



Taking your life in your own hands

transaction records with you.

- Do not count or visually display any money you received from the ATM. Immediately put your money into your pocket or purse and count it later.
- If you are using a drive-up ATM, be sure



passenger windows are rolled up and all doors are locked. If you leave your car and walk to the ATM, lock your car.

Special Precautions for Using an ATM at Night

- Park close to the ATM in a well-lit area.
- Take another person with you,

if at all possible.

- If the lights at the ATM are not working, don't use it.
- If shrubbery has overgrown or a tree blocks the view, select another ATM and notify your bank.

*Compliments of
The American Bankers Association
Education Foundation*

SAFETY AT THE DOOR

Knock, Knock . . . who's there?

You open your door to a woman who is clearly upset. She says she just had an accident around the corner and needs to get her car towed. The tow costs \$35.00 and she is \$15 short. She says she's your neighbor, "You see my little boy riding his bike up and down the street all the time." She will pay you back as soon as her husband gets home. If she is given cash she has been known to come back for more about a half-hour later. She is a known prostitute with a crack problem. The cash goes for drugs.

Door-to-door panhandlers often plague urban areas. In Grand Rapids people knock on doors asking for cash for an emergency at any time during the day or night. They are very convincing and it is

very difficult to turn them away. Men and women panhandle in residential neighborhoods. According to many police reports the panhandlers admit



that the money is spent on drugs or alcohol. They are addicts and this is a relatively easy way to get cash.

As an adult you can make your own decision about how to handle panhandlers, but crime prevention experts suggest never giving out cash at the door for any reason. Panhandlers will often ask to use your phone. You should refuse or you can close *and lock* the door and make the call for them. Generally they just want to get in so you will have to give them cash to get rid of them.

What to you tell your children? Do they answer the door themselves? Do they answer the door when an adult is not home? Do they know what to do if a stranger comes to the door and presents an emergency situation and asks to use the phone?

Here is what we think will keep you and your kids safer:

- Keep the main door locked when you are not in the room. To use a storm/screened door, make

sure it has a lock, and get an inexpensive door alarm that will alert you when the door is opened. It is risky to leave any door unlocked when you are not nearby.

- Don't let children answer the door when at home alone. Even young teens should have an adult nearby if they answer the door.

Explain that panhandlers are men and women who go door-to-door with a made-up story to get money. Tell the children if people need help you will call the police for them. Tell them to never let stranger into your home. Children should never get into a conversation with a panhandler.

