

2-1-1 IS AN EASY TO REMEMBER PHONE NUMBER THAT CONNECTS INDIVIDUALS WITH RESOURCES IN THEIR COMMUNITY

With approximately 1.5 million nonprofits in the United States, plus scores of government agencies, finding help can be confusing and intimidating. People who want to give help often do not know where to begin. 2-1-1 centers are staffed by trained specialists who quickly assess the callers' needs and refer them to the help they seek. It's simple to remember, accessible to the public at no cost, available 24/7, with multilingual capabilities.

2-1-1 ENABLES PEOPLE TO GET HELP OR GIVE HELP

2-1-1 offers information on a broad range of services, including rent assistance, food pantries, affordable housing, health resources, after-school programs, elderly care, financial literacy, and job training programs. Specialists at 2-1-1 centers facilitate thousands of volunteer hours and direct donors to locations where their gifts may be most needed and appropriate.

2-1-1 BENEFITS NEBRASKANS

Access to services is streamlined by elimination of confusing and frustrating searches for our most vulnerable populations – the elderly, disabled, non-English speaking, illiterate, incapacitated by crisis, and others who need help finding available services. Individuals can also access information online at www.ne211.org.

SUPPORTING 2-1-1 BENEFITS YOUR COMMUNITY

Businesses, nonprofit organizations, individuals, and government officials support 2-1-1 as a way to improve the lives of residents in their communities. As of August 2010, 2-1-1 serves over 246 million Americans (more than 82% of the entire population) covering all or part of 46 states (including 34 states with 90%+ coverage) plus Washington DC and Puerto Rico.

2-1-1 ENHANCES PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRISIS RECOVERY EFFORTS

In a crisis, the public needs easy access to information about where to go, what to do, and how to volunteer. 2-1-1 has been critical to providing these services to Nebraskans. Flooding in the summer of 2010 prompted many Nebraskans to call 2-1-1 looking for shelter, food, clothing; some called 2-1-1 because they wanted to volunteer to help with clean-up and relief efforts. In Douglas County, emergency management authorities use 2-1-1 to collect damage reports from citizens, which aid in filing for federal disaster declarations.

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2-1-1 IS A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

Financial support for this effort to date has been a public-private partnership comprised of the Nebraska United Ways, businesses, health departments, foundations and grants. However, current funding is not adequate to sustain a statewide system that would guarantee every Nebraskan easy access to information and referrals to health and human services, either toll-free or via the internet 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Some funding sources were short-term.

For additional information, contact Jamie Moore, Vice President, Volunteer and Community Services Division, United Way of the Midlands. jmoore@uwmidlands.org, (402) 522-7930