Need help? Dial 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898-211. Or contact us via chat on pa211nw.org
DEAR FRIENDS,

We are excited to share with you PA 2-1-1 Northwest’s 2018-2019 Annual Report. Before 2-1-1 was available, many people in our local communities struggled to find the resources they needed. Many folks just didn’t know where to even start. That has all changed now that we are able to provide an up-to-date, quality service for people in need. While we will continue to grow and improve service, we are proud to share with you the following accomplishments.

MAKING IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO FIND HELP
Because most communities did not have a comprehensive, up-to-date listing of available social services, 2-1-1 has become recognized as the easy to remember, go-to resource for individuals and families in need of local support services in the Northwest region. This service is available 24/7 through the mode in which people choose to communicate – phone, text, chat, or website.

CREATING EFFICIENCIES
Before 2-1-1 was available, many local nonprofits were receiving calls for services they did not offer. Now, people in need are connected with the organizations best suited to meet their needs. In addition, 2-1-1 is able to help local service providers coordinate special projects like holiday gift distributions or holiday meal services, reducing administrative burdens.

CONNECTING MORE PEOPLE WITH RESOURCES
Having officially launched in May 2017 with only three counties, we are well on our way to bringing 2-1-1 to all 12 counties in the Northwest Region, so even more of our community members can connect with the resources they need to continue on a path to self-sufficiency. Last year, PA 2-1-1 Northwest received 7,393 contacts.

IMPROVING THE 2-1-1 EXPERIENCE
2-1-1 is the place to turn for assistance finding basic needs, recovery after disaster, or support through life transitions. Thanks to our network of supporters – funders, United Ways, county governments, human service providers and other corporate, labor, academic, and community partners – who make it possible for 2-1-1 to be the place to turn for those who don’t know where to turn for help.

Mike Jaruszewicz
Vice President of Community Impact,
United Way of Erie County
Whether you need help finding child care, food assistance, care for an aging parent or utility assistance, 2-1-1 is where to turn. Our trained Resource Navigators specialize in finding you the help you need for any of life’s tough situations, using our comprehensive (and ever-growing) database of social services.
Help For Those Who Served

Doug, 65, is busy with satisfying volunteer work now that he’s retired. He just moved to a smaller apartment, hoping to reduce his expenses. But his rent doesn’t include utilities, and he was shocked when he received his first water bill. He owed over $200, more than he could pay on his modest social security income. He tried to get help by himself, with no success. Then he called PA 2-1-1 Northwest.

Because Doug is a Veteran, the Resource Navigator told him about Army Emergency Relief, which provides grants and interest-free loans to Veterans in financial need. Doug was relieved when the organization helped him pay his water bill in full. He spends his days helping others. It feels good to know that 2-1-1 is there for him.
Community Services of Venango County

"PA 2-1-1 Northwest encourages the use of our programs through referrals and helps us reach more people."

Community Services of Venango County (CSVC) is a vital resource in the area, offering a variety of support services, including two food and clothing pantries, life skills trainings, support with budgeting and financial planning, housing, apartments for people recovering from mental illness, Senior Centers and Home Meal Delivery and so much more. To sum it up, CSVC is an incredible resource to anyone in need of help throughout the county.

In 2018 alone, CSVC served 6,685 unduplicated families in all their programs combined.

Mary Jeanne Gavin, executive director, CSVC, said most people they serve face difficult barriers to self-sufficiency and success such as lack of income, transportation, housing, lack of food, struggling to pay their bills, and more.

In order to meet the needs of people across Venango County and get them the help they need when they need it, CSVC not only does outreach throughout the community, but they also partner with United Way’s PA 2-1-1 Northwest.

"PA 2-1-1 Northwest stays up to the minute on services available and providers that are serving the area. We don’t have the capacity to keep current on all of the available services," Mary Jeanne explained. "Partnering with 2-1-1 simplifies the process for the many families and individuals in our community who need help. PA 2-1-1 Northwest refers families and individuals to us for services, which increases the impact we’re able to make throughout the year."

Mary Jeanne recalled multiple times the organization teamed up with PA 2-1-1 Northwest on special projects to reach more families with opportunities. "2-1-1 helped us in our Friends for Food and Spirit of Giving programs by collecting information on families that need our services and could benefit from those particular programs," said Mary Jeanne.

To learn more about CSVS and the work they do in Venango County, visit https://csvenango.com/.
FEATURED CALLS

“We’re here to empower people, so they can take charge of their own situations. But sometimes I’ll advocate on behalf of someone who’s elderly, or who has a disability and can’t be easily understood. I’ll be someone’s voice if that’s what it takes.”

*PA 2-1-1 Northwest* Resource Navigator

Ted, 63, survived an acute attack of polio as a child. He developed post-polio syndrome years later, and his chronic pain, weakness and fatigue have gradually gotten worse. He can’t work anymore, and he falls easily. He needed help at home during the day, while his wife was at work; he was worried about his medical expenses, because he had no health insurance. When Ted called *PA 2-1-1 Northwest*, the Resource Navigator listened attentively as Ted told his story. She gave him referrals for health insurance navigation, legal assistance, and a Medicaid-certified home care agency. She also told him about nearby food bank programs. Ted checked out every lead. He has insurance coverage now, and receives in-home services. Knowing that his community supports him has made his difficult path a little easier.

Top Five Needs in 2018-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Requests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electric Service Assistance</td>
<td>1,153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent Payment Assistance</td>
<td>719</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary Financial Assistance</td>
<td>568</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Pantries</td>
<td>539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Service Assistance</td>
<td>534</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“This job is about having real compassion for people. What keeps me going is knowing that I can provide inspiration and encouragement, even if I can’t always provide resources. Sometimes people thank me just for listening.”

**PA 2-1-1 Northwest** Resource Navigator

“I called PA 2-1-1 Northwest when I was in a real bind and didn’t know where to turn.”

Mack, 56, had excruciating pain in his hand before his tendon repair surgery. He’d missed a lot of work before the operation and would be off for six more weeks while he recovered. He was worried. He was already behind on his bills and couldn’t get through the day without taking painkillers. A local agency helped when his gas was shut off, but he’d also received a termination notice from his electric utility.

When he called **PA 2-1-1 Northwest**, the Resource Navigator referred Mack to three organizations that could help. Mack connected with his first call, and now he’s receiving case management and service coordination for all his needs. He’s so relieved. He’d always thought it was hard to get help, “but with **PA 2-1-1 Northwest**, all you have to do is ask. They’ll tell you exactly what you need to do.”