



NEED TO KNOW SERIES

One-Pager

Keep Your Identity Safe! Get your Annual Credit Check.



What is Credit?

Credit is the ability to borrow money or access goods or services now, with the promise to pay for them later.

What is a Credit Score?

Credit scores are a way to “score” your reliability when it comes to paying back loans. The higher the number, the more reliable you are. It lets other companies know whether or not to lend you money.



Why is Checking Your Credit Score Important?

As you become an adult, your credit score starts to play a big role in your life, whether you realize it or not. A good credit score can help you buy a car, rent an apartment, purchase a home, or even qualify for student loans. It shows lenders that you can be trusted to borrow and repay money responsibly.

How Can You Tell if Your Identity May Have Been Stolen?

- Your credit score suddenly drops, even though you don't have or use a credit card.
- You discover loans or debts you never took out.
- You receive bills, statements, or account notices for services or credit accounts you didn't open.

How Can You Protect Yourself?

As a youth in foster care, it's important to check your credit report every year. If you're 14 or older, your caseworker is required to check it annually. They should do this with you so that you learn how the process works!

Everyone 18 years old or older can check their credit for free at AnnualCreditReport.com, a safe and trusted resource to review your credit report and make sure your information is accurate.

