

To understand the scope and nature of identity theft, statistics and studies can be helpful. Keep in mind that the number of identity theft complaints that agencies or organizations receive does *not*

indicate the rate of identity theft. Complaint numbers may rise or fall because the percentage of identity theft victims who report their problems to particular agencies or organizations has changed, not necessarily because there are more or fewer victims. Surveys provide better information about the rate of identity theft.

The **California Attorney General's Office** issues [studies and reports](#) on data breaches and other subjects related to identity theft.

The [Report on Child Identity Theft](#) from the **Carnegie Mellon University CyLab** describes how identity thieves are targeting children for unused Social Security numbers. A

[2012 Child Identity Fraud Report](#)

sponsored by the nonprofit

Identity Theft Assistance Center

provides data on the frequency, sources and consequences of child identity theft.

[To Catch a Thief: Are Identity Theft Services Worth the Cost?](#), a study of the identity theft industry, was released by

Consumer Federation of America

in March 2009 and led to the

[Best Practices for Identity Theft Services](#)

, which were developed by

[CFA's Identity Theft Best Practices Working Group](#)

CFA's April 2012 report,

[Best Practices for Identity Theft Services: How Are Services Measuring Up?](#)

, shows progress has been made and recommends improvements to meet the goals of the best practices.

The **Federal Trade Commission** releases a report every year about fraud and identity theft based on complaints to its Consumer Sentinel Database:

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2020](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2019](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2018](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2017](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2016](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2015](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2014](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2013](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2012](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2011](#)

[Fraud and Identity Theft Complaints in 2010](#)

The nonprofit **Identity Theft Resource Center** produces a variety of [surveys and studies](#) .

Javelin Strategy & Research is a company that conducts annual surveys about identity theft fraud, which is the use of stolen personal information:

[2020 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2019 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2018 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2017 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2016 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2015 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2014 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2013 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2012 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

[2011 Identity Fraud Survey Report](#)

The **U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics** provides [identity theft statistics](#) based on its National Crime Victimization Surveys.