

Preventing Theft During Finals Time

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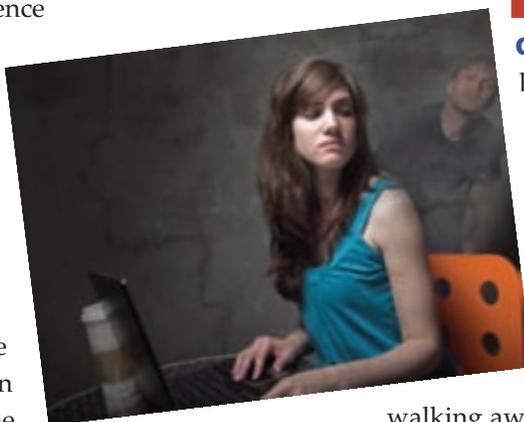
any campuses experience an influx of thefts during final exam time. Textbooks, laptops and other valu-

ables are at risk, making it even more important for students to take simple precautions. You can help students keep their belongings safe and sound by sharing the following tips:

- **Textbooks.** Encourage your student to write his name near the binding of a certain page in each textbook. This way, if a book is stolen, he can tell public safety to look for his name on page 77. This will help identify his book, should it be sold back to the bookstore.
- **Locking Doors.** If your student lives in a residence hall, she's probably feeling pretty comfortable with the people on her floor by now. However, that doesn't mean she should leave her room unlocked, even if she runs down the hall to the bathroom. For both personal and property safety, encourage her to keep the door locked. Thieves become familiar with people's patterns. A locked door can thwart even the most prepared want-to-be-thief!

Lost Keys/Cards

When students are feeling frazzled and fried due to finals, they can get a bit scatterbrained. This might mean that residential students misplace their room keys or cards. Instead of "waiting until it turns up," the best bet is for them to alert residence life staff immediately and get their locks changed. It's too easy for someone to find the key/card and access a student's room, especially if it was attached to their student ID or other identification. This puts the people—including your student's roommate(s)—and the property in that room at risk. This is never a good gamble to take!



- **Unattended Goods.** Leaving a bookbag on the library study table for two minutes or failing to lock it up when you're working out at the gym increases the chances exponentially of it

walking away. Students need to keep their belongings with them at all times or locked safely away.

- **Laptops.** These are BIG targets throughout the year. Does your student have a laptop safety device? Is the computer engraved with an ID number? These precautions can help track down laptop thieves more easily.
- **Big Ticket Items.** Stereos, DVRs, iPods, portable CD players... these items and others are a temptation for thieves looking to "holiday shop" in your student's room. Encourage him to keep these things out of site, when possible, and, again, to keep the room locked at all times.
- **Cash.** It's never a good idea to have large amounts of cash on hand. Whether it's stashed in a sock drawer or readily available in a wallet, industrious thieves can find it. Keeping track of cash, ATM cards, credit cards and other personal IDs is very important for students to keep in the forefront of their minds, even when papers and projects are piling up.

Gently remind students that this is one of the hottest times for thieves to strike. By taking some simple precautions, they can avoid some complex headaches.