



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is 2-1-1?

- **2-1-1** is the national abbreviated dialing code (like 911 for emergencies and 411 for directory assistance) for free and confidential access to **non-emergency health and human services** information and referral.
- **2-1-1** is an **easy-to-remember number** that makes it easy for people to get connected with the appropriate community-based organizations and government agencies that can help them. It provides simple access to often complex and hard to find services, such as food and shelter programs, child or elderly care, family services, employment and training support, physical and mental health services and more.
- About 82% of the nation's population now has access to 2-1-1; visit www.211us.org to learn more.
- In addition to the 24/7 phone service, people may also search for services online.

Where is 2-1-1 in Wisconsin?

- **2-1-1** is currently available in all counties; eleven independent 2-1-1 providers serve the state.
- **2-1-1** Wisconsin, a non-profit organization, administers 2-1-1 service in Wisconsin, and is responsible for making sure that each provider meets nationally established standards, is accredited, and retains certified staff. For more information about 2-1-1 Wisconsin log on to www.211wisconsin.org.
- In fall 2010 **2-1-1** services implemented new, common software, creating a state-wide data base.

Background on United Way's 2-1-1

- United Way of Marathon County started United Way's FIRST CALL in 1990 as an informational and referral service for Marathon County, operating weekdays 8-5, and housed at United Way.
- In 2006 United Way's FIRST CALL became United Way's 2-1-1, extended service to Portage County, and expanded hours to 24/7. Nearly 100% of the funding for the 2-1-1 service is provided by the United Way of Marathon County and United Way of Portage County. Visit www.unitedwaymc.org and click on 2-1-1 to search the online database, access resource publications and community need reports, and more.
- In 2008 United Way's 2-1-1 became a nationally accredited service.
- In fall 2009, 2-1-1 WI requested United Way's 2-1-1 expand to Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. The United Way of Marathon County Board approved expanding only if funding could be found. Funding was secured for 2010 for the Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas service area; through Merrill Area United Way, Northwoods United Way, Church Mutual Insurance Co., Aspirus, Marshfield Clinic, Ministry Health Care, Merrill Area Community Foundation, Wisconsin Public Service Foundation, and a 2-1-1 Wisconsin grant.
- In spring 2010 United Way's 2-1-1 began providing 2-1-1 services to Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties.

For more info. contact Julie Grip, United Way's 2-1-1 Director, 715-848-2927 or jgrip@unitedwaymc.org

1-13-11



Serving Marathon, Portage, Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties.

