Identity theft is widely recognized as the fastest-growing crime in the US today <http://www.idtheftcenter.org/facts.shtml>.

I recently received a DVD with a dramatic 15-minute awareness film called “Delivering Justice: All the King’s Men – Picking up the Pieces” from the US Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) that everyone can order at no cost from <http://ww.usps.com/postalinspectors>. It tells the heart-breaking stories of a number of identity-theft and investment-fraud victims being interviewed on a news program and has intercuts from actors representing USPIS experts. The video is shot with professional production values and with competent and engaging actors. I’ll be using it next year as a useful audiovisual aid in a variety of courses and in one of the weekly meetings of the Special Interest Group on Security, Audit and Control (SIGSAC) of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) at Norwich University. Readers may find it helpful as part of their ongoing security-awareness programs for fellow employees.

There’s a flier with the video that lists a wide range contact numbers for helpful organizations such as Battered Women’s Justice Project, National Organization for Victim Assistance and USPIS Fraud Hotline (among many others). It also specifically mentions the Web site <http://www.lookstoogoodtobetrue.com> which has extensive resources for anyone interested in learning more about frauds. That site in turn has helpful links to page-long descriptions of many types of fraud (e.g., pharmacy fraud, hacking, identify theft, phishing, spam, spyware, romance schemes, advanced-fee fraud, auction fraud, Ponzi schemes and so on). Each of those pages then provides yet more links to more extensive documentation on each particular topic.

The USPIS Web site has a list of several free security-awareness DVDs that I just ordered <http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/dvdorder.htm>. In addition to the identity-theft piece, there are films on the following topics:

- Cross-border telephone frauds (“Nowhere to Run”)
- Telemarketing and mail fraud via the Internet (“Web of Deceit”)
- Foreign lottery scams (“Long Shot”)
- Work-at-home scams (“They Just Don’t Pay”)
- Identity theft (“Protect Your Identity”)
- Telemarketing fraud (“Dialing for Dollars”).

Readers will also want to check out the extensive list of publications <http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/is-pubs.htm> and FAQs <http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/fraud/welcome.htm> available on the site.

I checked with the USPIS operator and verified that anyone can order the entire set without problems. These short films will be useful not only for employee security-awareness programs but also to supply to local schools so that our teenagers can learn to defend themselves against
these crimes. In addition, you may want to pass along information about these resources to social-service groups and religious organizations in which you are involved, especially those serving older members of society (a special target for scammers).

Kudos to the USPIS.

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