



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR  
CREDIT COUNSELING

*Knowing the difference can  
make all the difference.*

## ***NFCC PRESS RELEASE***

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### **NFCC LAUNCHES NATIONAL PROTECT YOUR IDENTITY WEEK**

*New Web site and Community Events across the Country Will Educate Consumers*

Silver Spring, MD – Identity theft is a crime that won't go away. In spite of doing everything right, consumers nonetheless can find themselves victimized, forced to spend time and money restoring their good name and good credit.

Recognizing the need for a nationwide grassroots consumer education outreach, the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) will launch the inaugural Protect Your Identity Week (PYIW) October 19-25, 2008. NFCC Member Agencies in more than 100 locations across the nation will conduct ID theft workshops, credit report reviews, and shredding events, in addition to providing a variety of other protection oriented education. All events are free and open to the public.

Identity theft touched the lives of more than eight million consumers last year, with thefts totaling close to \$50 billion. According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) ID theft has been the top consumer complaint for the past five years in a row.

“We need to fight back, and the way to do that is to arm consumers with concrete steps they can implement into their daily lives,” said Gail Cunningham, spokesperson for the NFCC. “We are all vulnerable to ID theft, making it even more critical that we stay aware of the latest schemes, and understand how to protect ourselves. The nonprofit, community-based NFCC Member Agencies are well-positioned to deliver this type of education in the communities they serve,” she continued.

As a complement to the community events, the NFCC created a consumer Web site developed to highlight PYIW events and provide valuable identity theft awareness and prevention education. The Web site, [www.ProtectYourIDNow.org](http://www.ProtectYourIDNow.org), features a map where consumers can locate National Protect Your Identity Week events near them; the Identity Theft Risk Check<sup>SM</sup>, an interactive quiz to help consumers assess their risk of identity theft; a video of an actual victim; steps to take if a consumer is a victim of identity theft; and identity theft protection tips and resources.

Underscoring the importance of educating consumers regarding the perils of ID theft is the impressive list of organizations which have shown their support by becoming a Coalition Member: Council of Better Business Bureaus, National Education Association Member Benefits, National Crime Prevention Council, Jump\$tart Coalition, Consumer Action, Consumer Federation of America, Credit Union National Association, ID Theft Resource Center, AFSA Education Foundation, ABA Education Foundation, National Council of La Raza, and Junior Achievement USA.

Additionally, MSN Money is the PYIW 2008 National Media Sponsor, and will host a community message board on Tuesday, October 21 where consumers can post their questions about ID theft and have them answered by an NFCC Member Agency Certified Credit Counselor.

NFCC Member Agencies stand ready to help consumers prevent ID theft or recover if they've become a victim. For more information on Protect Your Identity Week, visit [www.ProtectYourIDNow.org](http://www.ProtectYourIDNow.org). To find an agency near you, call toll-free to (800) 388-2227, or go online to [www.DebtAdvice.org](http://www.DebtAdvice.org). To locate a Spanish-speaking counselor, dial (800) 682-9832.

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*The National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC), founded in 1951, is the nation's largest and longest serving national nonprofit credit counseling organization. The NFCC's mission is to promote the national agenda for financially responsible behavior and build capacity for its members to deliver the highest quality financial education and counseling services. NFCC members annually help more than two million consumers through close to 900 community-based offices nationwide. For free and affordable confidential advice through a reputable NFCC member, call 1-800-388-2227, (en Español 1-800-682-9832) or visit [www.nfcc.org](http://www.nfcc.org).*