

Think Twice Before You Call the Police

RECOMMENDATIONS

- If you have to make an official report about an incident, go to the police station rather than inviting them into your community.
- Assume odd behavior is a sign of illness rather than criminal intent – ask if the person needs medical attention. First Call of Chittenden County (802-488-7777) may be a better call than to the police.
- A tow truck is better equipped to help a broken-down vehicle than the police.
- Is that person “suspicious-looking” because their race, gender, ethnicity, class, or housing situation is different than yours? You may place them at risk of being harmed if the police are called. Can you just go about your own business?
- Inviting police into public spaces increases tension. There is enough stress and tension in schools, workspaces, and public places without the need to increase it with the presence of armed officers.
- Get to know your neighbors – if you have a disagreement about their behavior, it’s easier to address it directly with someone you already have a relationship with.
- Take a first-aid, de-escalation, conflict resolution, or self-defense class and put those skills to use when needed rather than calling the police. You’ll feel good about yourself, too!
- If no one is being hurt or endangered when public or corporate/private property is being disturbed, let it be.

Recommendations adapted from a Zine by May Day Collective and Solidarity & Defense

BLACK LIVES MATTER OF GREATER BURLINGTON

<http://www.blmgb.org>
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In Partnership with BTV Copwatch
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Think Twice Before You Call the Police

Black Lives Matter of Greater Burlington condemns the police brutality of the Burlington Police Department (BPD) – both the brutality seen in body camera footage and ongoing brutality that continues to go insufficiently recorded or documented.

In addition to the need for structural change, those of us who are not police officers or part of the legal “justice” system must commit to alternatives that increase safety in our community.

We must all take responsibility for how we interact with these institutions and each other. This includes seeing and acknowledging the risk of violent and irreversible outcomes of calling the police, particularly for Black people, and “thinking twice” before making that call.

It is obvious to anyone watching bodycam videos of police brutality that body slamming, shoving, and forcing people to the ground is not morally acceptable.

We cannot rely on the rule of law, which values “law and order” over human lives, to give us our moral code. We also cannot trust the laws to protect us from the people who enforce them.

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