

Town of Middlebury
Emergency Management Bulletin
May 13, 2020

Kids Are Home, On-Line, and Vulnerable

From Homeland Security Unit Investigations: The internet has always provided a way for predators to locate and harm children. Because of COVID-19, children are home and spending more time online. Predators have always sought child victims online, and they are seeking to take advantage of the shifting home dynamics caused by the pandemic.

Children are vulnerable to a variety of forms of online predatory behavior, from sexual exploitation to financial crime. According to HSI, during the pandemic period, there has been a 150 percent increase in reported incidents in Vermont of online child exploitation and attempted exploitation. These reports include incidents of cybercrime against children and child extortion.

To report a child exploitation crime or concern call the CyberTipline: 866-347-2423. Your call will be routed to the appropriate resources based here in Vermont. A flyer called ***“Internet Safety Tips of Parents and Guardians”*** can be viewed at:
<https://www.justice.gov/usao-vt/page/file/1275316/download>.

Speaking of Predators

We anticipated an uptick in larcenies after the first few weeks of the emergency order. In the past week we’ve seen an increase in shoplifting and car breaks. Two people have been arrested for some of the car breaks and the investigation is continuing into the other breaks and a burglary. We are experiencing an influx of people into Middlebury with criminal histories and substance abuse issues. Make sure you lock your vehicles and don’t leave valuables, checks, credit cards, or medication in them. Report suspicious activity to the police as soon as possible.

Transfer Station Availability

Got junk? Yard waste? Flotsam and jetsam you need to dispose of? The transfer station remains closed to the general public. However, an opening date is being reviewed by the board of supervisors soon. You can follow this on their website at: <https://www.addisoncountyrecycles.org/> The banner at the top of the page contains updated information.

Meal Distribution for Those in Need

Meals will be distributed to those in need throughout the month of May. Food will include FEMA meal boxes, along with produce, chicken, and dairy products.

In Middlebury, delivery will held on Wednesday, May 20 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Middlebury State Airport. Take Route 116 to Airport Road, continue to the end and follow the signs and/or direction. Pull up in your car, open your trunk, and the appropriate amount of food will be loaded by members of the Vermont National Guard.

Please be sure there is plenty of space available in your car for the boxes of food.

The National Guard requests that you please not bring your pet to ensure their safety while loading MREs into vehicles. Those who are ill, have been advised to quarantine, or lack transportation can send a friend or relative to pick up meals for them. There will be further events around the state in the coming weeks.

To Mask or Not

Of course you should always mask up. But the Governor was quite clear today – masking is NOT mandatory. And to be clear- a “mask” is not a Lone Ranger type mask, that won’t suffice. Both he and Dr Levine would like to see everyone in public wear a covering over nose and mouth, but right now it is NOT a mandate. That being said, when retail is open on May 18, employees in the retail environment must wear a mask as a condition for opening up.

Friday, May 15

Expect the emergency order to be continued, the announcement will be made this Friday. Don’t expect the spigot to be cranked open, with creaks and groans it will still be turned very slowly and deliberately.

Stay Safe, Stay Well, Be Aware

Wear the mouth and nose covering, wash hands regularly without sparing the soap, maintain your distance, AND turn up the sensitivity knob on situational awareness. Don’t let the carelessness of others adversely affect you. You may take the 3 big precautions but if you get yourself in an environment where others are not, you can inadvertently become an Uber driver for contamination. Remember, a sneeze or a cough, or heavy breathing, singing, or exhaling can send contaminated aerosoled droplets all over the place- on surfaces, on the floor, atomized in the stagnant inside air. All waiting for you to touch, inhale, absorb in on your mask, or be picked up on the soles of your shoes and deposited on the floor of your car or home.

If the store doesn’t mandate masks for entry, or it is not enforced you should either avoid the place or make sure you apply hand sanitizer when you leave, deposit your mask in a paper bag for the ride home and wash it before wearing it again, and take your shoes off before coming into the house. This bug is resilient, why take a chance? And while you’re at it, I’d drop the proprietor a note letting them know that you’d take your business elsewhere.

Without enforceable mandates, community pressure can encourage compliance.