



# FREE TIP SHEET: *How to Help a Panhandler*

*Step-by-step guide to helping homeless people you encounter on the street.*

## **No one likes to see people living on the street**

begging for food and money. Trouble is, when you encounter panhandlers, only two options seem readily apparent:

1) ignore them – look the other way; or 2) give them money. Neither seems quite right, so what can you do?

### **1. Treat them with dignity.**

Make eye contact. Smile. And, in a safe (daylight, public) place, take the time to speak to them. Through brief, civil conversation, you can help homeless individuals combat the loneliness, depression and isolation many of them face.

### **2. Give them food/supplies.**

Carry granola or energy bars in your car. If the person's sign says he is hungry and you have the time, buy him a sandwich and a beverage. Warm socks and gloves are practical gifts all year long.

### **3. Direct them to a shelter.**

Gospel Rescue Mission is currently located at 323 Callahan in Muskogee. There they can receive food, shelter, work and hope. If for some reason GRM cannot help them they will direct them to someplace that can help.

## **PLEASE DO NOT . . .**

**1. Hand out money.** Well-intended gifts are often converted to drugs or alcohol.

**2. Give rides to strangers.** Particularly if you are alone. It is best to provide directions or pay for a cab to 323 Callahan