

# 2-1-1 Connections

Newsletter Spring 2014

## What is Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1?

Every hour of every day, hundreds of people need essential human services - they are seeking help with basic needs, child care, healthcare, finding volunteer opportunities, crisis support, counseling, donations, information on government services and more. 2-1-1 is a simple way to connect people here in the Wiregrass with non-profit, social service, faith-based and government agencies when they need help, or when they want to help. By its design, the 2-1-1 system is ideally suited for serving as the single entry point for any variety of programs and for being the single contact point for information. 2-1-1 serves families from all walks of life, but most importantly benefits our most vulnerable populations such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and low-income by providing advocacy and making access to services easier. The number operates 24-hours a day, seven days a week, and is a free service.



Since opening the Dothan Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 Call Center in July of 2008 through March 2014, residents from the Wiregrass have made 74,563 calls to 2-1-1. 133,717 referrals to partner agencies have been provided to those callers by the 2-1-1 staff. Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 is a non-profit agency and works with approximately 860 agencies/programs to help meet the needs and improve the quality of life for so many people within our communities. Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 maintains a database of health and human services throughout 7 counties in southeast Alabama to include: Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry, & Houston counties.

### Did you know...

- 2-1-1 is an easy to remember, three digit dial code for getting help or giving help. If you're looking for help, dial 2-1-1 and you'll be connected to a trained operator that has access to a comprehensive database of services in your community. If you want to volunteer, dial 2-1-1 and that same trained operator can put you in contact with agencies and programs that need volunteers in your community.
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- By mid-year 2003, United Way Worldwide (UWW, then United Way of America) identified 2-1-1 as a valuable tool for enhancing access to social services and adopted 2-1-1 as a community impact strategy. UWW sought and received nation-wide approval from the Federal Communications Commission for the use of 2-1-1 as the Information & Referral three digit dial code.

*Every hour of every day, many people need help but don't know where to turn. People in search of critical services such as financial assistance, food, shelter, child care, eldercare, jobs, or mental health support often do not know where to begin to get help, or they get overwhelmed trying to find what they need.*

## **Stories from our Call Specialists**

We got a call from a disturbed woman who stated that she was going to kill herself before calling us. We let her vent for a while. We were able to give her resources that she can talk to such as a local suicide agency & 24 hour suicide prevention hotline. We also gave her prescription assistance. We did a follow-up and gave her additional resources and she stated that she will call and that we just *made her day by calling on her and checking to see if she was okay and that she is very touched that a total stranger is so concerned for her and that we showed her that there are still some good people in this world.*

A grandmother called for utility assistance so she could save money to buy toys for sick granddaughter with leukemia undergoing chemo at UAB. We gave her electric and did an emergency sign up for Toys for Tots.

**Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1**  
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**Here for You 24 Hours-A-Day**

When she came to the Toys for Tots pickup she was given 2 bikes one for each granddaughter. The sick girl had a twin. When we called to follow-up on December 26<sup>th</sup> she said that *her granddaughter was very happy - she wanted a bike and was very grateful.*

We got a call for a young woman who is a recent amputee who just moved to the Dothan area from Texas. She had no insurance & no income and mentioned that she had various needs; clothing, food, household goods (pots, pans, and dishes). We were able to give her the resources that she asked for and we also gave her information about a "major" foundation that may provide prosthetic limbs to those in need. *When we contacted her for a follow-up she told us that she was able to get most of the items that she needed and she was able to apply for assistance with the prosthetic limb foundation.*



### **Upcoming Events:**

- ❖ 2-1-1 Exposed Fundraiser at KT's Tavern in Dothan May 28th 6-9 p.m.
- ❖ Marc will be attending the National Information & Referral Conference in Atlanta June 1st through the 4th.
- ❖ Sip, Celebrate & Give Fundraiser at The Loft on Foster in Dothan July 31st 6-8 p.m.