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Kevin Middleton  
Director of Member Services



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

September 19, 2014

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

RECEIVED

SEP 22 2014

PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION

RE: Annual Status Report regarding United Way 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 United Way 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 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**

**September 19, 2014  
(Submission date extended based on request dated August 29, 2014)**

## **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 United Way 2-1-1 in Kentucky (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.

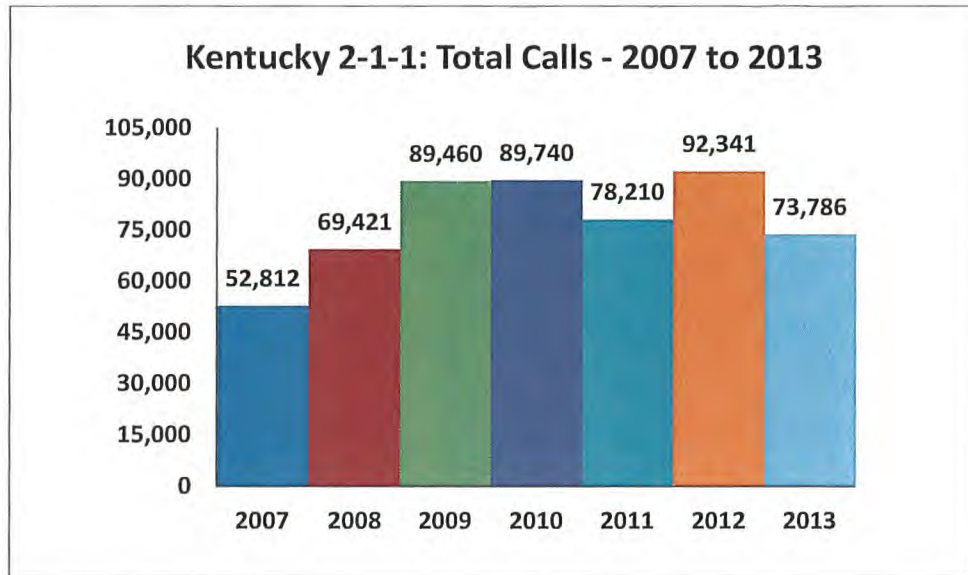
While the expansion of 2-1-1 has been slower than originally anticipated due to the lack of available funding to support the project, we continue to believe that statewide implementation is critical to the Commonwealth. Over the past year, UWKY continued its work with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the Department for Military Affairs, to seek a public/private partnership in support of statewide 2-1-1. We will also be now exploring options for expanding 2-1-1 into additional United Way communities, based on the availability of funding, specifically in the United Way of Southern Kentucky footprint, covering Bowling Green and surrounding counties, as well as most recently in United Way of Murray - Calloway County in Southwestern Kentucky.

## **Call Volume**

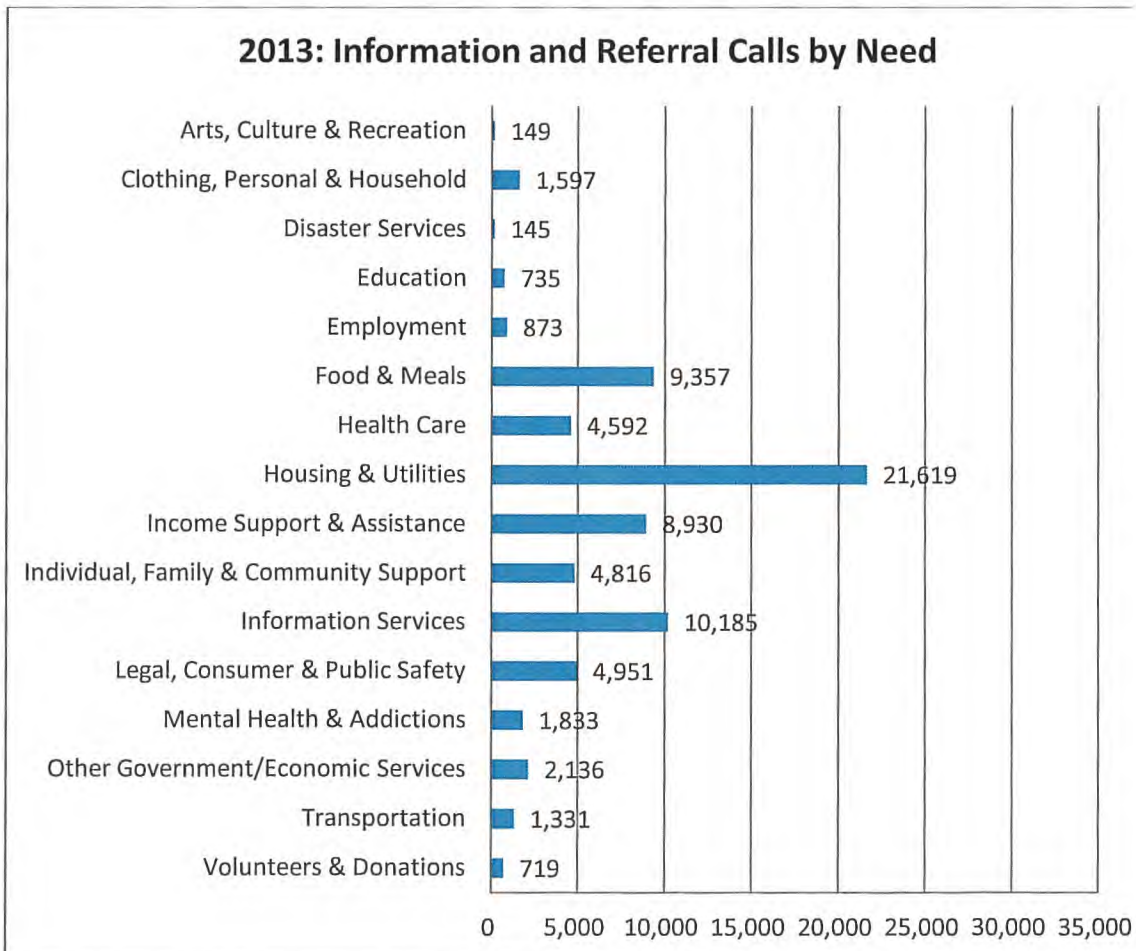
There has been a steady increase in call volume since implementation. In 2013, as the economic recovery has stabilized, call volume in Kentucky, at 73,786, is still showing an increase over pre-recession levels. Online or text based contacts to the service total to 26,059. Figure 1 below shows statewide call volume. This increase can largely be attributed to greater public awareness of United Way 2-1-1 and the period of economic instability, which brought heightened awareness of the service to families calling United Way 2-1-1 to get connected to community resources to help meet their basic needs.

In 2013, calls for basic needs, such as income assistance, housing, utilities, food, clothing and household assistance made up over 56.1% of all calls for services (see Figure 2 below).

**FIGURE 1**



**FIGURE 2**

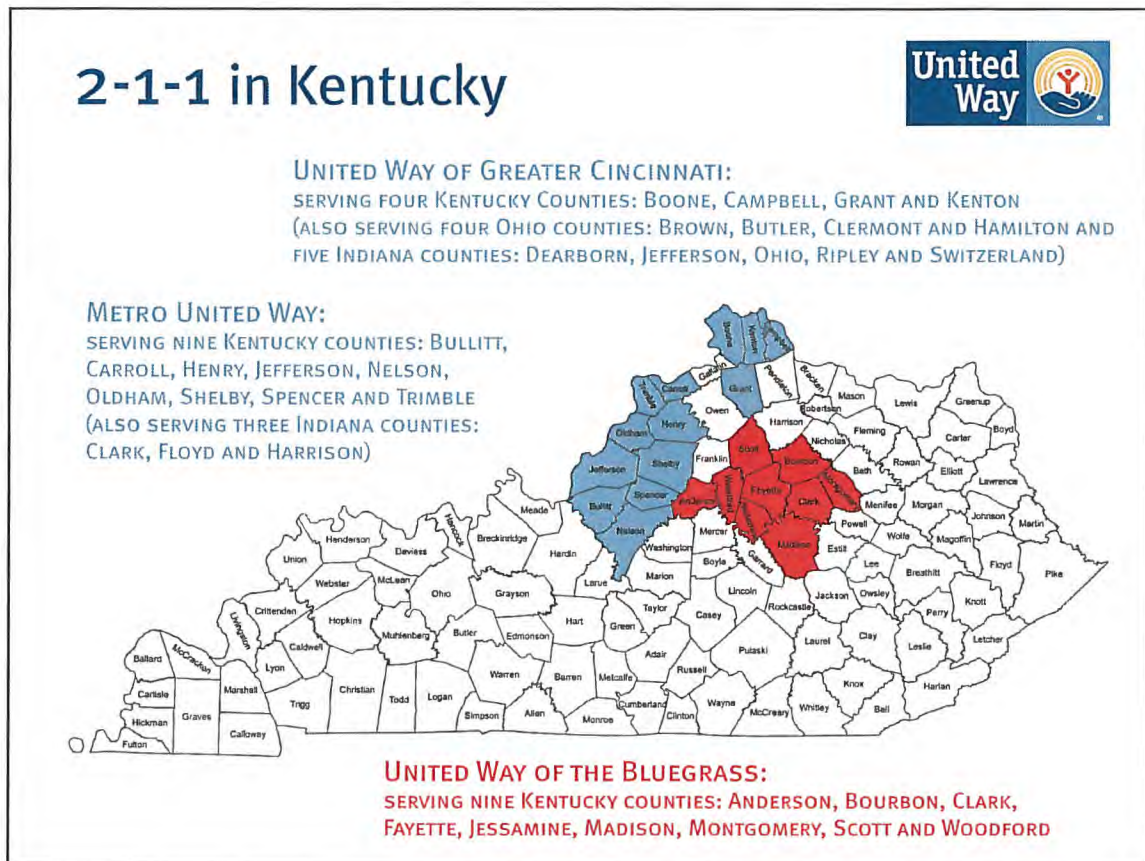




## Service Delivery

Metro United Way in Louisville is 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 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 46% 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 has scheduled free tax appointments for the local VITA coalition, CKEEP, since 2006. In 2013, the local United Way 2-1-1 answered over 3,709 calls inquiring on tax assistance and made appointments for over 1,760 of those. This resulted in a total of \$2,329,231 in EITC returns and \$5,350,303 in total tax returns going back to Central Kentucky families. Statewide, in 2013, the two call centers answered nearly 10,100 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.

**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 or 113th Congresses.

Alternative efforts are currently underway to champion public support for statewide 2-1-1 service outside of the Kentucky legislature, including a developing discussion of partnership with the AmeriCorps VISTA program, the Department of Military Affairs, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and local United Way community support.

## **National View**

2-1-1 service is available to more than 90% of the population of the United States - over 270 million individuals, and in 2013, call centers across the nation answered over 15.6 million calls. Kentucky serves 46% 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 14 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 2013-2014

A foundational initiative of United Way of Greater Cincinnati is the 2-1-1 call center. United Way of Greater Cincinnati's 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. United Way 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) is distinctly known as the first designated 2-1-1 in Kentucky.

Full 2-1-1 center operations continue today to residents in 25 counties across 3 states (Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana). See Figure A below for information on service delivery area.

### Major Accomplishment:

In keeping with commitment to quality standards, United Way 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) received national accreditation through the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems AIRS in July 2007. As regulations require, nationally accredited centers need to reaccredit every 5 years. In May of 2013, all required documentation was submitted to the AIRS national review committee. In April, 2014 the final phase, consisting of site review, for national reaccreditation was conducted with significant positive results.

The Joint National Accreditation Commission notified United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) in June of 2014, that we successfully obtained national reaccreditation status through the Alliance of Information & Referral Systems.(AIRS). AIRS, a membership association for Information & Referral professionals, is a driving force behind clear and consistent professional standards that benchmark every aspect of quality Information & Referral.

United Way 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) is part of a select group of 150 information and referral organizations within the United States and Canada that has demonstrated competence in meeting highest standards in the field dedicated to bringing people and services together.

The AIRS Accreditation Program is operated in alignment with the standards developed by the Institute of Credentialing Excellence. The multi-phase, intensive process assesses more than 200 distinct components of an operation with emphasis on review of areas such as: Service Delivery/Quality, Resource Database, Reports and Measures, Cooperative Relationships, Disaster Preparedness, Community Involvement and Organizational Effectiveness.

Our demonstrated commitment to meeting the highest standards in the field helps us stand out as leaders of 2-1-1 in the industry. This objective evidence of accreditation is a significant achievement in which we have great pride. We routinely strive to exceed quality standards to enable us to better serve our callers and be more responsive/impactful to the communities we serve.

**Geographical Area Served:**

As of August 2014, UWGC/NKy 2-1-1 continues to provide 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 more than 3 million. United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 provides 2-1-1 services for Metro Louisville United Way (MUWL) which alone comprises 9 counties in Kentucky and 3 counties in Indiana.

**FIGURE A : UWGC 2-1-1 Service Delivery Area Map**



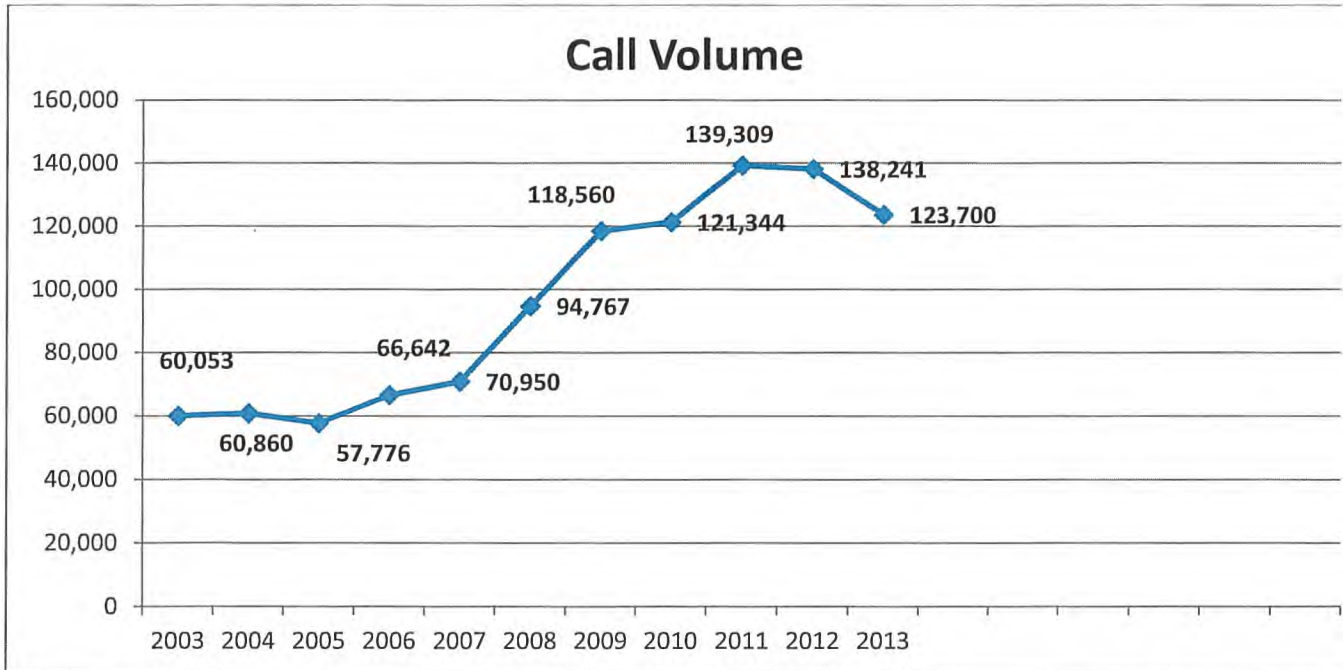
**Kentucky:** Boone, Bullitt, Campbell, Carroll, Grant, Henry, Jefferson, Kenton, Nelson, Shelby, Spencer, Oldham and Trimble (*13 counties, or 33% of the Kentucky state population*).

**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*).



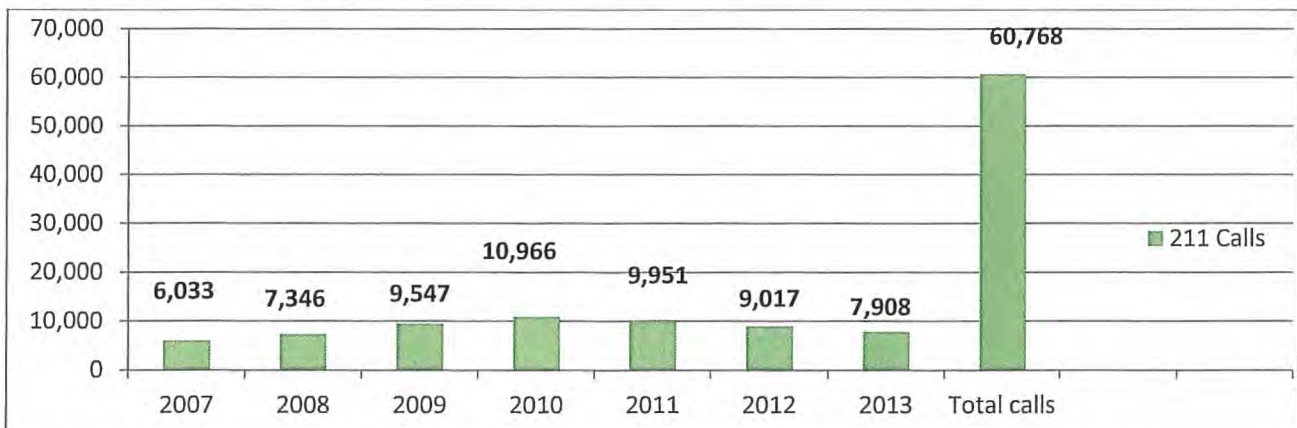
**Figure B: United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 Call Volume Growth (2003-YTD)**



United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) has responded to more than **1,052,202** calls for connection to community services since launch February 11<sup>th</sup> of 2003. In addition to 123,700 calls, there was also a total of 138,410 visitor searches to our website [www.uwgc.org/211](http://www.uwgc.org/211). This was an increase of 25,769 hits in comparison to 2012 visitor search total of 112,641.

United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 Website Searches	
2012:	112,641
2013:	138,410

**Figure C: United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 Northern Ky Call Volume Growth**



In Northern Kentucky counties, United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) has responded to more than 60,768 calls since 2007.

**Figure D: Total Call Volume Northern Kentucky Counties**

N Ky Counties	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	County Total
Boone	1,511	1,769	2,270	2,369	1,753	1,597	1,302	<b>12,571</b>
Campbell	1,327	1,622	2,027	2,390	2,553	2,178	1,882	<b>13,979</b>
Kenton	2,965	3,640	4,811	5,631	5,311	4,876	4,399	<b>31,633</b>
Grant	230	315	439	576	334	366	325	<b>2,585</b>
<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>9,017</b>	<b>7,908</b>	<b>60,768</b>

**Collaborative Relationships:**

**Kentucky Strengthening Families (KYSF)** represents a multi-disciplinary partnership of more than 20 public and private national, state and local organizations dedicated to promoting six research-based protective factors into services and supports for children and their families. KYSF is an initiative led by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood through the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge Grant Program and the Kentucky Department for Public Health through the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant Program.

United Way 2-1-1 assisted KYSF leadership team member in providing information and resources for the 2014 Concrete Supports for Families Resource Guide. This list of resources is a starting place for accessing help for KY families.



**The Tristate Veterans Community Alliance** has been formed as an outcome of the year long Operation Vets THRIVE convening process led by Easter Seals. Based on recommendations from the 2014 report <http://www.easterseals.com/swohio/shared-components/document-library/tristate-veteran-community.pdf> the Veterans Community Alliance exists to align our community's Veteran support systems to ensure all generations of service members and their families have the opportunity to thrive. The United Way 2-1-1 Director is chairing the Coordinated Access for Veterans work group as United Way 2-1-1 is a key partner in aligning and coordinating a streamlined information & referral system.

The geographic scope of the Tri-state Veterans Alliance covers a 15 county area including the Kentucky counties of Boone, Bracken, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton and Pendleton.

**Duke Energy and United Way of Greater Cincinnati** partnered this summer to bring relief to those in need. Duke Energy provided a \$25,000 grant to buy fans for area older adults, low-income residents and people with disabilities. United Way administered the program, distributing funds to non-profit agencies that serve the needs of those populations.



By dialing 2-1-1 for fan distribution resources, individuals can reach United Way 2-1-1, United Way's 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week health and social services information and referral helpline. Fans were made available in Duke Energy's service territory of Southwestern Ohio and Northern Kentucky.

### **Earned Income Regional Tax Credit Initiative**

Almost \$21 million in tax refunds were returned to local families, thanks to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and free tax preparation services provided by United Way of Greater Cincinnati, Internal Revenue Service Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), AARP, the Benefit Bank and other community partners.

More than 19,800 returns were prepared last year for local families at 126 sites across Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. This year's returns represent a 9 percent increase in the number of returns over 2013.

The EITC initiative helps families and individuals get more of their hard earned money back and avoid cost of paying someone to prepare their tax returns. 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.

Beginning in January of 2014, 753 volunteers from around the region helped hardworking, low-income families determine whether they qualified for EITC and other tax credits that return more money to taxpayers. Volunteers saved individuals and families an average of \$200 per return.

"Taxpayers in our community are fortunate that IRS-certified volunteers donate their time and expertise to accurately prepare tax returns," says John Crawford, senior stakeholder relationship tax consultant, IRS. "The IRS is proud to support the United Way of Greater Cincinnati in their VITA effort."

Local companies also supported the effort by hosting and adopting tax preparation sites, including Ernst and Young, GE Aviation, The Kroger Co., Fifth Third Bank and Park National Bank. Ernst and Young recruited and trained other companies to host sites. Not including training time, altogether the companies and their employees donated more than 900 volunteer hours.

Filing taxes can be complicated. For those who can't afford professional tax preparation services, this could translate into important tax credits being left out or improperly filed returns that could cause long-term headaches. Our free tax prep sites are vital to the community. Since United Way began participating in the EITC regional initiative, the collaborative has been instrumental in returning over \$100 million to the community. United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) has been a critical partner in the regional initiative for over eleven years connecting over 23,931 callers to EITC sites. In 2013, we handled close to 3,000 EITC calls. At the 2-1-1 level, we realize that by connecting callers to free tax prep sites we are impactfully connecting them to many other elements such as financial literacy and stability through trained volunteers that can better their lives.

Another area that United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) is involved with is referral for individuals and families to local financial opportunity centers. These local centers provide a full range of services and support- from financial coaching to free tax preparation as well as employment counseling, benefits enrollment and credit counseling. The main goal is to help working families and individuals achieve financial stability through financial behavior that is committed to increasing income, decreasing expenses and acquiring assets. One of the primary centers in Northern Ky is operated by our neighboring partner Brighton Center.

### **Disaster**

United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) continues to be an active member of COAD- The Tri-State Community Organizations Active in Disaster. This nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization serves as the forum where organizations from the Southeast Indiana-Northern Kentucky-Southwest Ohio Region share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster cycle - "preparation, response and recovery- to help disaster survivors and their communities. United Way of

Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy), along with COAD, shows commitment to communities and helps avail resources to meet the needs of people who have been or may be affected by disaster. United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 (UWGC/NKy) participated in COAD's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual community Disaster Fair in coordination with our local American Red Cross and Emergency Management Agency on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014. This event helped members of the community focus on general preparedness in the event of a disaster. Numerous community partners and responders were also a part of the successful event.

## **Health**

One out of every six Americans is currently living without insurance. Close to 80 percent of the uninsured are working families. With each state's Health Insurance Marketplace open October 2013-March 2014, millions of Americans were afforded an opportunity to gain access to quality, affordable health insurance.

As a generalized comprehensive information and referral service, United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 ((UWGC/NKy) assisted in providing information and connecting people to healthcare resources such as Kynect, Kentucky's Healthcare Connection, healthcare.gov and other agencies. United Way of Greater Cincinnati 2-1-1 ((UWGC/NKy) provides Kentuckians with the information needed to help understand health insurance options, where to get free help with their application and help in determining if they qualify for financial assistance or programs like Medicaid or the Kentucky Children's Health Insurance Program.



## Metro Louisville Update for 2013

**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.

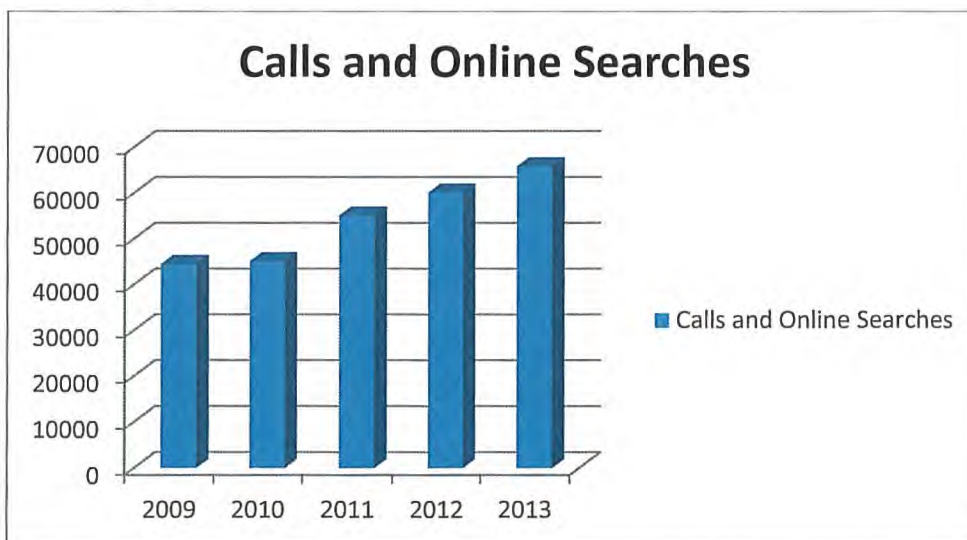
### MUW 2-1-1 Service Delivery/Coverage Area

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 1,227,512 Kentuckians (approximately 30% of the population of the Commonwealth). The entire MUW 2-1-1 service area, including the Southern Indiana Counties population, is approximately 1.5 million people.

### Call Volume/Growth

In 2013, MUW 2-1-1 assisted **65,805** individuals find the help they needed. That is more than 9% increase in the number of people than were helped in 2011. Since its beginnings in September 2006, MUW 2-1-1 has helped **400,555** people get connect to the help they need.

**FIGURE A: METRO LOUISVILLE CALL VOLUME**



\* As of August 20, 2014, MUW 2-1-1 has helped 400,555 individuals find the help they needed throughout the Louisville Metro area, surrounding counties and across the Commonwealth.



As notated in chart, there has been a steady upswing in call volume since implementation. This can be attributed to the state of the economy, as more struggling individuals and families (facing unemployment, foreclosures, etc.) are turning to 2-1-1 to get connected to community resources to help meet 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 nature disasters and crisis incidents over the past. MUW 2-1-1 continues to support Emergency Management operations in Louisville and Jefferson County, Oldham County, Shelby County and Trimble County with signed Memorandums of Agreement to directly work with and in support of the communities in these Counties during any crisis incident in those communities as well. By providing needed non emergency information about what is happening during and after a disaster, 2-1-1 helps maintain the integrity of the 911 system to receive only emergency calls and allow EMA and first responders to focus on the job at hand. Metro United Way is working with the State Emergency Management Agency's Private Sector Working Group. The 2-1-1 Director completed the FEMA EMI Professional Development Series.

## **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 five 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. During the 2013 tax season, MUW 2-1-1 answered 3,418 calls for information directly relating to EITC and VITA Site locations from individuals across the Metro Louisville and surrounding counties.

## **Education & Health**

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.

Seasonally, 2-1-1 supports Flu Shot Clinics, providing callers with locations, dates and hours of operations for these clinics. 2-1-1 staff also makes presentations to seniors groups explaining how they can find resources from health related issues to transportation. 2-1-1 is directly supporting the Jefferson County Public School System in their development of an initiative called Louisville Linked to connect students with community-based organizations that could work with them outside of school. The program houses data from the area's resources that should help the school district manage and grow the efforts of dozens of organizations looking to improve education. 2-1-1 will be the conduit to these agencies. 2-1-1 Call Specialists will direct callers looking for assistance with their children's



educational issues directly to Louisville Linked agencies, and identifying logos have been placed on the 2-1-1 web search to ID these agencies for people using the online 2-1-1 search looking for assistance with these issues.

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

MUW 2-1-1 continues to expand 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.

The staff at 2-1-1 continues to work with Jefferson County EMA on the development of a plan for a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) as well as a Donation of goods and Services Plan – Emergency Support Functions.. 2-1-1 regularly shares aggregate data with local government agencies such as family services, non-profit organizations and recently began continues working with the Veterans Affairs facilities in Louisville and other agencies that serve VETS to improve the access to Veterans programs.

### **On Line Search and Mobile App**

In January 2011, Metro United Way 2-1-1 launched its 2-1-1 community resources database online search capabilities. Since the 2-1-1 Database search went live, it has had over 85,000 searches for thousands of different health and human services throughout the Metro United Way 2-1-1 service area. The online search has been utilized greatly by local social workers, case workers, counselors and teachers for Clients of Programs like Louisville Linked, Destination Degrees, countless Veterans services and homeless programs like the Single Point of Entry which tracks open shelter bed space.

### **Summary**

For past eight years, Metro United Way 2-1-1 has demonstrated substantial impact and value as a full service 2-1-1 Information and Referral Service built on solid infrastructure supporting high-quality and standards. Metro United Way 2-1-1 continues to expand and improve its ability to service individuals seeking assistance, and the community as a whole during any type of crisis through technological advances and creative partnerships. Metro United Way 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 in ensuring of standards of excellence in service delivery.



## Lexington/Central Kentucky Update for 2013

### Introduction

United Way of the Bluegrass launched their 2-1-1 service in June of 2005. Clark County was chosen as a pilot site and coverage soon expanded to all counties served by United Way of the Bluegrass in subsequent years. United Way 2-1-1 serves nine counties in Central Kentucky: Anderson, Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, Jessamine, Madison, Montgomery, Scott and Woodford. United Way 2-1-1 provides information and referral services from 7:30am to 6pm, Monday through Friday with a voicemail set up to record calls received during off-hours. 100% of call center staff are Certified Information and Referral Specialists, a certification received from the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems, a national organization for information and referral centers. United Way 2-1-1 can assist calls who speak a variety of languages thanks to a partnership with a translation service that can accommodate for over 170 languages.

United Way 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.

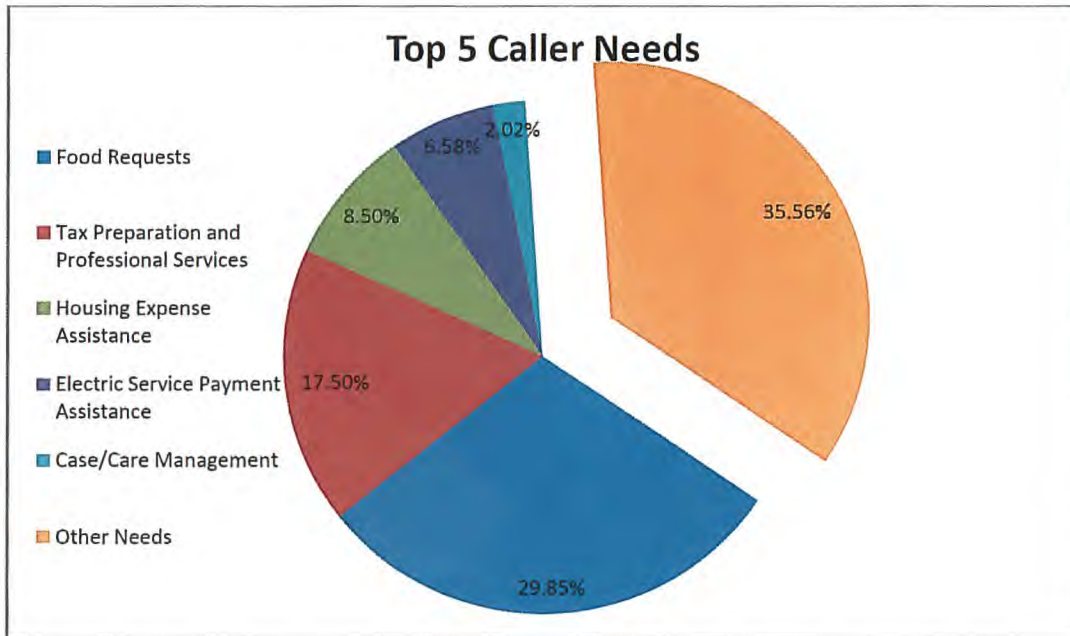
This report will give data on the volume and type of calls received by United Way 2-1-1, as well as results of a customer service follow-up. This report also provides information on the partnerships and work of United Way 2-1-1 in the greater Bluegrass community.

### Data

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

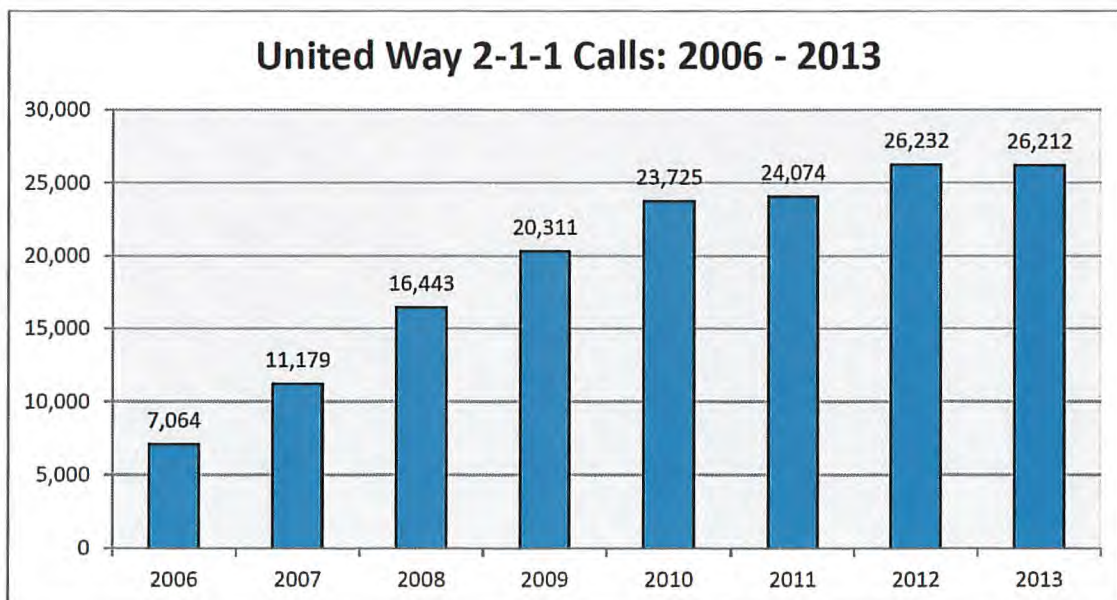
In 2013, United Way 2-1-1 received 26,212 calls for assistance and provided 27,932 referrals for a variety of needs. The top five caller needs for the year were Food and Meals (29.85%), Tax Preparation and Professional Support (17.50%), Housing Expense Assistance (8.50%), Electric Service Payment Assistance (6.58%), and Case/Care Management (2.02%). Other needs represented 35.56% of calls, with needs ranging from getting a Thanksgiving Basket to contacting an attorney for legal advice to getting help with intake/assessment for substance abuse problems. The chart below shows a breakdown of calls over 2013. As seen, a substantial number of the calls fall within the top five caller needs. The other needs have been included but are shown separate from the top five caller needs.

**FIGURE A: CALLER NEEDS**



Since United Way 2-1-1 began in June of 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. In 2012 there was an 8.9% increase to 26,232 calls. In 2013 there was a 0.08% decrease to 26,212 calls. The chart below shows the growth throughout the years. United Way 2-1-1 has experienced a 271% increase in calls since being implemented.

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





### **Customer Service**

A percentage of those who called United Way 2-1-1 during 2013 received a follow-up phone call to measure client satisfaction. When an individual called United Way 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 calling 2-1-1 on a scale from Poor, Fair, Good and Excellent. Ninety-eight percent of callers rated their experience as excellent or good. Additionally, 97.61% of callers said they would utilize 2-1-1 again.

### **Partnerships**

#### **God's Pantry**

God's Pantry Food Bank is a regional food pantry in the state of Kentucky whose goal is to reduce hunger in Kentucky through community cooperation making the best possible use of all available resources. Currently United Way of the Bluegrass' 2-1-1 call center provides over 25% of food pantry referrals for God's Pantry in the Lexington area.

#### **EITC – Earned Income Tax Credit**

United Way of the Bluegrass is committed to helping families and individuals become financially stable. The promotion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is one important way United Way of the Bluegrass 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 toward savings, home repairs, bills, further education, or other needs that help families achieve greater stability. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites 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 the client is eligible. United Way 2-1-1 has schedule free tax appointments for the local VITA coalition, CKEEP, since 2006. In 2013 United Way 2-1-1 answered over 3,709 calls inquiring on tax assistance and made appointments for over 1,760 of those. This resulted in a total of \$2,329,231 in EITC returns and \$5,350,303 in total tax returns going back to Central Kentucky families.

#### **Back On Track**

United Way of the Bluegrass was awarded an Assets for Independence grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Community Service. The program, entitled Back On Track, is designed to help hardworking individuals succeed by matching their savings 2-to-1 for home ownership or 4-to-1 for starting a small business or going back to school. Individuals working toward these goals save \$2,000 dollars for homeownership and \$1,000 for starting a small business or going back to school and are matched with \$4,000 to put toward their asset.

United Way 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 United Way 2-1-1 to connect to local resources that provide the needed classes and seminars required to complete the program. Those clients calling 2-1-1 that qualify and could benefit from Back On Track are also given information regarding the program.