

The PPC has been working closely with United Way and other Nebraska stakeholders to develop an easily accessible, comprehensive and accurate 2-1-1 database for Nebraska. See http://ppc.nebraska.edu/program_areas/documents/integratedinformation/index.htm for more information on the project.



2-1-1 Program

By Alicia Meyers/ kolnkgin.com

There are many social services and resources available in every community, but it's not always easy to know where to go for help.

The United Way is making that process a bit easier through their 2-1-1 program.

The service provides easy information to users by just dialing three simple numbers and within seconds nearly 80 percent of those living in the U.S. get the answers they need -- like where to find a food bank, transportation assistance or even volunteer opportunities in their community.

"Sometimes people may know they have a problem, but don't know how to identify it," said Robin Mahoney, United Way.

"If they identify it they don't know where to go, or the problem occurs 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning or on a Sunday afternoon. I think what this does is open that up for people," Mahoney said.

The 2-1-1 Program provides each caller with a trained information assistant who sorts out a family's needs and recommends organizations or government agencies who can help.

"Say if you call and have four or five issues facing your family. They'll really help you through to see, 'Where should I start?' 'Where's a good place to start here?' 'Where's an agency that I can go to that can help me?'" she explained.

By dialing 2-1-1 on any phone, or visiting the 2-1-1 Web site you can get information on a variety of services dealing with basic needs, physical and mental health, and employment.

You can also learn about ways to support the organizations providing those services, something Mahoney said is putting many people's minds at ease.

"If you reach out to someone who knows what they're doing, you find comfort in that," she said.

Although the program is not yet available in all counties, it's available to 1.2 million Nebraskan and nearly 80 percent of the population nationwide.

The program is free and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.