Child ID Theft Twitter Chat

On March 14, 2013, FTC staff participated in Twitter Chat co-hosted by Stop.Think.Connect. and CSI Identity on child identity theft. FTC staff attorneys worked with the Office of Public affairs to answer questions from the @FTC Twitter account. The hashtag was #ChatSTC.

These tweets include retweets from @StopThnkConnect's questions and various retweets of participant's questions throughout the chat. It includes all of @FTC's answers, but not a complete transcript of the entire chat, just the parts the FTC participated in.

Note: Tweets in their original order (reversed here for ease of reading) and without handles of individuals redacted remain publicly available on Twitter.

@FTC: We hope you'll join the Twitter Chat on child #idtheft today from 3-4pm ET. Use #ChatSTC: http://go.usa.gov/2XY9

@FTC: @ITRCSD @STOPTHNKCONNECT @DataPrivacyDay @CSIdentity Glad to have you! #ChatSTC

@CSIdentity: We're co-hosting a #ChatSTC Twitter chat in 15 minutes w/ @STOPTHNKCONNECT & @FTC on child #identity protection. See you soon!

@FTC: Hi. Steven Toporoff, staff attorney, FTC Division of Privacy & Identity Protection. Happy 2 B here 2 discuss such important topic. #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: Let's start with basics. Where, both #online & in the real world, are children's identities & privacy put at risk? #idtheft #ChatSTC

@FTC: Schools, sports teams, clubs, doctors' offices, hospitals, chat rooms, and other social media, among others#ChatSTC

[redacted] #ChatSTC Is a social security number the primary way children's ID is stolen? The only way?

@FTC: Yes, in our view, the misuse of SSNs is the primary way children fall victim to child id theft. #ChatSTC

@FTC: But children need to be careful not to share personal info in chat rooms, social media, as well. #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: Why are children in particular targeted for #idtheft? What do criminals intend to gain from their #identity? #ChatSTC

@FTC: Children typically have no prior credit history, which makes them attractive targets. Misuse of their ids is difficult to detect. #ChatSTC

@FTC: #ChatSTC RT [redacted] Why would a child need a Social Security number before s/he's reached the age of employment? Do young kids need one?

@FTC: By law, parents must get SSNs for children at birth. SSNs are also needed to get fin. accounts and for tax purposes. #ChatSTC

@FTC: Every piece of publicly available info can be used to create a complete picture of the child. #ChatSTC

[redacted] How would stealing a phone number from Facebook give someone access to enough facts to steal a child's ID? #ChatSTC I know it happens,...

@StopThnkConnect: Children likely won't notice their #identity was stolen. How can adults determine if child #idtheft has taken place? #ChatSTC

@FTC: Parents should ask for manual search of child's SSN w/ each of 3 credit reporting agencies. 4 warning signs: http://go.usa.gov/2Zmm #ChatSTC

[redacted] @FTC is the person's age not associated to the SSN? #chatSTC

@FTC: Especially with randomization of SSNs, it is not possible to link SSN w/ age. Only SSA has the underlying data, which is non-public #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: What problems can #idtheft create for children? How can guardians resolve these & help children regain their #identity? #ChatSTC

@FTC: #IDtheft can impede ability to get credit, job, apartment, utilities, school and car loans. #ChatSTC

@FTC: A good resource is the FTC's Guide for Parents: Safeguarding Your Child's Future, at http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: Foster children face a higher risk of #idtheft. Why is that & how can it be remedied? #ChatSTC

@FTC: Foster youth info is widely circulated. New fed law requires states to assist foster youth in getting and repairing credit issues. #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: How can parents & guardians protect their child’s #identity? Should parents monitor their child's activity on social networks? #ChatSTC

@FTC: FTC has some practical tips for parents to use when kids go online: Kids and Socializing Online: http://go.usa.gov/2BpN #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: What role can schools play in preventing child #idtheft? #ChatSTC

@FTC: As for schools, check out Protecting Your Child's Personal Information audio tip: http://go.usa.gov/2ZmA #ChatSTC

@FTC: Parents should ask their school about its directory info policies. #ChatSTC

@FTC: Schools should review what kind of info they collect, whether it is necessarily, and how it will be protected. #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: What is the government doing to protect children from #idtheft? #ChatSTC

@FTC: The FTC raises awareness thru efforts like this. Maryland and Utah have programs for protecting kids. #ChatSTC

@FTC: SSA considering making it easier for parents to get new SSN for children. There's an open comment period, closing on April 12. #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: How can people learn more about what my state is doing to prevent child #idtheft? #ChatSTC

@FTC: For info on your individual state, call your Office of Atttorney General. #ChatSTC

@StopThnkConnect: What the simplest step every child can take to protect him/herself from #idtheft? #ChatSTC

@FTC: Parents should look for warning signs, don't give out SSNs, don't overshare personal info online, incl photos. #ChatSTC

@FTC: Parents should also shred all unnecessary financial docs. #ChatSTC

@FTC: Share with kids: Kids & Computer Security - http://go.usa.gov/2ZyQ #ChatSTC

@FTC: Encourage kids to play FTC's Security Plaza game to learn about protecting priv online: http://go.usa.gov/2Bpp #ChatSTC

[redacted] @FTC My 9 year old is home sick and reading tweets over my shoulder. He now wants to play Security Plaza. :) #chatstc

@StopThnkConnect: What’s your biggest “no-no” for adults that could put their child at risk of #idtheft? #ChatSTC

@FTC: Parents should never give out SSNs without a valid reason and knowing how the SSN will used and protected #ChatSTC

@FTC: Good conversation on child #idtheft today! Still a few minutes left if you have any other questions... #ChatSTC

[redacted] #ChatSTC @FTC any new outreach programs aimed at educating parents about child #idtheft planned? We'd love to help you spread the word.

@FTC: We had a great time with #ChatSTC. Thanks for all the questions and participation.