

San Bernardino County 



Get Connected. Get Answers.

San Bernardino County 2-1-1 First Year Caller Data and Analysis

2-1-1 San Bernardino County is provided by:



Inland Empire United Way

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2-1-1 Caller Data and Analysis – First Year Report

For the first time in the history of San Bernardino County, there is an easy to access continually updated central location for social and health services resource information, available 24 hours a day by phone or internet. It is the 2-1-1 system, launched officially on September 20, 2006.

This service, a vital piece of social infrastructure, serves as the social receptionist, performing triage for the service providers in the county. To the consumers, those in need, those just trying to find someone who can answer their questions, or point them to an agency that can respond to their needs, dialing 2-1-1 is as dramatic an improvement in information management as the advent of the yellow pages was more than 100 years ago. 2-1-1 has been a totally conscious creation.

In addition to streamlining the social service system, 2-1-1 provides for comprehensive data collection of caller demographics and expressed needs. This rich array of data, when analyzed, can paint a defining picture of our communities and their needs. It can be framed as wide as the whole county, or focused down to the zip code level. It can be used to determine trends and identify service gaps. When overlaid with a GIS mapping of service of providers' locations extracted from the 2-1-1 database, the picture becomes multi-dimensional, and can be used to determine best locations for new service provision, or to avoid duplication of services already in place.

The data generated by callers to 2-1-1 can be used by government, nonprofit organizations and funding agencies for planning, program development and funding purposes.

For these and other reasons, Inland Empire United Way embarked on producing a report that would benefit government and nonprofit sectors and give a glimpse into the potential of the data the 2-1-1 system produces. The second year's data will likely increase in volume by an additional 50%, offering an even clearer window into the status of our communities.

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*2-1-1 San Bernardino County is funded in part by
First 5 San Bernardino and the County of San Bernardino.*



Executive Summary

This executive summary highlights the more important findings from the analysis of identified needs and caller outcomes reported for Inland Empire United Way's 2-1-1 information and referral program's first year of operations. Who seeks help, why they seek help, and the result of their search for help is briefly discussed. A more detailed examination of the needs of callers and the result of their efforts to find assistance can be found in the full report and supplementary materials. You can find the report on www.ieuw.org.

The use of 2-1-1 as a resource to find help is growing quickly. Each month, greater numbers of callers are using 2-1-1. In July 2007, over 2,600 information and referral calls were taken by 2-1-1 call center staff, over triple the number of calls from August 2006. At the current rate of growth in call volume, over 3,000 calls per month will be reached well before the end of the year. Based on the experience of other 2-1-1 programs, call growth will continue for several years.

Callers to 2-1-1 are a diverse group, representing the diversity of San Bernardino County. 2-1-1 serves a broad assortment of racial/ethnic groups, ages, and family types. However, callers are not entirely representative of San Bernardino County as a whole. Almost 4 of every 5 callers are female, and African-Americans utilize 2-1-1 three times as much as would be expected based on their representation in the population. Most other ethnic and racial groups are slightly under-represented based on their county-wide representation.

First and foremost, callers are seeking help with basic needs, especially housing-related needs. Over 68% of all 2-1-1 calls are related to basic needs. Regardless of how the callers are classified - gender, race/ethnicity, whether or not children are present, age, etc. - help with basic needs is what is most needed.

Most callers, 58%, had children under age 18 present in the home with more than one-third (34%) of the callers having children under the age of 6. Households with young children (under age 6) were very similar to household with older children. About three-fourths of the households with children under age 18 present had a basic need identified (compared to 60% of households without children).

The City of San Bernardino led the other cities and towns in the rate of basic needs requests per 100,000 in most categories. Yet Running Springs, a mountain town with a population of a little more than 5,000 located between Lake Arrowhead and Big Bear Lake, had a much higher rate of calls in the categories of Housing, Rent Assistance, Sober Living and Transportation requests.

Success at finding help largely depends on what type of help is needed. For most of the ten broad top-level categories of needs, 2-1-1 is very successful at connecting callers with appropriate agencies. In fact, with the exception of basic needs and environment quality needs, at least 69% of callers were able to find assistance. Within the top-level category of basic needs, callers were able to find help with food and clothing needs most of the time, 79% and 86%, respectively. Seeking help with rent assistance, housing and transportation was, more often than not, a futile effort.

The demographics of the callers, their location within San Bernardino County and the circumstances prompting their seeking help are largely a function of economic circumstances. Most callers are seeking help with basic needs and those callers tend to come from demographic groups that tend to have above average rates of low-income households. Thus, females, African-Americans and households with children make up a substantial portion of callers to 2-1-1.

The demographics and needs of callers will likely not change substantially in the near future. A large part of San Bernardino County's population is struggling with basic needs. A high poverty rate, increasingly expensive housing and a lack of living-wage jobs available to the struggling portion of the population will ensure that basic needs remain a priority. The good news is that, with 2-1-1, persons needing help now have a place to turn that increases their chances of finding the help they need.

The following narrative, tables and maps form the main body of this report. This report is also available on www.ieuw.org. There are numerous other ways the data can be analyzed. If you have an interested in working with the raw data, contact our main office:

Inland Empire United Way
9644 Hermosa Avenue
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730
(909) 980-2857 ext. 211



This report was prepared by Gregory A. Works.

Introduction

This report describes the results from the first year of Inland Empire United Way's 2-1-1 information and referral program. Topics include the volume of calls for information, the nature of the need that prompted the calls, a description of the persons seeking information, and follow up information about the caller's success at finding help. The data described in this report came from the 2-1-1 call database between August 1, 2006 and August 18, 2007. Also included as a supplement to this report is a substantial section of tables and maps documenting in detail the number, rate, and location of persons seeking help. The full report is available at www.ieuw.org.

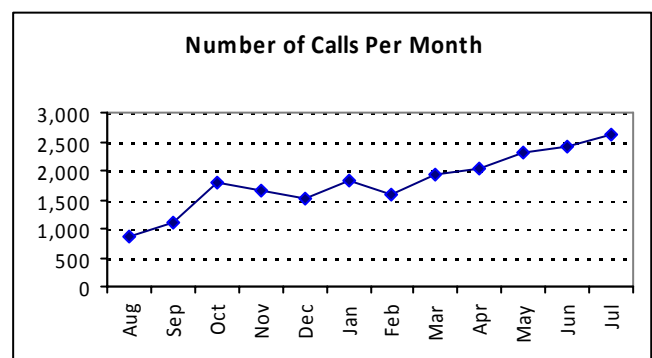
There are two broad categories of statistics described in this report, call statistics and need statistics. It is important to distinguish between the two. Call statistics in this report refer to characteristics of the call to 2-1-1 and the persons making the call. Needs statistics refer to individual needs, or problems, identified by 2-1-1 Call Specialists. A caller may have multiple needs identified. Therefore, there are more needs than callers and the numbers presented in this report reflect those differences.

The classification of needs is based on the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) taxonomy. AIRS is the national professional organization for information and referral programs, providing accreditation to member organizations and certification to information and referral professionals. Among the standards provided by AIRS is their taxonomy of needs. Inland Empire United Way 2-1-1 uses this standardized taxonomy to match clients with programs that can help meet their needs.

Overview of Calls

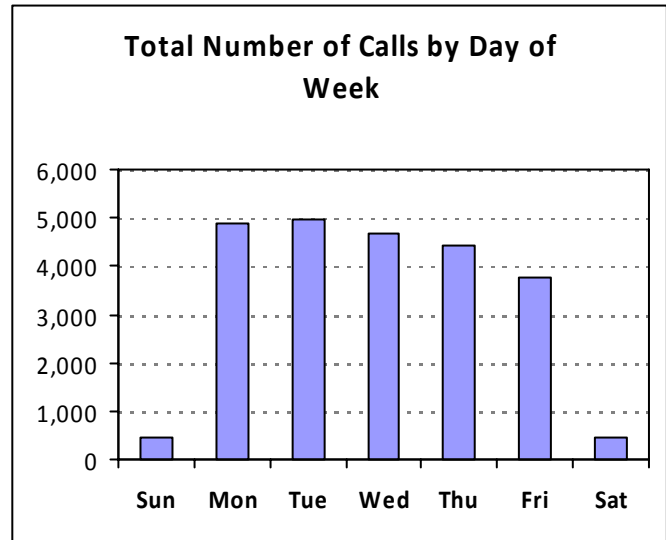
A total of 23,853 legitimate information and referral calls to 2-1-1 were logged between August 1, 2006 and August 18, 2007. A considerable number of calls to 2-1-1 were not information and referral calls. These non-information and referral calls included phantom calls, wrong numbers, and transfer calls. Statistics in this report are based on the legitimate information and referral calls.

The number of calls per month to 2-1-1 has increased steadily since August of 2006. The chart at right shows a month-to-month count of the number of information and referral calls to 2-1-1. In the first full month of operation 2-1-1 received almost 900 calls; in the last complete month of operation included in this analysis, July 2007, 2-1-1 received over 2,600 calls, a threefold increase. Within each month the number of calls remained quite steady throughout the month.



The number of calls did vary through the week. The majority of the information and referral calls to 2-1-1 occur between Monday and Friday. Only a small percentage of calls (4%) took place on weekends.

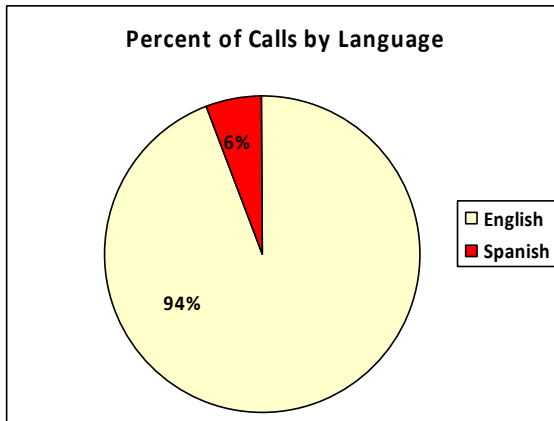
The chart to the right shows the total number of calls for each day of the week. The total number of calls received on Monday and Tuesday were almost the same, 4,871 and 4,985, respectively. Beginning on Wednesdays, the average number of calls declined each day as the week progressed. Fewer calls occurred on weekends when most non-emergency services would be unavailable.



Length of Calls

Most calls to 2-1-1 were short in duration. The typical 2-1-1 call took 4 to 5 minutes to complete. Over 90% of the calls lasted 9 minutes or less and less than 1% of the calls lasted as long as 20 minutes.

Language



The vast majority of the 2-1-1 information and referral calls have taken place in English. Over 94% of the calls have been in English, almost 6% have been in Spanish, and an extremely small number (10) have been in a language other than English or Spanish. This is surprising considering the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that over one-third of the residents of San Bernardino County speak a language other than English at home and that the non-English speaking population is generally less affluent, and

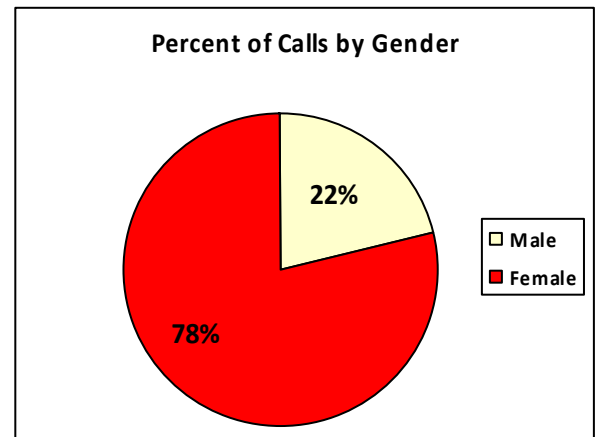
therefore more likely to need assistance of the type most 2-1-1 callers are seeking, than the English speaking population.

Description of Persons Seeking Assistance

A variety of information describing the persons seeking assistance is included in the 2-1-1 database. This includes items such as the age, gender, and ethnicity/race of the consumer. In addition, some information was collected on the person's household such as the number of persons in the household, primary source of income, and whether or not children were present.

Gender

Almost 4 of every 5 callers to 2-1-1 are female. Female callers differ from male callers in several ways. Female callers were much more likely than male callers to have children present in the household. About two-thirds of female callers reported children of any age present in the household compared to 35% for males and were about twice as likely as male callers to have children under the age 6 in the household.

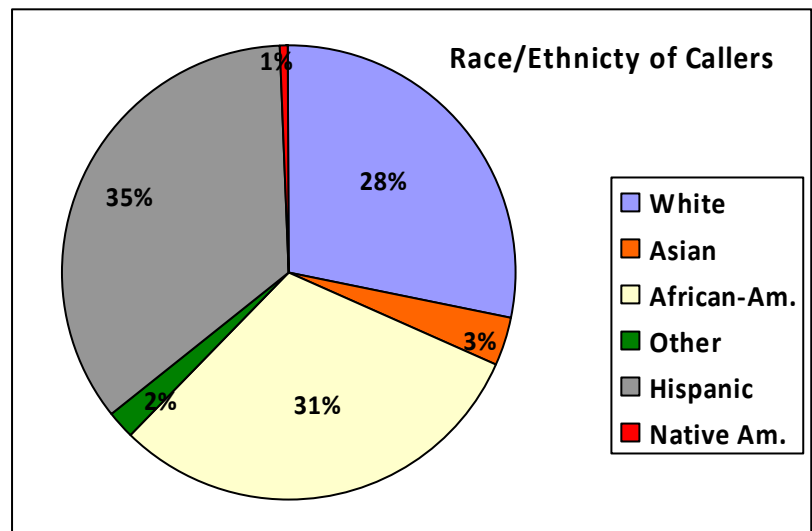


Children Present in Household

Overall, 58% of callers had children under age 18 present in the home. Over one-third (34%) of the callers had children under the age of 6 in their household.

Ethnicity/Race

As would be expected in an area as diverse as San Bernardino County, Inland Empire United Way 2-1-1 serves a broad range of ethnic and racial groups. The chart at right shows the racial and ethnic distribution of persons served by 2-1-1. The single largest ethnic/racial group served by 2-1-1 is Hispanics, followed by African-Americans and whites. These three groups comprise almost 94% of the persons served by 2-1-1.

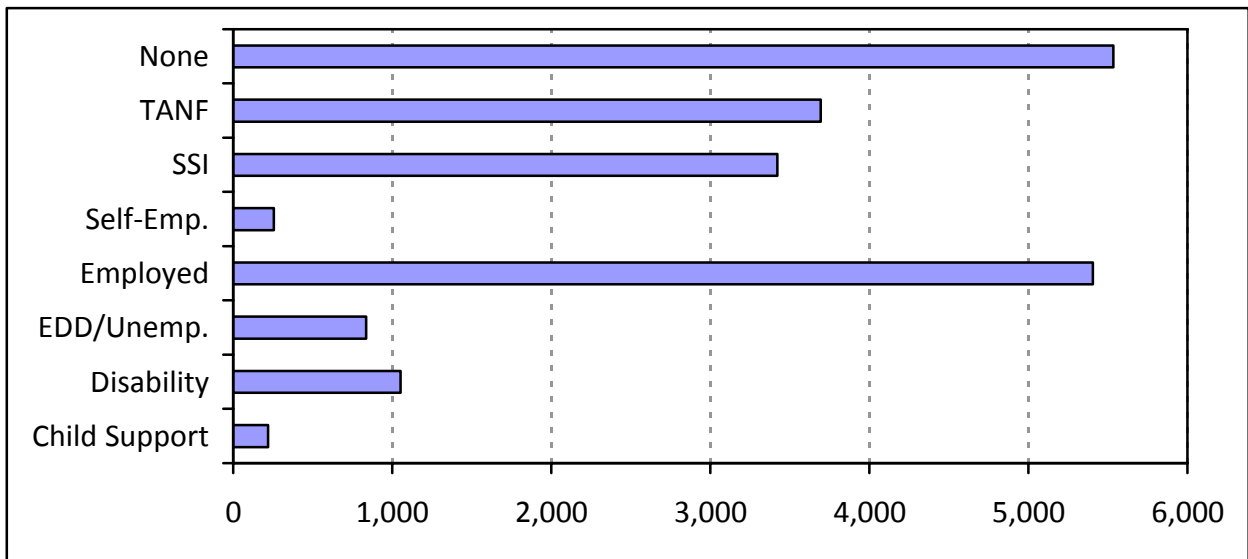


A comparison of the proportion of the callers belonging to a particular ethnic or racial group to that group's proportion of the total population is shown in the table below. Only one ethnic/racial group, African-Americans, is over-represented. Based on the ethnic/racial distribution of San Bernardino County alone, African-Americans are represented at over three times the rate that would be expected while all other ethnic/racial groups are under-represented to varying degrees. The Asian/Pacific Islander group is the most under-represented; the percent of Asian/Pacific Islander callers is almost half of what would be expected based on the ethnic and racial composition of the general population. There are a number of possible explanations for this including: the calling percentages reflected the relative amount of need; cultural bias against seeking help; and the effectiveness of marketing efforts in reaching those groups.

Race/Ethnic Group	Pop.	Call %
White	36.3	28.2
African-Am.	9.3	30.7
Asian/Pac. Is.	6.0	3.4
Hispanic	44.6	35.3
Native Am./AK	1.4	.6
Other	2.4	1.8

Source of Income

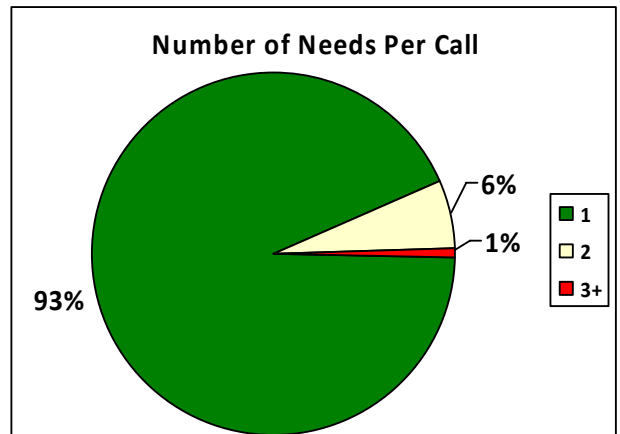
An additional piece of information collected from callers is their primary source of income. The largest group of callers reported that they had no source of income. Less than 28% of 2-1-1 callers reported that income from a job, whether self-employed or not, was the major source of income in their household. A significant percentage of callers reported that TANF, SSI, and disability income was the primary source of household income. Based on the information presented in the chart below and the high proportion of identified needs falling into the "Basic Needs" category, it is fairly certain that the majority of 2-1-1 callers are members of low income households.



Needs of Callers

The chart at right shows that 93% of callers had a single need identified; 6% of callers had two needs identified; and only 1% had more than two needs identified.

A total of 25,718 needs were identified by 2-1-1 staff. The needs are classified into ten broad top-level AIRS categories, each with a number of subcategories. The number and percent of calls within each of the top-level categories are shown in the table below.



Overwhelmingly, callers are seeking help with basic needs. Sixty-eight percent of the needs identified by 2-1-1 staff are in the “Basic Needs” category. This includes items such as utilities, rent assistance, shelter, and food. A complete detailed enumeration of the Basic Needs identified during 2-1-1 calls can be found in the tables and maps supplement to this report (available at www.ieuw.org).

Although basic needs are the most common type of need identified, other needs certainly exist. The table at right lists the number and percent of total identified needs by the top-level AIRS taxonomy. Over 11% of the identified needs were in the Organizational/Community Services category of needs which includes items such as general information services and information on donations. Health Care (6.7%) and Mental Health Care and Counseling (4.9%) also accounted to a significant amount of calls to 2-1-1. Detailed information about the identified needs in each of the ten top-level categories can be found in the tables and maps supplement to this report (available at www.ieuw.org).

Number and Percent of Top-Level Needs		
Top-Level Need	Number	Percent
Basic Needs	17,511	68.1
Consumer Services	87	.3
Criminal Justice and Legal Services	712	2.8
Education	113	.4
Environmental Quality	98	.4
Health Care	1,731	6.7
Income Security	583	2.3
Individual and Family Life	708	2.8
Mental Health Care and Counseling	1,268	4.9
Organizational/Community Services	2,907	11.3
Total	25,718	100.0

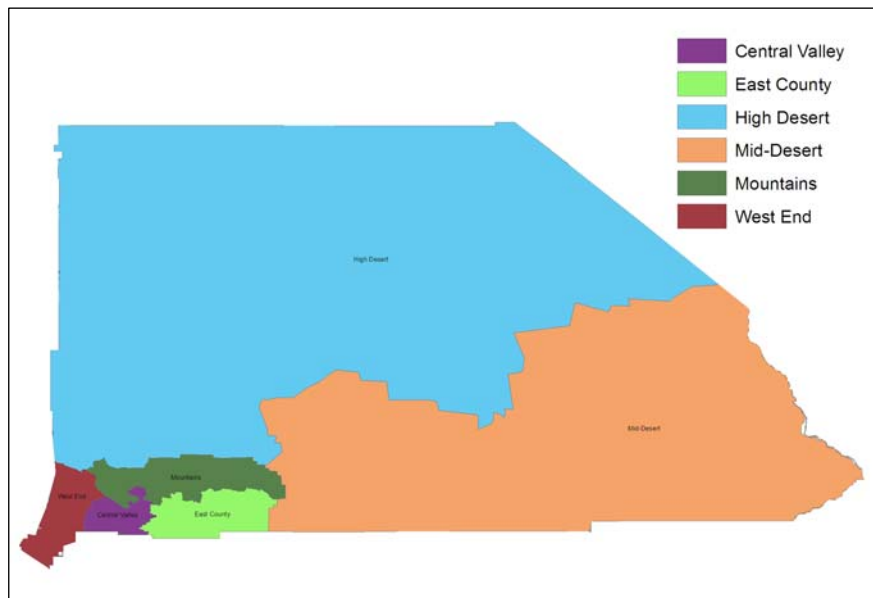
Location of Persons Seeking Help

For reporting purposes San Bernardino County has been divided into six geographic regions. The regions vary in physical characteristics, population size, and population characteristics. The table at right shows the number of callers from each region, the percent of all callers from each region, and the call rate per 100,000 persons. A map showing the location of the six regions is presented below.

Location of 2-1-1 Callers			
	Number	Percent	Rate
Central Valley	9,085	38.1%	1,478.7
East County	1,572	6.6%	717.8
High Desert	5,551	23.3%	1,409.9
Mid-Desert	384	1.6%	454.8
Mountains	305	1.3%	280.6
West End	4,518	18.9%	690.8
Outside County	803	3.4%	N/A
Unknown	1,635	6.9%	N/A
Total	23,853	100.0%	1,150.0

Several regional differences were found. The Central Valley region, which includes the cities of San Bernardino, Fontana, Rialto, and Colton, has the greatest number of calls to 2-1-1, the largest share of all calls to 2-1-1, and the highest rate of calls. This is not entirely unexpected since the area has large pockets of extreme poverty.

The High Desert region (Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Victorville, Lucerne Valley, and sparsely populated desert area) has the second highest number of calls and a call rate almost as high the Central Valley region. The East County (Highland, Redlands, and Loma Linda) and West End (Rancho Cucamonga, Chino, Chino Hills, Montclair, Ontario, and Upland) regions have very similar call rates. The remaining regions, Mountain region (Big Bear, Big Bear Lake, Crestline, Lake Arrowhead, and Running Springs) and the Mid-Desert region (Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, Needle, Twentynine Palms, and sparsely populated desert regions), have similar numbers and percent of total calls, although the Mid-Desert region has a slightly higher call rate.



Population Differences by Type of Need

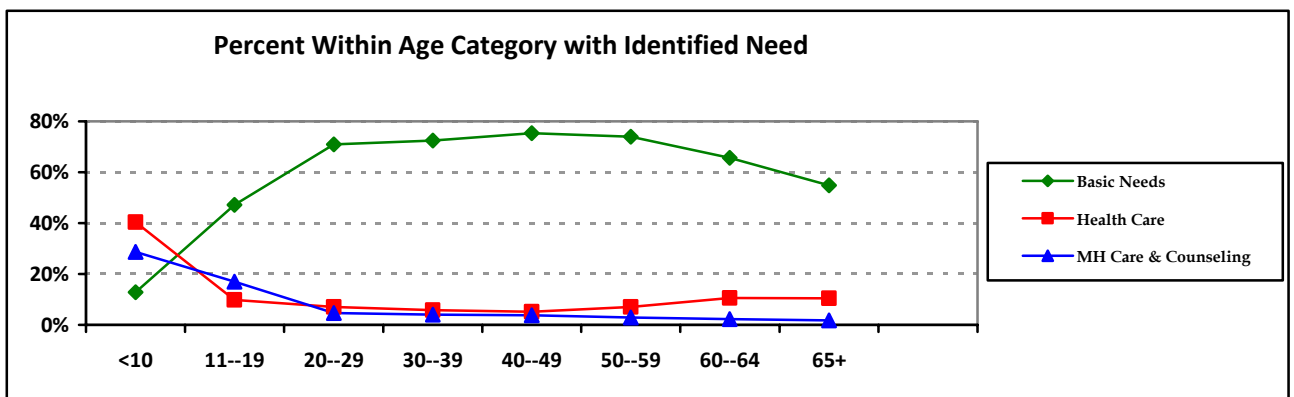
This section of the report looks at the characteristics of the callers to 2-1-1 and how those characteristics vary by the type of need identified. Groups that are more or less likely than others to be identified as having a certain type of need are highlighted.

Gender and the Type of Needs Identified

For most of the ten top-level needs, males and females have similar rates of need but there are distinct differences. For both males and females, Basic Needs is the most often identified category of need; 71% of female and 61% of male callers were identified as having a basic need problem. Basic Needs was also the category with the largest difference based on gender. Other significant differences include: males were twice as likely as females to be identified as having a Mental Health Care and Counseling need and were 60% more likely to have a Health Care need identified.

Age and the Type of Needs Identified

The overall pattern of the types of needs identified for age groups was similar to that for gender; most need categories exhibit similar rates across age groups and the same three top level categories, Basic Needs, Health Care, and Mental Health Care and Counseling show variations. Basic needs peaked in the middle years, increasing with age until the 40-49 year old age category and then declining. Health Care and Mental Health Care and Counseling exhibited a similar pattern in that both were highest for the youngest age groups and quickly declined to lower rates by the 20-29 year age category. The chart below illustrates the relationship between age and selected categories of identified needs.



Ethnicity/Race and Type of Needs Identified

While the different ethnic and racial groups looked at in this report are largely the same in terms of needs identified, several tendencies have been observed. The percentage of Ethnic and racial groups identified with a particular category of need was compared. Whites, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans tend to be

fairly typical; compared to all other racial and ethnic groups they have neither especially high or low percentages of their group identified with any category of need. African Americans are most likely to have a basic need identified (81%) and least likely to have a health care need identified (3.6%). Hispanics are the least likely to have a Basic Need identified and the most likely to have a Criminal Justice and Legal Services need identified – almost twice as likely as any other group. Hispanics are also the group with the largest percentage of callers with Health Care needs identified. The table below shows a complete distribution of top-level identified needs within ethnic and racial groups.

Distribution of Needs Within Ethnic/Racial Groups							
Top Level Category of Needs	Ethnic/Racial Group						Total
	White	African-American	Hispanic	Asian/Pac. Islander	Native American	Other	
Basic Needs	69.9	81.4	62.2	66.5	73.2	61.6	70.5
Consumer Services	.4	.2	.3	0.0	0.0	.7	.3
Criminal Justice and Legal	2.2	1.4	4.0	1.3	1.6	1.4	2.5
Education	.3	.3	.6	.9	0.0	.2	.4
Environmental Quality	.5	.2	.4	.8	1.6	1.0	.4
Health Care	7.6	3.6	9.2	7.4	4.7	8.6	6.9
Income Security	1.5	2.0	3.1	1.1	2.4	1.9	2.2
Individual and Family Life	2.7	1.9	3.3	3.5	2.4	4.1	2.7
Mental Health Care and	5.2	2.3	6.1	5.1	2.4	7.0	4.7
Organizational/Comm. Service	9.7	6.9	10.8	13.3	11.8	13.4	9.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Presence of Children and Type of Need Identified

The presence of children in the household has an influence on the type of needs identified. Two findings stand out. Households with children present, regardless of age, are more likely to have a basic need identified and less likely to have organization/community service needs identified, health care, or mental health care and counseling services identified. Households with young children (under age 6) were very similar to household with older children. About three-fourths of the households with children under age 18 present had a basic need identified (compared to 60% of households without children). These same households were about half as likely as households without children to have an Organization/Community Services need identified. Regarding other top level categories of need households with children present were very similar to households without children.

The Result of Calling 2-1-1

To gauge the effectiveness of 2-1-1, a sampling of callers were called back and asked follow-up questions regarding their experience with 2-1-1 and their efforts to obtain help. Questions were asked about the accuracy of the information given, whether or not the caller followed through on the information given, and, if they did follow through, were they able to find help. A question was also asked about the overall usefulness of 2-1-1 and whether or not the caller would use 2-1-1 in the future.

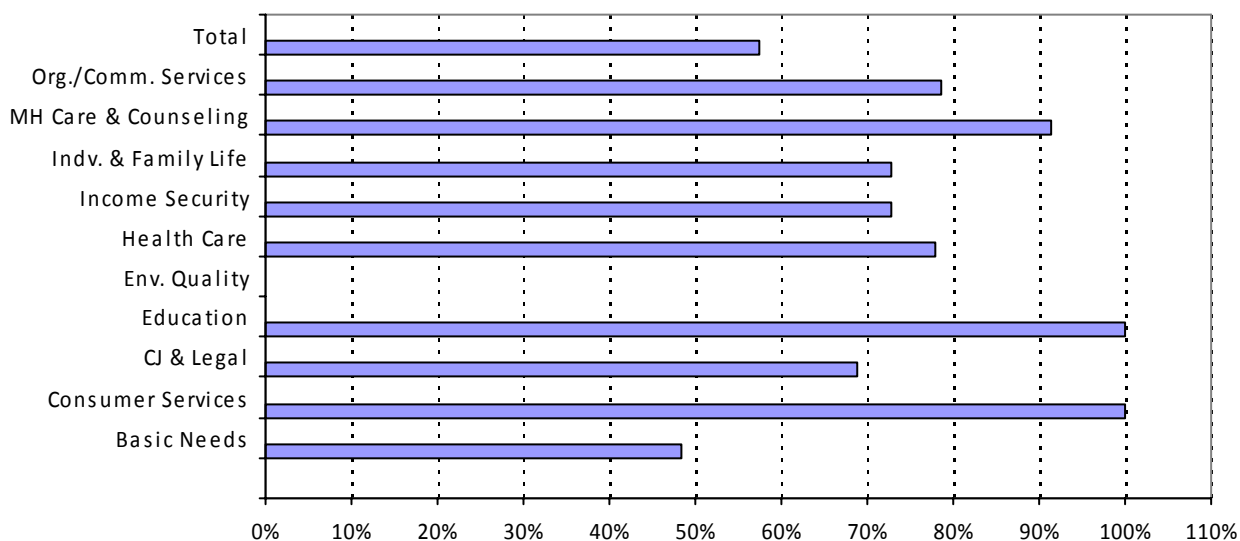
Over 95% of the callers who gave a definitive response indicated that the referrals given were accurate. Ninety percent of callers contacted the agency to which they were referred and, of those who contacted an agency and knew the outcome of their attempt to find help, 58% were able to find assistance. Even if they were unable to find help, many callers found the information useful. In fact, 84% of callers surveyed said that the information was useful and 86% said they would definitely use 2-1-1 in the future.

There were no significant differences between demographic groups in regards to following up on referrals; in other words, all callers were equally likely to follow up on their referral regardless of language spoken, age, whether or not children lived in the household, or where they lived. The only difference found that was of any significance was that females were slightly more likely than males to follow-up on their call to 2-1-1 and actually contact a referred agency.

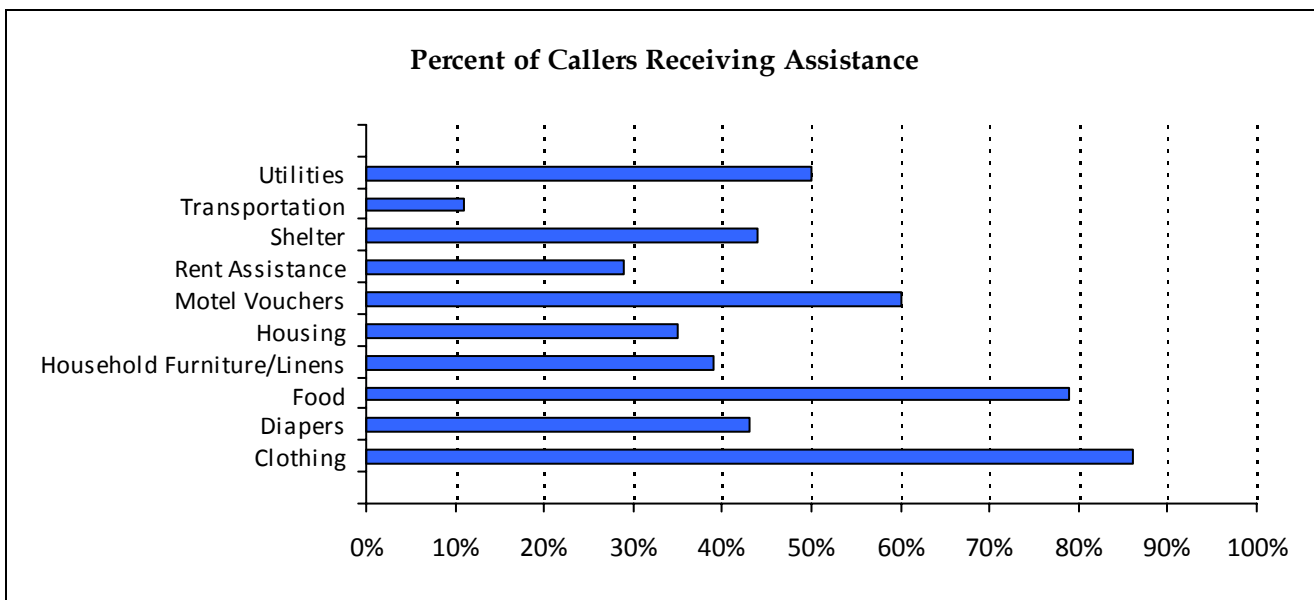
When comparing those who received help to those who did not, few demographic differences were found. Males were slightly more likely than females to receive help and Spanish speaking callers were more likely to receive help than English speaking callers. No other demographic differences were found regarding finding help.

However, callers differed in their success at finding help based on what type of services they sought. The chart on the following page shows the percent of callers who were able to find help based on the top level category of need identified. For all categories of need except Basic Needs and Environmental Quality needs (which had only one respondent in the sample) a large majority of the persons who contacted an agency to which they were referred found help. Unfortunately, slightly less than half of the persons seeking aid with basic needs were able to find assistance.

Percent of Callers Receiving Agency Assistance by Category of Need



Since Basic Needs make up such a large portion of the identified needs and is the category with the largest rate of unmet needs, it warrants a more detailed examination. The chart on the following page shows the percentage of callers in the call-back survey with a basic need who contacted an agency and found assistance with that need. Only categories with at least 5 respondents completing the call back survey are shown. Persons with certain needs were very likely to find assistance. For instance, 79% of the persons seeking food and 86% of the persons seeking help with clothing were able to find assistance. Sixty percent of the persons seeking motel vouchers and half of those seeking assistance paying utilities found the help they needed. Others in search of basic needs were rarely as fortunate. Only 11% of the persons seeking help with transportation found aid. Only 29% of the persons who sought rent assistance and 35% of the persons who sought housing assistance found it. Clearly, finding help with a housing-related need is a difficult task.



Summary

Inland Empire United Way’s 2-1-1 is a fast-growing community service that extends across geographic and social boundaries throughout San Bernardino County. The number of monthly calls has tripled since the first month of operations and continues to grow on a monthly basis. Based on the experience of other areas with 2-1-1 service, use of 2-1-1 will continue to grow for several years before call rates stabilize.

The vast majority of callers to 2-1-1 report having a positive experience and indicate that they will continue to use the service. More importantly, most of the persons who call 2-1-1 seeking help are able to find assistance. For certain categories of need such as health care, legal help, mental health counseling, and legal services, callers are very likely to find assistance. Those seeking others types of help were not always so fortunate.

Callers seeking help with basic needs such as housing and transportation are doing without assistance more often than not. Most callers have families that need assistance with necessities such as food, housing, and utilities. That requests for help with basic needs make up the vast majority of calls to 2-1-1 demonstrates the seriousness of problems facing San Bernardino County residents. Furthermore, many of the callers to 2-1-1 have no source of income and many others are on some type of public assistance. This is reflective of the high cost-of-living and the demographics associated with a large proportion of San Bernardino County’s population – relatively under-educated and having lower-than-average income. The prevalence of need for assistance with basic needs will probably continue for the foreseeable future.

