



**FROM WELD COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY KENNETH R. BUCK  
FOR THE C.A.S.E. PROGRAM**

# **FRAUD ALERT!**

## **COLLEGE CHECK LIST**



A student's first year at college is an exciting time full of new found freedom, independence and experiences. It is also a time for new potential hazards. If you will be sending a family member off to college this fall, don't forget to pack a few words of wisdom along with their books, furniture, computers, music, clothes...

### **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER**

It wasn't that long ago that a student's school identification number was his or her Social Security Number. Luckily that has changed, and many schools, whether voluntarily or due to state laws, prohibit colleges and universities from using a student's SSN as their student ID number. In applications, forms and other enrollment paperwork, however, the college or university may need the student's SSN in order to process their documents. If a student is asked for their SSN, they should request a copy of the school's disclosure statement which will explain exactly how the number will be used. Also, students need to properly

protect any forms or copies of forms they have that include their SSN.

### **PERSONAL SAFETY**

When students live away from home, whether in a dorm or in off-campus housing, they need to remember that with their new independence comes new responsibilities. It will be up to them to make sure their room door is locked and their windows are secured. Remind them to not leave valuable items out in the open for anyone to see or take. Check into renter's insurance especially if your student is toting expensive items to college. Also, make sure they take notice of where emergency phones are located across the campus and encourage students to walk with friends after evening classes or late night trips to the library or student center.

### **AUTO THEFT**

As with personal belongings in their room or apartment, students should never leave valuable items in their vehicle. Remember, whether it is an iPod, a cell phone, a purse or wallet, there is no place in a vehicle where someone can "hide" items that a thief hasn't already thought to look. Items of value can also mean incoming or outgoing mail and application forms or billing statements that list names, addresses and account numbers.

### **CREDIT CARD APPLICATIONS**

Whether or not a student decides to fill out a credit card application is a personal choice, but it is one that should be given plenty of thought prior to completing. A student, especially one without a job, can put their financial future in jeopardy by applying for credit they can't really afford.

### **IDENTITY THEFT**

Remind your student to be vigilant about checking their bank account information. Statements should be opened immediately and reconciled with receipts. If an unauthorized charge is made, they need to notify their financial institution immediately. Students should also get in the habit of checking their credit report often to make sure that they have not become a victim of identity theft. And, of course, ATM cards and credit cards should be protected at all times—they should never let a friend use their card.

**Contact your local police agency if you think you are a victim of a crime.  
To contact the Weld County District Attorney's Office, call (970) 356-4010 ext. 4702.**