

Frequently Asked Questions:



What is 2-1-1?

2-1-1 is an easy to remember, three-digit telephone number that connects people with the important community services they need to meet everyday needs as well as more immediate crisis needs. For example, 2-1-1 can offer access to:

1. Affordable high quality child care/after-school care;
2. Counseling and support groups;
3. Health services;
4. Food, clothing and housing, and;
5. Services for seniors and the disabled.

How is United Way involved with 2-1-1?

United Ways in North Carolina host the 2-1-1 service and provide the information on local resources used to connect callers and meet their needs.

United Way of North Carolina partners with the American Social Health Association (ASHA) to provide 2-1-1 services to many communities in our state. ASHA operates five state-of-the-art call centers that address sensitive health topics. Call center staff provide compassionate, one-to-one services to thousands of individuals every month.

How does 2-1-1 work?

Callers simply dial 2-1-1 for information on vital local services. 2-1-1 is free, confidential, available 24/7, multilingual and staffed by agents ready to help you find the connection you need.

How can I reach 2-1-1 from my cell phone?

If you call from a mobile/cell phone, you will need to use the toll-free number of 1-888-892-1162.

How can I reach 2-1-1 from work?

If you call from work and cannot reach 2-1-1, try using the toll-free number (1-888-892-1162). Then ask the person in charge of your phone system to program the 2-1-1 number into your PBX system.

What is an I&R?

I&R stands for information and referral. There are thousands of I&R service agencies operated by non-profit and government organizations throughout the United States. These I&R services answer millions of calls annually. I&R services are responsible for connecting callers with opportunities to get and give help through more than 1.6 million health and human service providers, government agencies, and community-based service organizations in the United States.

I&R agencies maintain comprehensive databases of resources including federal, state, and local government agencies, private non-profit agencies, faith and community based organizations, schools, libraries and neighborhood and civic organizations. The comprehensive I&R agency often maintains this data for the specialized centers in the community and makes it available on the Internet, in other electronic forms, and through paper directories and handbooks.

I&R specialists are skilled professionals. They assess callers' needs and help the caller determine their options and the best course of action. Additionally, I&R specialists are trained to determine whether a caller may be eligible for other programs, to intervene in crisis situations, and to advocate on behalf of the caller, as needed.

2-1-1 is a community service of your United Way

