



## AFSA Education Foundation

919 18th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006

Phone: (202) 296-5544 Fax: (202) 223-0321 Web site: [www.afsaef.org](http://www.afsaef.org)

---

For Immediate Release

Contact: Lynne Strang  
(202) 296-5544, ext. 613

### FIVE WAYS COLLEGE STUDENTS CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST IDENTITY THEFT

**WASHINGTON, July 27, 2006.** . . . .As college students get ready to head back to school, the American Financial Services Association Education Foundation (AFSAEF) has this advice for them about identity theft: don't think it can't happen to you.

"Millions of people have their identity stolen each year," says Susie Irvine, AFSAEF's president and chief executive officer. "Students may be among those who are most vulnerable, especially if they're careless with their credit cards or leave personal information lying around in their dormitory rooms."

AFSAEF recommends the following to help college students avoid becoming an identity theft victim:

- **Keep your credit card in a secure place.** If it's lost or stolen, notify your card issuer immediately.
- **Buy a shredder.** Destroy credit card applications and other financial information before trashing them.
- **Don't let your mail pile up.** Before going home for the weekend or a holiday break, stop delivery of your mail or ask someone you trust to collect it for you.
- **Review credit card and bank statements.** Don't toss them aside and forget about them. Look for any suspicious charges. After paying bills, store your statements in a secure place where they can't be seen.
- **Protect your computer.** Don't download files or click on links sent from strangers. Install firewalls to guard against hackers and other threats. If you have a laptop, don't leave it unattended in public places.

In addition, AFSAEF encourages consumers of all ages to visit [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com) to get their free annual credit report and [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft), the Federal Trade Commission's Web site with information on deterring, detecting and defending against identity theft.

Based in Washington, D.C., AFSAEF ([www.afsaef.org](http://www.afsaef.org)) develops education materials and programs to help consumers become financially literate. Among its initiatives are "*Understanding Credit Cards*," an e-brochure and MoneySKILL ([www.moneyskill.org](http://www.moneyskill.org)), a free, Internet-based personal finance curriculum for high schools and other interested organizations. AFSAEF is affiliated with the American Financial Services Association (AFSA), a national trade association for financial services firms that lend to consumers and small businesses.

###