



INFORMATION SHEET

Theft Happens All the Time

1 a week! Nearly every week a new case of theft from a school PTO, booster club or other fundraising group is reported in the press. These reported cases don't include the thousands of other incidents that are settled quietly by the payment of restitution.

95% of embezzlers have no prior criminal conviction.

Rarely is all the money recovered. When it is recovered, only about half is paid back.

Check fraud and pocketing cash are the most common schemes used to steal from school fundraising groups.

Why do people steal? Three common factors, sometimes referred to as the fraud triangle, are related to the decision to steal.



These factors are often present in school fundraising organizations. The perpetrator feels some kind of motivation or pressure, an opportunity presents itself, and rationalization for committing the crime follows. Volunteer leaders are usually friends who have known each other for years. The trust level is high and so too is the perception, and often the reality, that offenders, if caught, are not prosecuted. The high trust level also leads to lax financial controls and failure to enforce any financial control policies that may be in place.



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