



How many times have you tried to look up services in your community only to end up so confused and frustrated; never finding what you need? You have all the intentions of looking up the information yourself in the phone book; you know, the one they call “The Yellow Pages”, but as you start your search , you notice that the “yellow” pages are becoming more like the colors of the rainbow. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for organization, but somehow in their intent of categorizing services in the phone book by colored pages, they have created a monster search for the simplest thing, and frankly, who has the time? I know I don't

What if you I told you there was a **FREE**, accessible, 3-digit telephone number that gives everyone access to community health and human services? In addition, what if I told you that there is a live person there to answer the phone 24 hours a day 7 days a week, 365 days a year? Unbelievable? Not at all, it is reality! With the help of the United Way, Kings County has been added to that special service. The name of this new program is **2-1-1 Kings County**.

On November 23, 2009, Kings County launched its very own multilingual-staffed 2-1-1 call center. Supporters include the United Way, Behavioral Health and Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Counsel.

While services that are offered through the 2-1-1 program vary from community to community, 2-1-1 provides callers with information about and referrals to human services for every day needs and in times of crisis. Keep in mind, however, **this number is for non-emergency assistance only**.

### 2-1-1 Can Offer Access to the Following Types of Services:

- **Basic Human Needs Resource:** food, shelters, clothing, rent & utility assistance.
- **Physical and Mental Health Resources:** health insurance, Medicaid and Medicare, counseling, crisis, drug and alcohol and alcohol intervention and rehabilitation.
- **Employment Support:** financial assistance, job training, transportation assistance, education programs.
- **Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities:** adult day care, Meals on Wheels, transportation, respite & home health care.
- **Volunteer opportunities and donations.**



**Every hour of ever day, hundreds of people need essential human services.** They are looking for training, employment, food pantries, help for an aging parent, addiction prevention

programs for their teenage children, affordable housing options, support groups and ways of becoming part of their community.

2-1-1 is an easy to remember telephone number that, where available, connects people with important community services and volunteer opportunities. 2-1-1 allows people to give help and to get help. In 2010, 2-1-1 services in the United States answered more than 16.4 million calls. The implementation of 2-1-1 is spearheaded by the United Way and information and referral agencies in states and local communities.

**Are you excited yet?**

Are you ready for some more exciting news? Not only is all this information available to you by a single phone call, it is also available online! Visit <http://www.211kingscounty.org> and see what your community has to offer. 2-1-1 can also be dialed directly at **1-877-864-9290**. As of this writing, there are 17 organized categories. Clicking on each individual category will give you more of a breakdown of services within each category.

So, with that being said, I do hope you get the chance to visit the 2-1-1 site and see how wonderful locating services in your community can be. I will even venture to guess that you will have learned something about your community you never knew.



<b>Categories Available</b>	<b>Benefits of 2-1-1</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food, Clothing and Material Goods</li> <li>• Housing Locator</li> <li>• Housing Services, Utilities and Transportation</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Substance Abuse</li> <li>• Children/Youth/Teen and Family</li> <li>• Employment, Training and Commerce</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Legal</li> <li>• Disaster/Emergency</li> <li>• Victim Services</li> <li>• Government Services and Benefits</li> <li>• Seniors</li> <li>• People with Disabilities</li> <li>• Military, Veterans, and Families of</li> <li>• Volunteer/Donations/Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-1-1 is free and confidential.</li> <li>• 2-1-1 simplifies access and increases the effectiveness of the entire health and human services system.</li> <li>• 2-1-1 can provide system wide cost savings through a reduction in 800 numbers used for nonprofits and state organizations.</li> <li>• 2-1-1 plays a key role in public safety; relieves 911 call volumes, allowing for faster response to real emergencies and cost savings, and plays a major role in disaster response.</li> <li>• 2-1-1 is included in the <b>Federal Bioterrorism Act</b> as part of the needed infrastructure for disaster preparedness.</li> <li>• 2-1-1 is an easy to remember telephone number that connects people with important community services and volunteer opportunities.</li> <li>• All counties must be prepared for natural disasters including wild fires, mudslides, floods and earthquakes. A 2-1-1 system can be a powerful part of a county's and state's crisis preparedness and response network.</li> </ul>

Have a great week, and remember... Be Responsible - Be Ready - Be Prepared!



Photo by Elizabeth Hall