



PARENT LETTER

(Date)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are working on a lesson in school to help students understand the importance of protecting their identity and other personal information, especially in an online environment

While most of us tend to think that children cannot become victims of identity theft, we are seeing a growing number of reports where their identities are being used to create new credit accounts, apply for government benefits, and even open bank accounts using their names and Social Security Numbers. A study in 2012 found that 1 in 40 households with children under the age of 18 had at least one child whose personal information was accessed illegally.* These results are alarming, and therefore, we adults need to be more aware of this possibility with our children.

If you believe you or your child may be a victim of identity theft, it will be necessary to take action immediately. For more information about the signs of child identity theft and what to do, visit the FTC's web site at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0040-child-identity-theft>.

Taking some time to talk to your child about protecting their identity would be a good way to reinforce what we are discussing in class. You can also use the sources listed below to inform your discussion.

- To discuss Internet safety for kids, including information on passwords and online chatting go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLO3lqYW9vE>
- To discuss steps for creating stronger passwords go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEmF3lylvr4>
- Use the following blog article to discuss potential sources of identity theft: <http://www.experian.com/blogs/ask-experian/survey-findings-are-consumers-making-it-easier-for-identity-thieves/> (Note: The data in this blog is a summary of a survey conducted by Consumerinfo.com, a subsidiary of Experian.)
- Use the ten tips in the following article to talk about cell phone identity theft: <https://what-is-privacy.com/2012/07/how-to-avoid-cell-phone-identity-theft/>

If you have any questions or concerns about these topics, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Teacher's Name

(* This data is from the Child Identity Fraud Report, sponsored by the Identity Theft Assistance Center (ITAC) and conducted by Javelin Strategy & Research in 2012)