



# Fight Identity Theft



## Atlanta Victim Assistance Inc.

150 Garnett Street  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Tel (404) 588-4740  
Fax (404) 588-4759

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Established 25 years ago in 1984 as the Victims Witness Assistance Program, Atlanta Victim Assistance, Inc. serves the needs of all victims of any crime against a person.



**Nobody**  
should take  
**ID theft** on the chin.

## Join Project **Safe**

You too can be a part of Atlanta's campaign to fight back against identity theft.

### Join today:

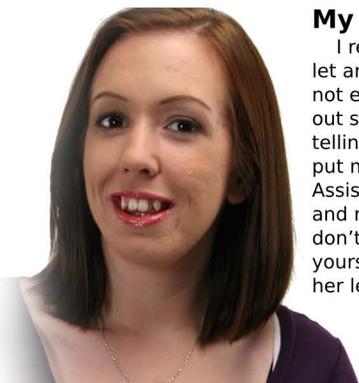
**S**pread the Word – help disseminate campaign materials

**A**ct Online – put a Project Safe link on your site

**F**acilitate a Seminar – inform your community

**E**nlist as a volunteer – help victims become victors

To learn more, visit our campaign web page at [www.atlantava.org/idtheft](http://www.atlantava.org/idtheft) or call Project SAFE at (404)588-4745.



### My name is Brittany...

I really love my family but I don't let anybody take advantage of me, not even my kid sister. When I found out she had used my name without telling me to avoid getting arrested, I put my foot down. Atlanta Victim Assistance helped me get my identity and my life back. I learned that you don't have to fight identity theft all by yourself. I think my sister has learned her lesson too. I hope so.



### My name is Erica...

I didn't know someone else was using my identity until I got laid off and started applying for a new job. A prospective employer turned me down cold because they found a bunch of delinquencies on my credit history. I was shocked because they weren't mine. Thankfully, Atlanta Victim Assistance pointed me in the right direction and helped get me back on track.



### My name is Jaden...

I'm too young to know what a Social Security number is but I got one the day I was born. Now my Mommy is using mine instead of her own to get the lights turned on in our house. I don't think that's right and neither does Atlanta Victim Assistance which speaks up even for little guys like me.

## did you Know?

## Project Safe Campaign

## Top 5 Ways You can Fight

Identity theft is **the fastest-growing crime in the United States**. In fact, every 3 seconds someone else becomes a new victim of identity theft. Every 3 seconds! That's more than 8 million people each year at a total cost of \$57 billion per year to individuals and businesses. Other costs, including the emotional ones and hours lost trying to restore your finances are incalculable.

Today's identity thieves have become more and more adept at staying a step ahead of consumers and the law. As a result, most of us have either been a victim or know someone who has been a victim of identity theft. Identity theft is all around us. Georgia ranks among the top 7 states in the nation in terms of identity theft - fueled in large part by the spiraling rates of this crime here in Atlanta. (include pie chart of top cities/areas in the state).

### Victim City No. of Victims

Atlanta	1,073
Decatur	220
Marietta	215
Lawrenceville	168
Alpharetta	139

Based on location data for 2002.

Tackling one of the city's fastest growing crimes, **Atlanta Victim Assistance** has joined forces with a coalition of local agencies, businesses and consumer groups to urge Atlanta residents to **"fight back"** against **identity theft** as part of a city-wide public awareness campaign.

**Dubbed Project SAFE**, this comprehensive initiative was launched in 2008 with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, and has been deploying AVA staff and volunteers in assisting local residents in **recovering their losses, repairing their credit histories** and, in some cases, **restoring their good names before the eyes of the law**. The "Fight Identity Theft" campaign tells the real life stories of one-time victims who, thanks to Project SAFE, have emerged from their ordeals as **victors**.

As part of the campaign, AVA and its partners have also launched a one-stop **Web site** where Atlantans can find the **information, tools and resources** they need to **combat identity theft** and protect themselves from becoming victims. To learn more, visit us at [www.atlantava.org/idtheft](http://www.atlantava.org/idtheft)

- 1. Place a "Fraud Alert" on your credit reports, and review the reports carefully.** The alert tells creditors to follow certain procedures before they open new accounts in your name or make changes to your existing accounts. The three nationwide consumer reporting companies have toll-free numbers for placing an initial 90-day fraud alert; a call to one company is sufficient:
  - Equifax: 1-800-525-6285
  - Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN(397-3742)
  - TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289
- 2. Placing a fraud alert entitles you to free copies of your credit reports.** Look for inquiries from companies you haven't contacted, accounts you didn't open, and debts on your accounts that you can't explain.
- 3. Close accounts.** Close any accounts that have been tampered with or established fraudulently.
  - o Call the security or fraud departments of each company where an account was opened or changed without your okay. Follow up in writing, with copies of supporting documents.
  - o Use the ID Theft Affidavit at [ftc.gov/idtheft](http://ftc.gov/idtheft) to support your written statement.
  - o Ask for verification that the disputed account has been closed and the fraudulent debts discharged.
  - o Keep copies of documents and records of your conversations about the theft.
- 4. File a police report.** File a report with law enforcement officials to help you with creditors who may want proof of the crime.
- 5. Report the theft to the Federal Trade Commission.** Your report helps law enforcement officials across the country in their investigations.
  - o Online: [ftc.gov/idtheft](http://ftc.gov/idtheft)
  - o By phone: 1-877-ID-THEFT (438-4338) or TTY, 1-866-653-4261
  - o By mail: Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580