

United Way  
of Kentucky

P. O. Box 4653  
Louisville, Kentucky 40204  
tel 502.589.6897  
fax 502.589.0057  
kevin.middleton@uwky.org  
www.uwky.org

Kevin Middleton  
Director of Member Services



**VIA E-MAIL AND U.S. MAIL**

August 30, 2012

Mr. Jeff Derouen  
Executive Director  
Kentucky Public Service Commission  
P.O. Box 615  
211 Sower Boulevard  
Frankfort, KY 40602-0615

RECEIVED

SEP 4 2012

PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION

RE: Annual Status Report regarding 2-1-1 Implementation

Dear Mr. Derouen:

Pursuant to the Administrative Case No. 343 dated August 17, 2004 designating United Way of Kentucky as lead agency for implementation of the 2-1-1 dialing code in Kentucky, enclosed please find our annual report on the progress of the 2-1-1 initiative.

We appreciate the ongoing support of statewide 2-1-1 by the Commission.

If you have any questions about the report or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Middleton", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Kevin Middleton  
Director of Member Services and 2-1-1 State Director

Enclosure



**Status Report to the  
Kentucky Public Service Commission  
from  
United Way of Kentucky**

**2-1-1 Statewide Implementation  
Administrative Case No. 343**

**August 30, 2012**

## **Introduction**

In July of 2000, the Federal Communications Commission reserved the abbreviated 2-1-1 dialing code nationwide for access to health and human service information and referral (I/R) services.

In 2001, following informal meetings held by the Kentucky Public Service Commission to discuss the assignment of 2-1-1 in the Commonwealth, United Way of Kentucky (UWKY) petitioned the Commission to assign the 2-1-1 dialing code to UWKY and its affiliated organizations. UWKY proposed that it be designated as the lead agency for the statewide implementation of 2-1-1 in Kentucky. The Commission granted UWKY provisional authority over 2-1-1 for a three-year period to develop a pilot program for the implementation of 2-1-1, and to report on its progress at the end of that time.

In 2004, UWKY submitted its report to the Commission on the progress of its pilot efforts, including its comprehensive business plan for Kentucky 2-1-1.

On August 17, 2004, the Kentucky Public Service Commission issued an order granting UWKY the permanent designation as the lead agency for the statewide implementation of 2-1-1 in Kentucky. The Commission directed that UWKY make annual reports on the progress of the 2-1-1 initiative. Pursuant to that order, UWKY submits this status report.

## **Kentucky's 2-1-1 Business Plan**

UWKY remains committed to implementing a statewide plan for Kentucky 2-1-1 (original plan was presented to the Commission in 2004). Our plan was rewritten to account for new technology and current pricing in 2009. This new plan gave us the opportunity to make calls on the administration and legislators to reacquaint them with 2-1-1 and ask for their support. Meetings with state leaders were well-received, even though funding has not yet been available.

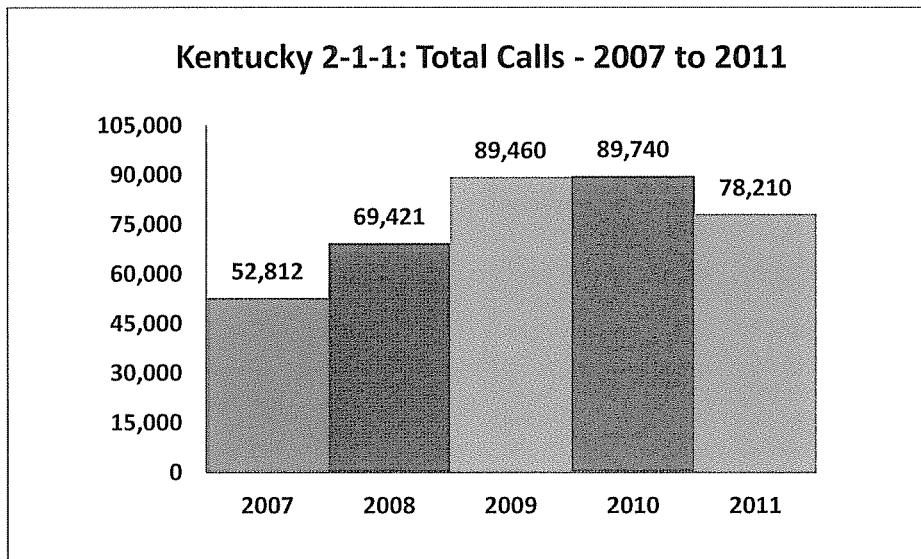
While the expansion of 2-1-1 has been slower than originally anticipated due to the lack of available funding to support the project, we continue to believe that statewide implementation is critical to the Commonwealth. Today, UWKY is pursuing new avenues, in association with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and Department of Emergency Management, to develop a public/private partnership in support of statewide 2-1-1. We will also continue to seek a legislative champion at both the Federal and State level to identify funding opportunities for expansion.

## **A Tool for Tough Times and Recovery**

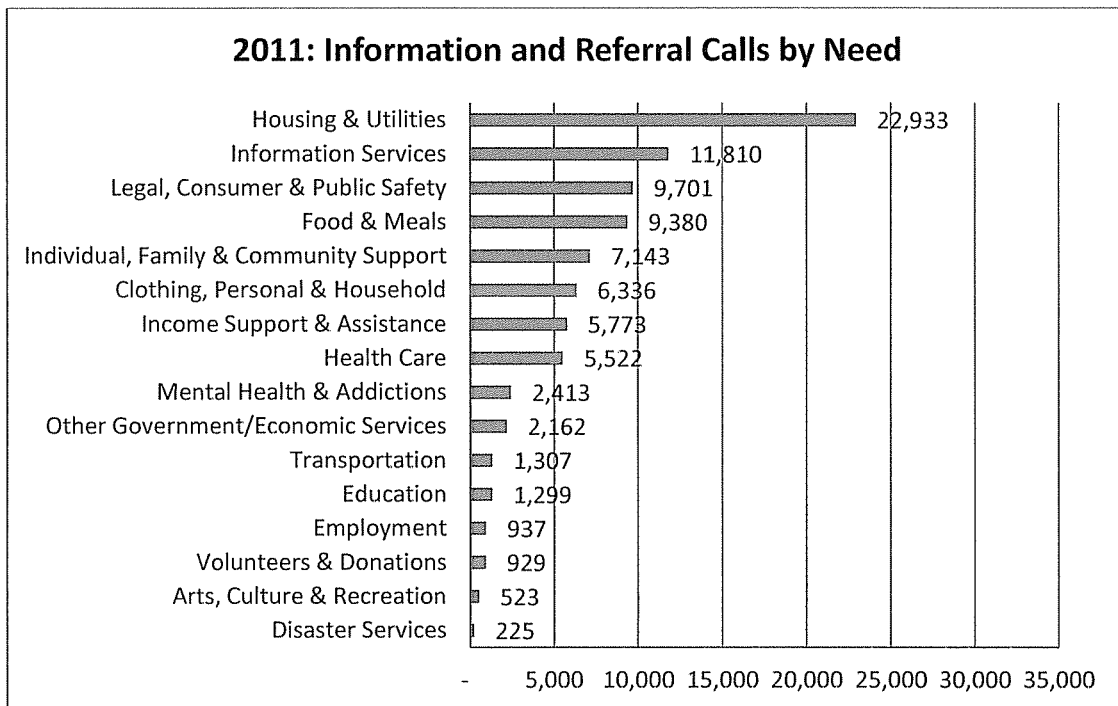
There has been a steady increase in call volume since implementation, particularly during the economic downturn from 2008 to 2010. In 2011, as the economic recovery has developed, call volume in Kentucky has increased in some areas, while receded to pre-downturn levels in others. Figure 1 below shows statewide call volume, which remains higher than 2008 levels. This can largely be attributed to greater public awareness of United Way 2-1-1 and the ongoing recovery of the troubled economy, as struggling individuals and families (facing continuing unemployment, foreclosures, etc.) look to United Way 2-1-1 to get connected to community resources to help meet their basic needs.

In 2011, calls for basic needs, such as income assistance, housing, utilities, food, clothing and household assistance made up over 56% of all calls for services (see Figure 2 below).

**FIGURE 1**



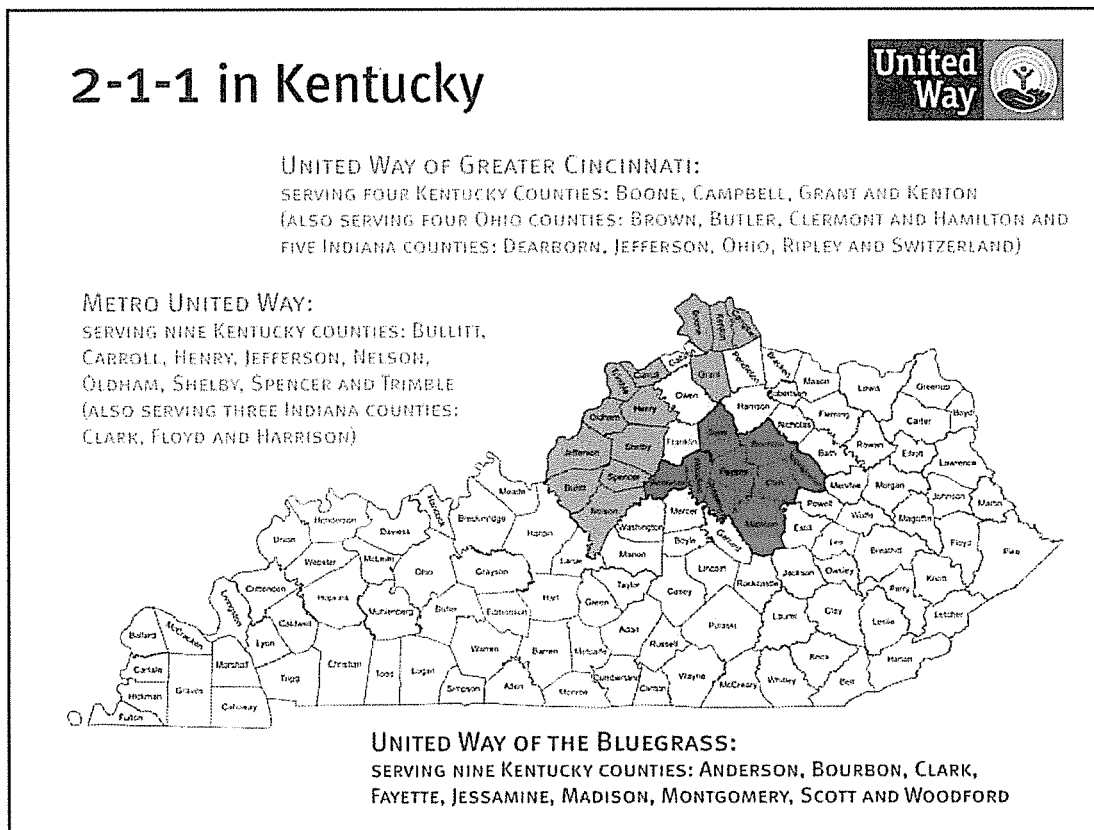
**FIGURE 2**



## Service Delivery

Until 2009, 2-1-1 services in Kentucky were provided by three call centers, one in each of the three major metropolitan areas of the state, Louisville, Lexington and the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky area. As was noted in the last report to the Public Service Commission, a significant change in the method of delivering 2-1-1 occurred in September of 2009. Metro United Way in Louisville contracted with United Way of Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky to answer all Metro Louisville 2-1-1 calls. Consequently, the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky call center now answers calls for 25 counties in 3 states (see Figure 3 below). In Kentucky, calls for 32% of the population are answered in a single location. This has provided efficiencies for both Metro United Way and United Way of Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky. It has also provided an excellent opportunity to demonstrate that calls can effectively be answered remotely, with no negative impact on the quality of the service. The provider database for Greater Louisville is still maintained in Louisville. This is consistent with the model for service delivery proposed in the updated statewide Business Plan.

**FIGURE 3**



Combined with the center based in Lexington, these two call centers answer calls for about 47% of the population of Kentucky.

## **Community Partnerships and Special Projects**

In addition to day to day information and referral services, United Way 2-1-1 has proven to be invaluable in a number of community partnerships and special projects. In two statewide initiatives (KCHIP enrollment and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance), at the request of the Governor's Office, United Way 2-1-1 call centers continue to serve as the answering and referral point for information for individuals outside of their normal service areas. This was done by publicizing the "1-800" that connects to the United Way 2-1-1 service. While this makes it possible for individuals to get information statewide, universal 2-1-1 service in Kentucky would make information and referral much more accessible.

Some of the special uses include:

**KCHIP Enrollment** – connecting individuals and families to information on sites where they could care for their children and gain access to health resources.

**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** – United Way 2-1-1 provided low income individuals and families with information about free tax assistance sites throughout the Commonwealth. In greater Lexington, United Way 2-1-1 schedules the appointments with tax preparers. In 2011, the two call centers answered nearly 13,800 calls regarding free tax preparation.

**Disaster and Crisis Response** – United Way 2-1-1 plays a vital role in responding to natural and man-made disasters. In addition to connecting people to services such as shelter, volunteer feeding services, etc., United Way 2-1-1 has been used to recruit volunteers to assist in clean up after ice storms and floods. United Way 2-1-1 supports Emergency Management operations and has signed memorandums of understanding in many counties. In the current year, 2-1-1 was a vital resource for community members and emergency management during the tornado disaster this March.

**Housing and Homelessness** – United Way 2-1-1 provides support to the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky and participates in the annual "Point-in-Time" Homeless Counts.

## **Federal and State Legislative Initiatives**

The federal "Calling for 2-1-1 Act" was introduced in both the U.S Senate and House of Representatives in 2010. Kentucky secured a record number of co-sponsors for the legislation – Ed Whitfield, Brett Guthrie, John Yarmuth and Ben Chandler. In partnership with its national 2-1-1 partner, United Way Worldwide, UWKY supported the passing of the Calling for 2-1-1 Bill. The Bill did not pass in the 111th Congress, despite securing a bi-partisan majority of sponsors in both Chambers, and was not reintroduced in the 112th Congress.

State legislation introduced in 2010 to assess the impact of 2-1-1 service and make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the means for securing financial support for 2-1-1 service in a public-private partnership was not reintroduced in 2011 or 2012.

Alternative efforts are currently underway to champion public support for statewide 2-1-1 service outside of the Kentucky legislature.

## **National View**

2-1-1 service is available to more than 86% of the population of the United States. Kentucky lags far behind, serving only 47% of our population. In states without full coverage, as in Kentucky, those lacking access to 2-1-1 services tend to be in rural areas.

A national public opinion poll in early 2012 showed that in 2011, awareness of United Way 2-1-1 increased to its highest level ever, with over 14% of the general public recognizing the service. The percentage can be attributed to increasing 2-1-1 visibility through leveraging special project media campaigns, grass roots outreach efforts, and consistent community engagement.

## **Summary**

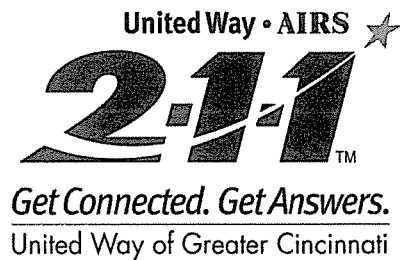
In the 12 years since the FCC assigned the 2-1-1 number for health and human services information and referral, it has repeatedly proven its impact and value. In Kentucky, United Way 2-1-1 is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the information and referral industry. In addition, we will continue to work to make 2-1-1 available to all Kentuckians.



Addendum

Community Reports





## Northern Kentucky Update for 2011

**The Vision That Guides Us:** *Our region is a vital and caring community where all children are educated and prepared for life success, all people are financially stable with maximum health and independence, and all neighborhoods and communities are vibrant, inviting places to live.*

**Our Mission In Pursuit of the Vision:** *United Way leads and mobilizes the caring power of individuals and organizations to help people measurably improve their lives.*

The work of United Way of Greater Cincinnati (UWGC/NKY) focuses on positive collective impact. One can define collective impact as numerous stakeholders/ entities coming together with shared performance indicators to solve complex human service issues. Our region is **United** by a mission to create a stronger community. This is being done currently through strategic efforts focused on specific **Bold Goals** which are about the community aligning and working together to achieve measurable results in important areas such as **Education, Income** and **Health**, which are building blocks for better quality of life.

UWGC/NKY 2-1-1, *formerly known as United Way Helpline*, a strategic initiative of United Way of Greater Cincinnati, has a long standing commitment to serving needs of those in the region. The Helpline, started in 1976, transitioned to a full service 2-1-1 center February 11, 2003 answering live calls 24 hours/day using the three digit number. We are the first designated 2-1-1 in Kentucky. In keeping with commitment to quality standards, UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 received national accreditation through the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) in July, 2007. We are currently under going re-accreditation. UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 has been in the Information and Referral industry over 36 years and has grown to provide services to a total of 25 counties across three states – Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana.

UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 has responded to more than **800,000** calls since its launch in 2003. UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 works to help enhance lives through 2-1-1 by helping individuals and families navigate the complex system of human service community resource information. We strive to provide credible, reliable and accessible community resource information to individuals and families to allow them to make informed decisions about accessing the broadest range of services.

**Population in Geographical Area Served:**

As of August 2012, UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 provides coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to residents in 25 counties across 3 states (Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana). Total population of this service delivery area is 3,171,789. UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 provides 2-1-1 services for the Metro Louisville United Way service delivery area which comprises 9 counties in Kentucky and 3 counties in Indiana (see chart below).

**Counties covered:**

**Kentucky:** Boone, Bullitt, Campbell, Carroll, Grant, Henry, Jefferson, Kenton, Nelson, Shelby, Spencer, Oldham and Trimble (13 counties, or 32% of the Kentucky state population).

**Ohio:** Butler, Brown, Clermont and Hamilton (4 counties or 12% of the Ohio state population).

**Indiana:** Clark, Dearborn, Floyd, Harrison, Jefferson, Ohio, Ripley and Switzerland (8 counties or 5% of the Indiana state population).

**FIGURE A: COUNTY POPULATION GRID**

<b>Kentucky</b>	<b>Population</b>
Boone	118,811
Bullitt*	74,319
Campbell	90,336
Carroll*	10,811
Grant	24,662
Henry*	15,416
Jefferson*	741,096
Kenton	159,720
Nelson*	43,437
Shelby*	42,074
Spencer*	17,061
Oldham*	60,316
Trimble*	8,809
<b>Kentucky Total:</b>	<b>1,406,868</b>

\* denotes county is part of Metro United Way (Louisville) vendor contract.

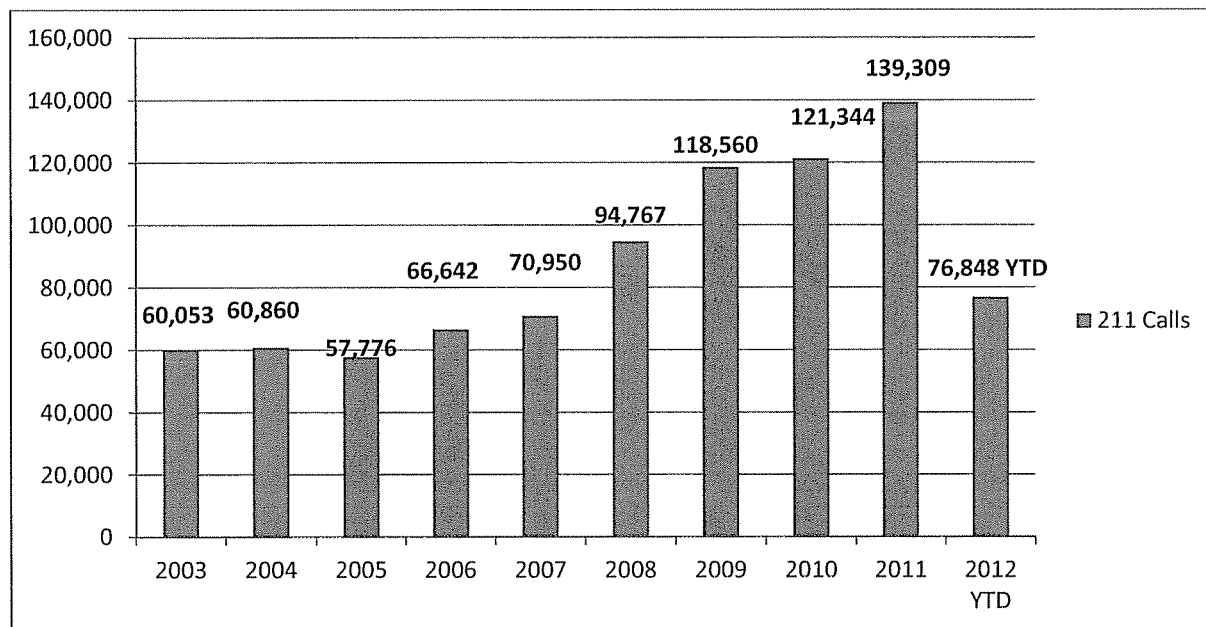
<b>Ohio</b>	<b>Population</b>
Brown	44,846
Butler	368,130
Clermont	197,363
Hamilton	802,374
<b>Ohio Total:</b>	<b>1,412,713</b>

<b>Indiana</b>	<b>Population</b>
Clark*	110,232
Dearborn	50,047
Floyd*	74,578
Harrison*	39,364
Jefferson	32,428
Ohio	6,128
Ripley	28,818
Switzerland	10,613
<b>Indiana Total:</b>	<b>352,208</b>

**FIGURE B: UWGC 2-1-1 SERVICE DELIVERY COVERAGE MAP**



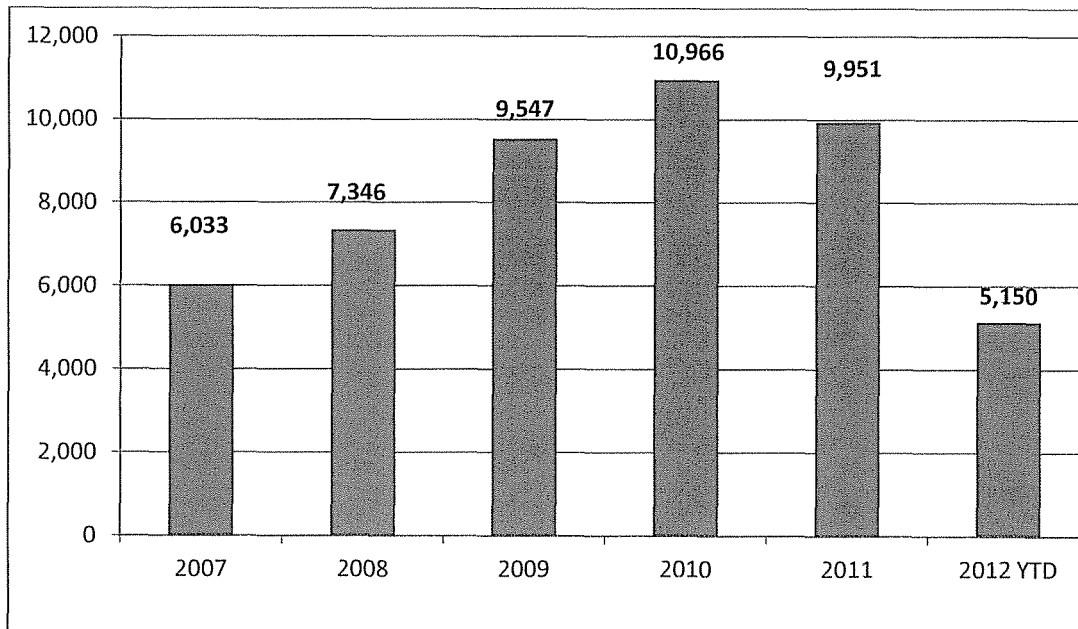
**FIGURE C: UWGC 2-1-1 CALL VOLUME GROWTH\***



\*Figure C includes entire UWGC service area.

United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 has responded to over **867,109** calls since launch February 11<sup>th</sup> of 2003.

**FIGURE D: NORTHERN KENTUCKY CALL VOLUME GROWTH**



UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 has responded to nearly 50,000 calls from Northern Kentucky counties since 2007.

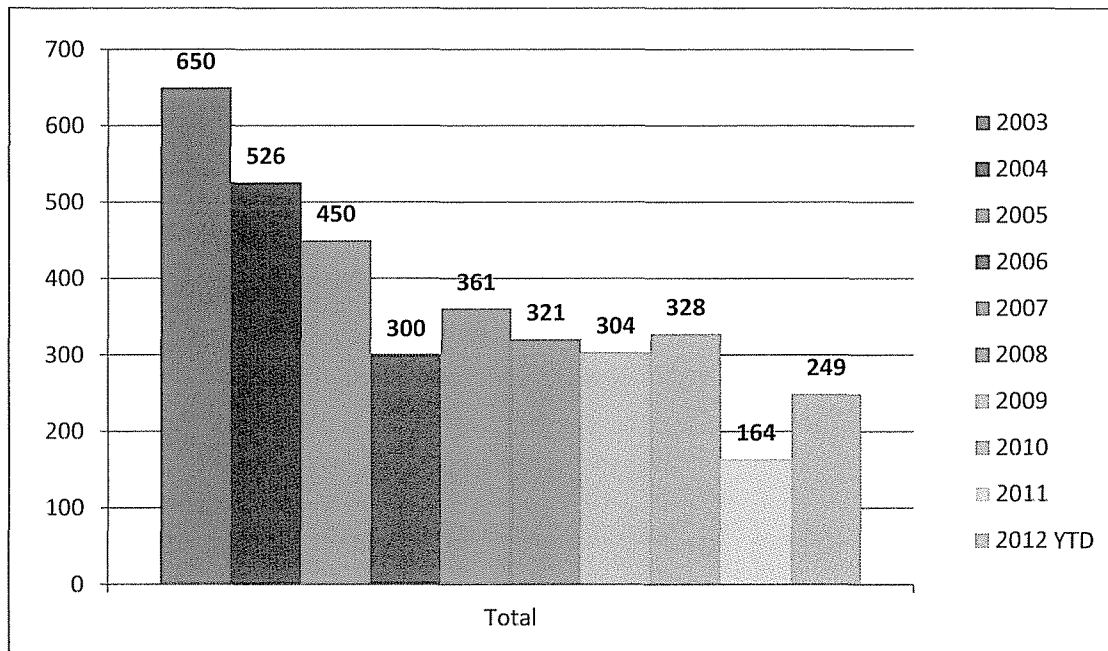
**FIGURE E: NORTHERN KENTUCKY CALL VOLUME BY COUNTY**

NKy Counties	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total by county
Boone	1,511	1,769	2,270	2,369	1,753	915	10,587
Campbell	1,327	1,622	2,027	2,390	2,553	1,203	11,122
Kenton	230	315	439	576	334	224	2,118
Grant	2,965	3,640	4,811	5,631	5,311	2,808	25,166
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>6,033</b>	<b>7,346</b>	<b>9,547</b>	<b>10,966</b>	<b>9,951</b>	<b>5,150</b>	<b>48,993</b>

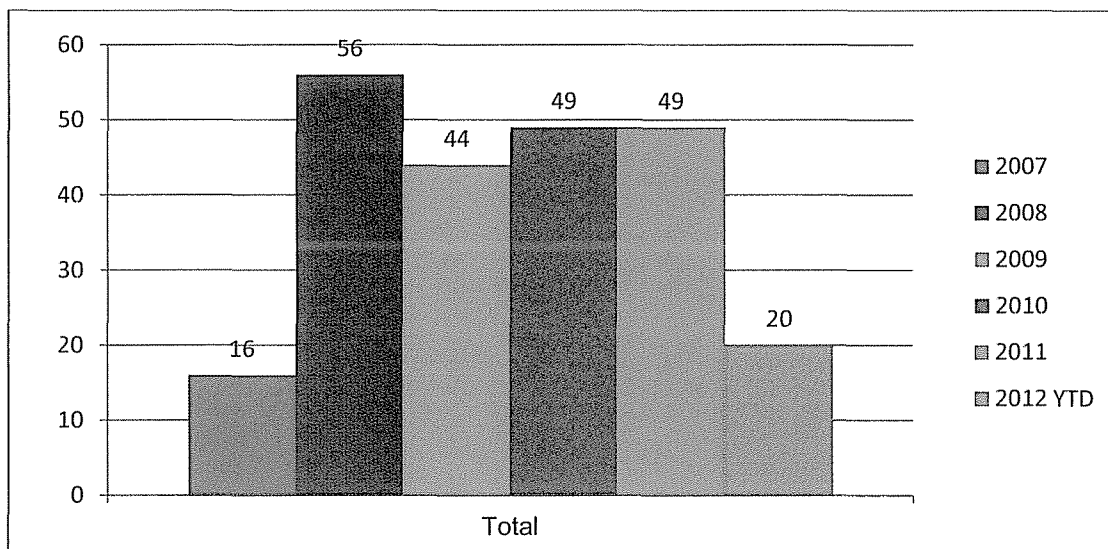
## Volunteering

Thousands have turned to UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 since implementation (2003) for a connection to volunteer opportunities to give back to the community. UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 call specialists, in conjunction with our UWGC Volunteer Connections department, have helped callers choose opportunities for meaningful engagement. Opportunities range from mentoring a child, helping him or her achieve their highest potential, to performing volunteer activities that assist individuals in achieving maximum independence (i.e., building wheel-chair ramps). See Figure F below for data reflecting Volunteer Call Volume.

**FIGURE F: TOTAL VOLUNTEER CALL VOLUME FOR UWGC 2-1-1**



**FIGURE G: TOTAL VOLUNTEER CALL VOLUME FOR NORTHERN KY**



**FIGURE H: TOTAL VOLUNTEER CALL VOLUME FOR NORTHERN KY BY COUNTY**

NKy Counties	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total by county
Boone	0	22	11	22	17	6	78
Campbell	2	10	8	11	13	4	48
Kenton	13	23	23	16	18	9	102
Grant	1	1	2	0	1	1	6
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>234</b>

## Community Partnerships and/or Projects

### txt4health

Txt4Health is a mobile health information service designed to help people understand their risk for type 2 diabetes and become more informed about the steps they can take to lead healthy lives.

This innovative public health initiative offers participants a new way to take actions towards a healthier life. The 14-week text-based program encourages participants to engage with and manage their health, helps them assess their type 2 diabetes risk level, sets individualized goals for increased activity and weight loss, and provides connections to local health care providers and existing wellness and diabetes prevention resources already available.



Individuals enroll in the txt4health program by texting "HEALTH" to 300400 using their mobile phones. To set up their personal profile, each participant is asked brief questions that assess their risk for type 2 diabetes.

Based on their text responses, individuals receive text messages each week with timely, relevant information to help them improve and manage their health and connect with the best possible resources for their needs. These resources may include phone numbers to find a local health care provider, a website with information on diabetes prevention or healthy eating habits, a local health screening event, or a discount at a local pharmacy or grocery chain.

The txt4health program is made possible through many partners. The program on a national level is being piloted in: Crescent City (New Orleans), Southeast Michigan and Greater Cincinnati. UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 locally has partnered with Hamilton County Health Department, American Diabetes Association and other local organizations in this endeavor. We are listed as a resource for people to call to learn more about the program or get connected to appropriate community resources.

### Financial Fitness Day

A major focus for UWGC/NKY is promoting financial health and stability for local residents. In partnership with United Way Community Impact team, UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 has helped to organize two major financial fitness events for the general public. One was held in February 2011 and the other March 2012. The event included informative workshops, key note speakers, one-on-one meetings with finance and housing experts, document shredding and free tax preparation services. A number of short "Ask the Expert" sessions were offered. Attendees were able to register for sessions on topics including credit reports, identity theft, job searches, couponing, energy saving, and to have their taxes done. UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 ensured coordination of community resource tables. Feedback from those attended was very positive. Approximately 400 people attended.

### EITC: Earned Income Tax Credit Initiative

#### ***UNITED WAY PARTNERSHIPS HELP MORE THAN 16,500 LOCAL FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS KEEP OVER \$19 MILLION IN TAX REFUNDS***

Thousands of people in our region are one step closer to financial stability, thanks to the free EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) tax preparation services sponsored by UWGC/NKY and its regional partners.

During the 2011 tax season, 16,553 families and individuals took advantage of the free opportunity, receiving refunds totaling \$19,051,859. This year's returns represent a two percent increase in tax

return dollars received by participating taxpayers in 2010, as well as a five percent increase in participants over last year. The average refund was \$1,150.

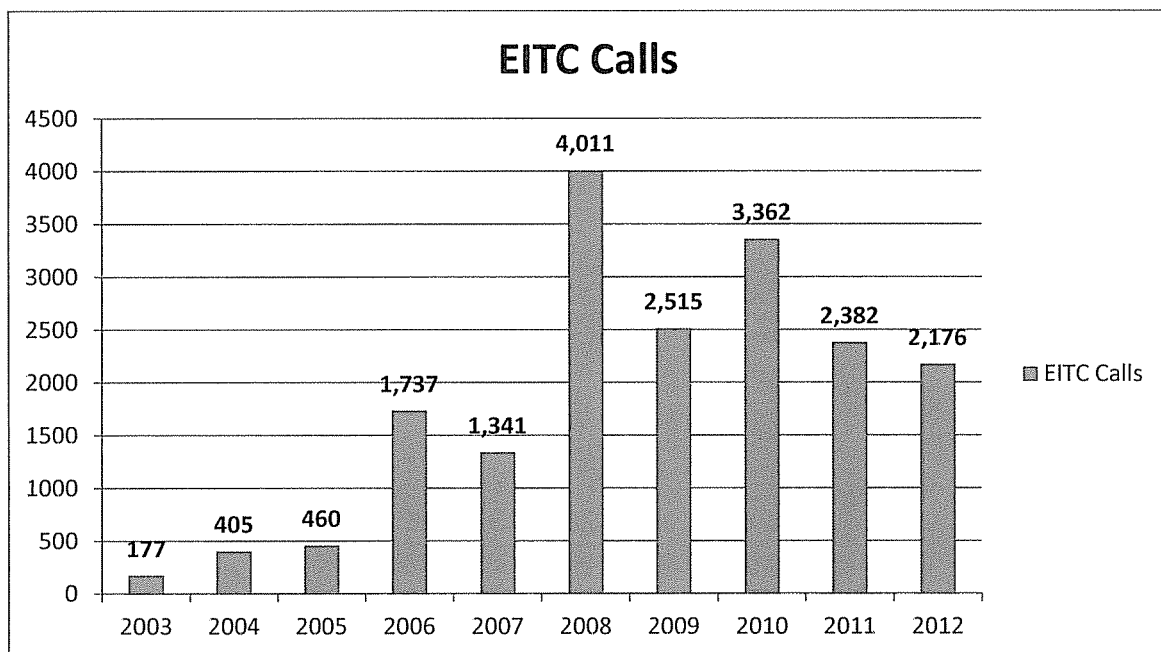
Partnerships with the AARP of Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky and the Ohio Benefit Bank joined with our VITA sites in a concerted effort to deliver free tax preparation services in our community. Thousands of local families and individuals are more financially sound, thanks to this service. The EITC initiative is an effort that helps provide a refund for people who are working hard to earn a living.

Over 656 volunteers from around the region helped hardworking, low income families determine Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) eligibility, a federal tool that returns more money to taxpayers. Of the thousands of families who received the free tax preparation assistance, 21 percent claimed the EITC, receiving a total of \$4,869,376 additional cash back. The credit returned as much as \$5,666 to families with three or more children.

Free tax preparation services throughout Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky saved participating families \$3,310,600 in fees associated with commercial preparation and rapid refund anticipation loans (RALs). The EITC initiative not only helps families and individuals get more of their hard earned money back, but it helps them avoid paying someone to prepare their tax returns. Nearly two dozen partners participated in the United Way initiative in Hamilton, Clermont and Butler counties in Ohio, Dearborn County in Indiana, and Boone, Campbell & Kenton counties in Northern Kentucky.

The information presented above highlights results from 2011. It should be noted however that UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 has been a centralized hub for this critical initiative since its inception in 2003 providing information on free tax preparation sites. Below chart shows over 19,000 calls fielded from individuals and families in the eight years we have been involved.

**FIGURE I: EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT CALL VOLUME**



**American Graduate**

Over 1 million kids drop out of high school per year, costing our nation more than \$100 billion annually in lost wages and taxes, plus the increased social costs due to crime and healthcare.

Experts estimate that American businesses are in need of 97 million middle-and high-skill workers, yet only 45 million Americans possess the necessary education and skills to qualify for these positions. The majority of job openings in the next decade will require at least some postsecondary education.

*Below is an article that summarizes American Graduate Initiative and local public media work to tackle dropout crisis with new programming and public engagement initiatives.*

(CINCINNATI) CET today launches a series of broadcast and online activities in support of "American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen," a national public media initiative funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to help Cincinnati and other communities across America to address the high school dropout crisis.

Every year 1 million kids drop out of high school nationwide. In Ohio, 39,200 students failed to graduate in 2010, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education. The estimated economic impact on the Greater Cincinnati region is a loss of \$180 million in revenues and earnings, according to the Community Research Collaborative of Cincinnati.

"Millions of students around the country, including many right here in Cincinnati, start out with great hope for the future. Yet, somewhere along the way, they give up and make the decision to drop out," said Patricia Harrison, president and CEO of CPB. "Through the American Graduate initiative, public media stations – locally owned and operated – are bringing together parents, educators, and business and community leaders to restore students' hope and encourage them to stay on a path to high school graduation, and a more successful future."

CET is one of more than 60 public media and television stations around the country that are working directly with their communities to address the dropout crisis. CET and "American Graduate" project partners Cincinnati Public Schools, Strive Partnership, UWGC/NKY 2-1-1, Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, Mentoring Works and 91.7 WVXU have developed a blend of media across several platforms – TV, radio, online – and community engagement efforts designed to raise public awareness and offer solutions to improve Cincinnati high school graduation rates.

"Education is central to our purpose as a public media organization" said David Fogarty, President and CEO of CET. "We are pleased to be a part of this national initiative, and to join the impressive collaborative of community partners that are working together."

### **Bank ON Initiative**

Bank ON Greater Cincinnati is a program designed to increase financial stability among households. The program was created with the intent to increase access to affordable financial services and strengthen banking relationships for more residents of our area. The initiative was launched April 2011 and is a collaborative effort between financial institutions, community groups, and local governments of Cincinnati (OH), Newport (KY), and Covington (KY). Bank ON establishes partnerships and assists "unbanked" or "under banked" consumers with the process of connecting with mainstream financial services. Participating households are assisted in creating checking accounts, proper use of credit cards, savings accounts, and mortgages. Additionally, Bank ON will provide individuals with education about the importance of wise spending.

In most low-income neighborhoods, households are using check cashing and pay day lending services that are costing them more than mainstream financial services. Bank ON works to eliminate these unnecessary costs by establishing a more effective plan for their personal banking. The result is more money in individuals' pockets. Bank ON Greater Cincinnati has a large outreach, targeting over 40,000 households in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. As of March 30th, 2012 nearly 1,000 new checking accounts were opened with the participation of 6 partnering financial institutions. The



partnering financial education providers educated over 350 individuals on topics such as Basic Banking, Managing Money and Understanding Credit.

UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 works in close relationship with agencies, like Brighton Center and Northern Kentucky Community Action, to point people in right direction by connecting them with the stepping stones (direct provider agencies) needed to assist with financial stability. From April 2011-April 2012 UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 referred 710 callers regionally for financial education resources.

**Disaster Response, Relief and Recovery**



The picture above shows the ES4 tornado that struck Henryville, Indiana on the afternoon of March 2, 2012. Two other tornados, equal in strength, touched down in Crittenden and Piner, Ky as well as Moscow, Ohio. All areas are under our 2-1-1 service delivery coverage. Henryville, Indiana and Moscow, Ohio were leveled, while Piner (Kenton County, Ky) suffered major damage. Indiana and Kentucky were FEMA declared disaster areas. Ohio (Clermont County) did not meet the FEMA threshold.

UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 continues to work diligently to help affected citizens and communities recover and rebuild through

- Call handling
- Community resource management of information
- Volunteer Support Involvement in Tri-State COAD and Long Term Recovery Groups in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana

Since March 2, over 1,000 calls have been handled through the 2-1-1 line related to disaster.

**Community Outreach Events**

UWGC/NKY continues to maintain presence at numerous community outreach events. The goal is to help educate about 2-1-1 service and connection for those in need to appropriate community services.

### Caller Satisfaction / Connection Data

UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 has had an independent auditor, H&H Data Services, conduct a field customer satisfaction survey since 2-1-1 implementation in 2003. UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 has consistently held ratings of 95% or above in overall satisfaction. The 2011 customer satisfaction survey shows 96% satisfaction. Of those callers that followed through with referrals given by 2-1-1, on average 69% reported receiving help at the agency level after being connected by 2-1-1.

**FIGURE J: CALLER SATISFACTION DATA**

<b>Caller Satisfaction</b>		<b>Callers Reporting They Received Help</b>	
2005	95%	2005	66%
2006	98%	2006	80%
2007	97%	2007	65%
2008	97%	2008	67%
2009	96%	2009	73%
2010	95%	2010	66%
2011	96%	2011	66%
<b>Accumulative Avg</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>Accumulative Avg</b>	<b>69%</b>

**UWGC/NKy Addendum Report Submitted by:**

Jennifer Bieger  
United Way 2-1-1, Manager  
United Way of Greater Cincinnati



## Metro Louisville Update for 2010

**Metro United Way 2-1-1** (MUW 2-1-1) provides full service 2-1-1 coverage (24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year), continuing its role in helping individuals, families and the community to better manage their lives by providing access to the reliable and accurate information and referral resources they need, as well as distributing non-emergency information during local disaster or crisis incidents.

### MUW 2-1-1 Service Delivery/Coverage Area

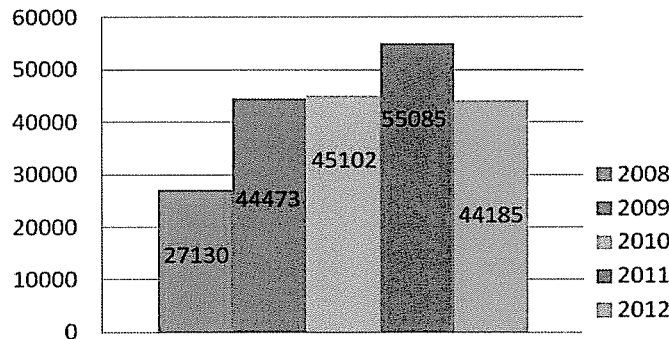
In September 2009, MUW 2-1-1 entered into a "vendor partnership" with UWGC/NKY 2-1-1 to provide 2-1-1 services for the Louisville Metro Area, which includes Bullitt, Carroll, Henry, Jefferson, Nelson, Shelby, Spencer, Oldham and Trimble Counties in Kentucky, and Clark, Floyd and Harrison Counties in Indiana. These nine Kentucky counties alone represent a population of 1,022,258 Kentuckians (approximately 23% of the population of the Commonwealth according to 2011 Census estimates). The entire MUW 2-1-1 service area, including the Southern Indiana Counties population, is approximately 1.25 million people.

### Call Volume/Growth

In 2011, MUW 2-1-1 helped 44,185 individuals find the assistance they needed, a decrease of 20% from the previous year. This decrease in call volume is directly attributable to a spike in calls that occurred in January of 2010 during which a large state-wide mailing to Kentuckians receiving benefit assistance referenced potential eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit and resulted in a phenomenal two-month increase of almost 18,000 calls than from the same time the previous year. No such mailing occurred in 2011. Since its beginnings in 2006 through the end of 2011, MUW 2-1-1 has helped 224,863\* people get connected to the help they need.

## FIGURE A: METRO LOUISVILLE CALL VOLUME

**As of July 31, 2012, Metro United Way 2-1-1 has responded to over 250,000 requests for assistance.**



\* As of July 31, 2012 MUW 2-1-1 has helped 251,678 individuals find the help they needed throughout the Louisville Metro area, surrounding counties, and across the Commonwealth.

Though there was a substantial increase in calls in 2010 as noted above, there has been a relatively consistent volume of calls for three of the last the last four years. Based on the types of calls most prevalent – utility and rent assistance – the call volume rates appear to be related to the economic downturn which has caused economic hardship for a large number of individuals and families who are seeking assistance fulfilling their basic needs.

## **Community Partnerships/Special Projects**

MUW 2-1-1 works in close partnership with other community service providers, local and state governments, agencies and businesses. The following examples highlight a few local initiatives in which 2-1-1 has played a vital role.

### **Disaster/Crisis Response**

MUW 2-1-1 has been there for the community during several natural disasters and crisis incidents over the past four years. MUW 2-1-1 continues to support Emergency Management operations in Louisville and Jefferson County, and has signed Memorandums of Agreement to directly work with and in support of the communities in Oldham, Shelby, and Trimble Counties during any crisis incident. By providing needed non-emergency information about what is happening during and after a disaster, 2-1-1 helps maintain the integrity of the 9-1-1 system for emergency calls and allows the EMA and first responders to focus on the job at hand. MUW is working with the State Emergency Management Agency's Private Sector Working Group Program Manager to develop a series of non-emergency call centers with technology to allow for re-routing of calls to one or more of the additional remote sites in the case of extremely high call volume. The 2-1-1 staff has also been involved in the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee which was responsible for the review and update of the Louisville/Jefferson Federal 5-Year Disaster Response Plan. This plan is essential for maintaining FEMA recovery funding after a major disaster.

### **Earned Income Tax Credit Initiative (EITC)/ Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Site**

MUW 2-1-1 and its partners, Louisville Asset Building Coalition (LABC) and Louisville Metro Government continue to increase awareness of and access to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). At a time when many families are struggling to make ends meet, EITC dollars can be used to reduce debt. LABC and other partners are helping families determine whether they can claim the EITC. MUW 2-1-1 has worked with this program for the past four years. 2-1-1 directs the callers to the VITA sites that offer trained volunteers who offer free help preparing the caller's tax return. A person dialing 2-1-1 can speak with a specialist and learn about EITC/VITA site locations, dates, times and general eligibility requirements.

### **Health & Education**

MUW 2-1-1 is also aligned to promote good health, healthy lifestyles and access to community resources. MUW 2-1-1 connected individuals and families to information on sites to help them enroll and gain access to health resources such as the state's child insurance program, KCHIP, and directed individuals to the MUW Success by 6 "Ages and Stages Survey" Questionnaire (ASQ) to enable parents to determine their child's level of mental development.

### **Volunteerism/Community Information/Additional Disaster Support**

MUW 2-1-1 has successfully expanded its ability to serve and support the community. 2-1-1 has always gone beyond information and referrals for health & human services, community support during disasters and crisis situations, and collection of data on areas of need.

Through the new technology service enhancement, 2-1-1 callers can connect to the MUW Volunteer Engagement Center. The MUW Volunteer Engagement Center matches people's abilities, interests and availability with appropriate volunteer opportunities. The Volunteer Engagement Center recruits volunteers for any nonprofit organization located in the following counties: Bullitt, Jefferson, Oldham and Shelby in Kentucky, and Clark, Floyd and Harrison in Indiana.

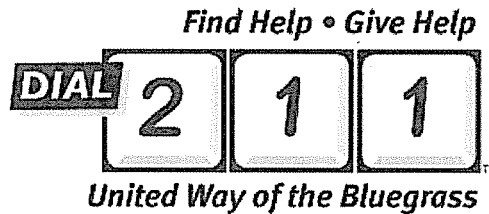
2-1-1's capacity in the area of disaster support also increases through this enhancement. It has been proven effective in identifying callers who are seniors, frail or disabled individuals, and others in need of assistance after a storm or natural disaster. It has also been used as a tool to organize clean up assistance programs for this vulnerable population.

## **Summary**

For the past five years, MUW 2-1-1 has demonstrated a substantial impact and value as a full service 2-1-1 Information and Referral Service built on a solid infrastructure. MUW 2-1-1 continues to expand and improve its ability to serve individuals seeking assistance, and the community as a whole, during any type of crisis through technological advances and creative partnerships. MUW 2-1-1 is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the information & referral industry. Through our Vendor Partnership with the United Way of Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky 2-1-1 call center, we are pleased to share best practices and work with other 2-1-1 centers and partners to ensure standards of excellence in service delivery.

### **MUW Addendum Report Submitted by:**

John Nevitt  
Senior Manager, Human Needs Initiatives  
Metro United Way



## Lexington/Central Kentucky Update for 2010

### Introduction

United Way of the Bluegrass (UWBG) launched 2-1-1 in June of 2005. Clark County was chosen as a pilot site and coverage soon extended to all counties served by UWBG. United Way of the Bluegrass 2-1-1 (UWBG 2-1-1) serves nine counties in Central Kentucky: Anderson, Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, Jessamine, Madison, Montgomery, Scott, and Woodford.

UWBG 2-1-1 provides information and referral services 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. 100% of call center staff are Certified Information and Referral Specialists, a certification received from the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems, the national organization for information and referral centers. UWBG 2-1-1 can assist callers who speak a variety of languages thanks to a partnership with a translation service that can accommodate for over 170 languages.

UWBG 2-1-1 has an advisory council that consists of representatives from the nine counties served. This advisory council assists in promoting 2-1-1 and advising 2-1-1 as it takes on new roles and positions within the community.

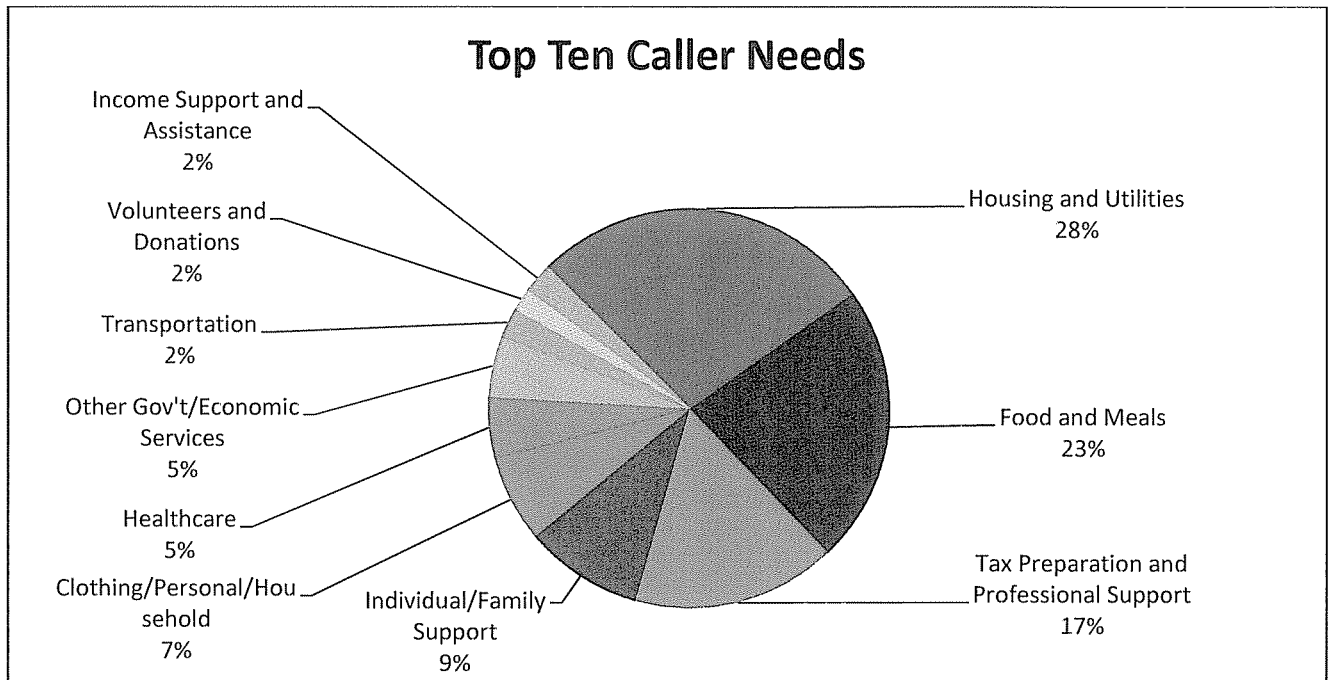
This report will give data on the volume and type of calls received by UWBG 2-1-1, as well as results of customer service follow-up. This report also provides information on the partnerships and work of United Way 2-1-1 in the greater Bluegrass community.

### Data

#### United Way 2-1-1 Call Statistics

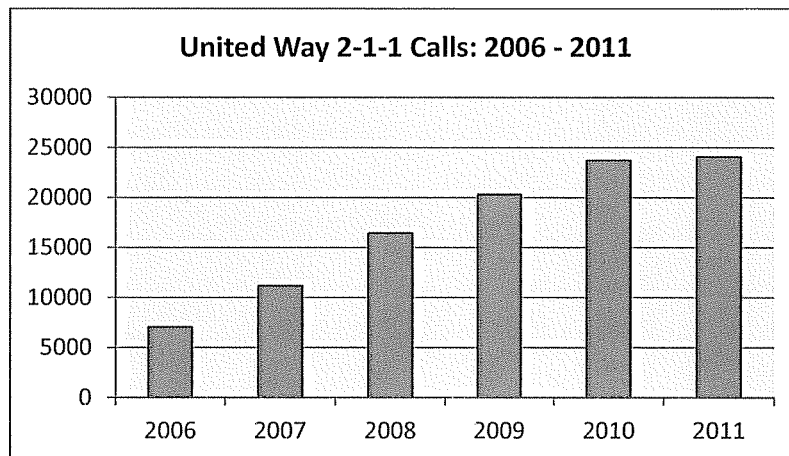
In 2011, UWBG 2-1-1 received 24,074 calls for assistance and provided referrals for over 31,000 needs. Top caller needs for the year were Housing and Utilities (20.91%), Food and Meals (17.06%), Tax Preparation and Professional Support (12.51%), and Individuals and Family Support (7.22%).

**FIGURE A: CALLER NEEDS**



Since UWBG 2-1-1 began in June 2005, each year has seen a remarkable call volume increase. In 2006, the first full year 2-1-1 was operational, 7,064 calls were taken. In 2007, that number grew by 58% to 11,179 calls. 2008 saw another 47% increase in calls to 16,443. In 2009, the number grew to 20,311, a 24% increase. In 2010, there was a 17% increase to 23,725. In 2011, there was a 1.5% increase to 24,074 calls. The chart below shows the growth throughout the years. UWBG 2-1-1 has experienced a 240% increase in calls since being implemented.

**FIGURE B: LEXINGTON/CENTRAL KENTUCKY CALL VOLUME**



## **Customer Service**

A percentage of those who called UWBG 2-1-1 during 2011 received a follow-up phone call to measure client satisfaction. When an individual called UWBG 2-1-1 for resources, the call specialist who took the call would ask if that person could be contacted in the next two weeks to determine if the need that prompted the call was met and to see if the caller was pleased with the way he or she was treated by 2-1-1 staff. Callers were asked to rate their experience in calling 2-1-1 on a scale from Poor, Fair, Good and Excellent. Ninety-nine percent of callers rated their experience as excellent or good. Additionally, 99.23% of callers said they would utilize 2-1-1 again.

## **Partnerships**

### **EITC - Earned Income Tax Credit**

UWBG is committed to helping families and individuals become financially stable. The promotion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is one important way UWBG helps those in the community achieve financial stability. EITC provides families with children an average tax credit of \$2,240; this money can then be used towards savings, home repairs, bills, further education, or other needs that help families achieve greater stability. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sties prepare taxes free of charge for families and individuals who fall within the income guidelines. The VITA volunteers are also trained to ensure tax filers receive the maximum credits for which they eligible.

UWBG 2-1-1 has scheduled free tax appointments for the local VITA coalition, CKEEP, since 2006. In 2011, UWBG 2-1-1 answered over 3,915 calls inquiring on tax assistance and made appointments for over 2,769 of those. This resulted in a total of \$2,271,636 in EITC returns and \$5,716,876 in total tax returns going back to Central Kentucky families.

### **AmeriCorps Partnerships**

To better help the community, including those needing assistance and the agencies providing the assistance, UWBG partnered with the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky. This partnership provides UWBG 2-1-1 an AmeriCorps member who could assist with all information and referral calls, but who could also specialize in housing issues. The AmeriCorps member assigned to UWBG 2-1-1 was responsible for representing UWBG 2-1-1 at community meetings, compiling data and reports to share with the community, and to increase efficiency in referrals by helping to create a cohesive view of available resources. The AmeriCorps member also visited agencies to build relationships with agency staff, helping keep the UWBG 2-1-1 database current.

Of the 24,074 calls taken in 2011, calls about housing, shelter and utility assistance comprised a high percentage of calls received. In 2011, there were 6,542 requests for housing and utilities assistance handled by 2-1-1. These included calls for housing counseling, requests for shelter, and financial assistance for housing and utility assistance to make homes livable. The statistics gathered by 2-1-1 showed the need to focus on housing resources and housing support services in the UWBG 2-1-1 service area. As community awareness of housing difficulties increase, social service agencies cannot solve the problem alone. Service providers are working together in collaboration and in many cases they are using the data and statistics kept by 2-1-1 to identify trends, gaps in services and potential duplication.

### **Back On Track**

UWBG was awarded an Assets for Independence grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Office of Community Services. The program, entitled Back On Track, is designed to help hardworking individuals succeed by matching their savings 2-to-1, up to \$2,000. Individuals working towards buying a first home, furthering their education or starting a business could make them eligible to receive an additional \$4,000 to put towards that asset.



UWBG 2-1-1 was advertised as the number to call for more information or to be pre-screened for the Back On Track program. As participants continue in the Back On Track program they can use UWBG 2-1-1 to connect to local resources that provide the needed classes and seminars required to complete the program. Any clients calling 2-1-1 that could qualify or benefit from Back On Track are also given information the program.

**UWBG Addendum Report Submitted by:**

Nathan Thompson  
Director of Community Impact  
United Way of the Bluegrass