards. [Identity Thieves] might use the card of a family member or friend"

Any kind of obsessive behaviour can throw a person's normally rational judgement out the window because the only thing that counts is satisfying the habit NOW!

Addiction also means more than likely the identity thief can and will justify their actions. Even if you catch them red handed, its very possible they'll say its not their fault, put the blame on you or just shrug their shoulders and say "so what?"

What do you do in instances like this? Filing a police report may not be a bad idea.

Author Liz Pullman Weston of MSN Money says "A little tough love may be the only way to stop a miscreant from becoming a career criminal"

Even if the addict apologizes profusely and vows never to do it again (quite common) the odds are high they will do it again unless they get some counseling. Filing a police report no matter how reluctant you are could be a step in that direction.

There are of course other symptoms. Somebody living above their means or mail that looks like its been tampered with. Identity theft requires constant vigilance with credit monitoring, storing private information in secure places, shredding documents etc.

If identity theft happens to you, the best thing besides recovering your identity will be your peace of mind in realizing it wasn't anyone you know.

Daryl Campbell is a writer and owner of Campbell Marketing L.L.C. What's the best way to fight id theft and fraud? Free information. Get featured articles from experts as well as tips,resources and up to the minute news at

<http://fightidtheft.winthemarket.com>

### **Fighting Identity Theft**

**By James H. Dimmitt**

Chances are good that you know someone who has been victimized by the fastest growing crime – identity theft. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported that there were 10 million cases of identity theft in 2002 alone. It's estimated that someone's identity is stolen every 79 seconds.

## Do You Know An Identity Thief

The bad news is with increasing amounts of personal information available to an experienced identity thief, it shows few signs of slowing down. The good news is that identity fraud is now a federal crime with stiff penalties for those who perpetrate these crimes.

Here are a few simple steps you can take now to minimize your risk:

- 1) Check your credit report annually, if not more often. Most victims of identity theft don't realize they've been victimized until 14 months after the crime. By then the damage is done and you will spend a significant amount of time and money trying to correct it.
- 2) Keep your Social Security number private. Do not have it printed on your personal checks or drivers license. Do not share it with anyone, including merchants, unless they can provide a good reason for having it. Once someone has your Social Security number they have the key to unlocking your identity and using it fraudulently.
- 3) Shred offers for pre-approved credit cards that you receive by mail. Do the same with any receipts that contain account numbers or your Social Security number. Identity thieves are not afraid to go "dumpster diving" in order to obtain your personal information.

Identity theft has become the fastest growing crime because it is the most profitable crime. On average, the loss from identity theft is about \$18,000.00. Taking these precautions now can you save you from becoming another statistic in the fight against identity theft.

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James H. Dimmitt

James is editor of "TO YOUR CREDIT", a weekly free newsletter. Subscribe to the newsletter by visiting

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Fighting Identity Theft

WILL THE REAL YOU PLEASE STAND UP? How To Prevent Identity Theft

9 Ways To Outsmart An Identity Thief

Identity Theft: It Can Happen to You!

How Identity Theft Can Happen To You

Paylocker Pro  
Scams Exposed



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