

**For Immediate Release**

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## **ACCC Holds Workshop To Teach Financial Awareness And Identity Theft Prevention**

### *Local Credit Counseling Organization Reaches Out To Community*

Newton, MA –March 8, 2005 -American Consumer Credit Counseling (ACCC) will host a free, public Financial Education Workshop on **Wednesday March 9<sup>th</sup> from 6-7pm in Newton, MA**. The session, part of a series of financial education events hosted by ACCC, will feature advice about personal finance as well as useful consumer information about how to help protect against the growing crime of identity theft.

The prevalence of identity theft in the United States is rising and it is currently ranked the nation's top consumer fraud complaint according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which receives thousands of complaints yearly. Identity theft occurs when a criminal uses personal financial details of an innocent, often unsuspecting person to obtain goods and services. It can happen to anyone, but ACCC's workshop, hosted by an experienced financial educator, will explore ways to reduce the risk of it happening to you. The ID theft component of the workshop will cover:

- How Identity Theft Occurs
- How to Minimize Your Risk
- Ways to Prevent Identity Theft
- What To Do If You are a Victim of Identity Theft

In addition, the workshop will focus on budgeting, credit reports, credit scores, and recognizing the danger signals of financial problems. As thousands of laid off workers in Massachusetts wait for the economic upturn to turn into jobs, ACCC aims to encourage good budgeting to help avoid, what for most is a temporary financial shortfall, from developing into a long term problem of debt that can result in subsequent loan denials and sometimes great personal stress.

—More—

The workshop also will focus on the following areas:

- **Creating a Budget** - Understanding the flow of money into and out of your household will allow you to have effective financial plans and realistic goals.
- **Credit Reports** - Information about your mortgage, car loan, credit cards, student loan as well as other financial details can be found on your credit report. The information contained on this individual record is often crucial to your financial prospects.
- **Understanding your FCIO score** - Banks and other lenders refer to your FCIO score to decide how much money to loan you and at what interest rate. A low FCIO score can be problematic and probably expensive when applying for a loan.

- Danger signals of Financial problems - Some people worry about nothing, others bury their head in the sand, learn to recognize the danger signs of financial difficulty and how to resolve problems before they get out of hand.

**To reserve a space or get directions to ACCC please call 1-800-769-3571 x 210**

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*American Consumer Credit Counseling (ACCC) is a national non-profit (501)(c3) organization specializing in professional education and credit counseling services. ACCC provides individuals with practical solutions for solving financial problems and recognizes that consumers' financial difficulties are often not the result of poor spending habits but more frequently from extenuating circumstances beyond their control. ACCC strives to empower consumers to regain control of the quality of their lives through education and money management. ACCC's experience has lead to success in serving thousands of consumers who are debt-free or on the road to financial independence. Educational services include a comprehensive SmartMoneySchool program which includes information on how to make informed financial decisions, budgeting and spending plan programs, identity theft and student debt. For more information please visit [www.consumercredit.com](http://www.consumercredit.com)*

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