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Social Media Identity Theft Tips

Did you know that according to the Federal Trade Commission, as many as **1 in 10** Ohioans under the age of 19 could be victims of identity theft? That number jumps to almost **1 in 5** for college-aged students. Given these statistics, it is important that you learn about ways to keep safe while using social networking sites.

Social media websites were created with the intention of bringing people together in a positive way, but we are beginning to see these people misusing this technology. With the increase in popularity of social networking sites, comes increased vulnerability; you could become a victim of identity theft. Here are some action steps that can help.

1. Anyone can pose as someone he or she isn't. Never friend someone you don't know in person and make sure that you do not give information out to people you don't know.
2. Keep your personal identifiers ~ your name, address, date of birth, social security number, credit card number ~ to yourself. Don't post your information or anyone else's.
3. Post only information that you are comfortable with the whole world seeing. Remember, that nothing you post is ever really private and once its out there, you can never get it back. Many colleges and employers are now looking at social networking sites to check out your reputation.
4. If you ever discover someone using your likeness in the social media, be very persistent in contacting the site's administrators. All sites have procedures for reporting concerns or issues.
5. Despite all the work you may do to protect yourself, you still need to use a good security software package to keep yourself and your information safe and secure. Set and check your privacy controls on all of the sites that you and your family visit.
6. If you do become a victim of criminal identity theft, contact your local law enforcement agency.

For more tips on keeping your identity safe, go to <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/IdentityTheft> or call 1-888-MY-ID-4-ME (1-888- 694-3463).

Sources:

www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/tech/tec14.shtm

Robert Siciliano, www.IDTheftSecurity.com