



United Way Capital Area

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LOCAL HELPLINE CELEBRATES NATIONAL 2-1-1 DAY

AUSTIN, Texas – 2-1-1 Texas and United Way Capital Area are joining the nationwide celebration of 2-1-1 Day this upcoming February 11, 2009. This day's purpose is to bring attention to the helpline as a valuable community resource. 2-1-1 is a free, confidential, multilingual resource available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The helpline is available by phone or as a resource database online, providing information and referrals to health and human service agencies, faith-based organizations, disaster relief resources, and volunteer opportunities.

In the United States, 65 percent of the population has access to the 2-1-1 service. Texas is one of 17 states with 100 percent coverage. Statewide, there are 25 Area Information Centers (AICs). The local 2-1-1 AIC is a collaboration between the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and United Way Capital Area.

The first 2-1-1 call in Central Texas was received in 2002 and since then more than 840,000 calls have been taken. Last year, more than 190,000 were handled, and the AIC is able to answer 80% of calls within 60 seconds. The majority of calls are in reference to basic needs such as assistance with rent, utility bills, shelter and disaster relief.

2-1-1 is the state designated disaster information helpline. When Hurricane Ike struck the Texas coastline, over 200 people volunteered with 2-1-1. 45,000 calls were answered and the statewide 2-1-1 network assisted more than 240,000 residents find shelter and food, evacuate safely and obtain long-term relief.

2-1-1 Texas also partners with Foundation Communities each year to bring millions of dollars back to central texans by helping eligible residents file their taxes for free. In 2009, more than 17,000 returns are expected to be prepared and \$26 million dollars in refunds received. These numbers have more than doubled since 2005.

Together, 2-1-1 and United Way Capital Area are working to assist the community through relationships with local service providers, participation in local committees and initiatives, and regular outreach. For more information, visit www.211CentralTexas.org.

United Way Capital Area

United Way Capital Area is focused on the building blocks of a good life—education, financial stability and health—thereby creating opportunities for a *better* life for everyone. The objectives are to provide a high-quality education to every child, to help people make and save enough money to support them through retirement, and improve health across the Central Texas region.

The goal is to create positive, lasting change by addressing the underlying causes of these problems.

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