

CAIRS

NEWSLETTER

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CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE OF INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

2-1-1 Comes to Monterey/Sonoma

On February 11, 2009, two more CAIRS member Information and Referral agencies began 2-1-1 service in their communities: the United Way Monterey and the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County. Now 21 California Counties and more than 31 million California residents (nearly 90% of the state's population) have access to 2-1-1 Services – free, confidential, multi-lingual and 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In 2008, one million calls were handled by 2-1-1 centers in California.

In Sonoma County where the Volunteer Center has provided information and referral services to the county in a 27 year partnership with the County of Sonoma Social Services Department, 2-1-1 launched on February 11th with a new expanded partnership including the United Way of the Wine Country and the Community Foundation of Sonoma County.

Last year the Volunteer Center helped nearly 9,000 callers challenged by a variety of critical needs for food, shelter, and jobs — accentuated by the current economic crisis. This year with 2-1-1 operational, they expect that total to double. The new expanded program has already nearly 42% of last year's total. Evening, weekend, and after hours calls are handled by the 2-1-1 call center at United Way Inland Empire in San Bernadino.

On the same day (2/11/09), in Monterey County, United Way Monterey launched its 2-1-1 service in cooperation with Interface of Ventura County, with a bus tour throughout the county, making stops in seven cities in one day. Since then the 2-1-1 service has mounted a strong outreach effort including events and programs aimed at alerting all parts of the county to the program.

Call volume to 2-1-1 Monterey has been climbing steadily. Calls increased from just under a thousand in March to more than 1500 in April. One in four callers is a Spanish speaker.

Half the call volume is from Hispanic/Latino callers. Two thirds of all 2-1-1 referrals are from Monterey County agencies. Housing and shelter account for more than one-third of the needs reported — by far the highest.

Current projections call for five more counties to launch service in the coming fiscal year which will put California coverage at more than 90% of the state's population. Discussions are underway with state leaders, local government and professional organizations and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to accelerate 2-1-1 coverage expansion — particularly in the event of a disaster — to the remaining California Communities.

See Table on page 5 showing the Active Call Centers, their contact information and their call volume in 2008.

— Ed Schoenberger

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Letter from the President . . .

Dear CAIRS Members:

At its May retreat the Board welcomed new Board member and new CAIRS Treasurer Erik Sternad, Executive Director of Interface Family Services, provider of 2-1-1 for Ventura County. We also bade farewell to Board Member Cory Scholtes, Direct Services Supervisor of Fresno-Madera Area Agency on Aging. Cory has served on the CAIRS Board since 2006 and his friendship and leadership will be missed. Congratulations are due to United Way of Monterey and the Volunteer Center of Sonoma for launching their 2-1-1 service this past February 11th (2-1-1- Day).



CAIRS has been busy getting support for the federal Calling for 2-1-1 Act (HR 211 and SB 211) that currently has 122 cosponsors in the House, 22 from California and 40 co-sponsors in the Senate including both California senators. We need 218 co-sponsors in the House and 60 in the Senate to move the bills out of the House Energy and Commerce Committee chaired by Congressman Henry Waxman. SB 712, the state legislation sponsored by 2-1-1 California and co-authored by Senators Alex Padilla (D-Los Angeles) and John Benoit (R-Riverside) would establish a lead entity in the state for purposes of distributing funds for 2-1-1 operation generated by the federal 2-1-1 bills. Unfortunately, the bill did not make it out of the Senate appropriations committee so we will have to try again next year. Thanks to all the CAIRS members who submitted letters in support of the bill!

Unlike past years, the CAIRS conference date has not been set pending circulation of a member needs survey that will be coming out shortly. The Board wants to provide training that will support the operational and management needs of I&Rs. We know that AIRS certification and strengthening of assessment and probing skills are key to all your operations so we hope to bring some new offerings in those areas. Please watch for the survey and take time to inform us about your training needs and interests to ensure that CAIRS can deliver a conference that supports your efforts.

Letters to the Editor

As always, the Board of Directors is looking for your input. You can provide feedback and comments by contacting the Editor, Barbara Bernstein at bbernstein@edenir.org or (510) 537-2710 x8.



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211 San Diego responds to H1N1 Situation

On April 27, 211 San Diego activated its call center for the public to call for non-emergency information related to H1N1 in the region after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention declared a public health crisis on Sunday, April 26. The County of San Diego's Department of Public Health promoted 2-1-1 to San Diegans as the place to call to speak with live specialists for information on the situation.

"2-1-1 helped more than 120,000 clients during Firestorm 2007," says the Chief Executive Officer, John Ohanian. "We are committed to public health and safety in our region, and to providing the public with a single place they can go to for accurate information 24/7 for their personal and public disasters."

To date, 211 San Diego has helped over 2,500 clients connect to critical information regarding the public crisis. Through our data collected by 211 San Diego's online disaster database, ReliefPoint, 57% of the clients heard

about 2-1-1 through the news on the television, followed by 16% of our clients hearing about it by word-of-mouth from neighbors, friends, and family. Most clients (51%) called 2-1-1 looking for general information on H1N1, while 30% of the clients called regarding information on symptoms.

211 San Diego is the region's primary place for 24/7, free community, health and disaster information. 2-1-1 works in partnership with the County of San Diego's Office of Emergency Services (OES) to provide the public with up-to-the-minute information when called upon by OES to distribute urgent information to the public supported by Qualcomm Incorporated, Pangea Foundation and the County of San Diego at the recommendation of Supervisor Greg Cox. Because this database is web-based, 211 San Diego will be sharing the system with 2-1-1's nationwide to better collect and report national information around this public health situation.

— John Ohanian

Erik Sternad, New CAIRS Board Member

Our newest CAIRS Board Member is **Erik Sternad**, Executive Director of Interface Children Family Services, which operates 2-1-1 Ventura. Interface has provided I & R for 26 years to the Ventura County community. Four years ago, Interface became the first 2-1-1 in California, followed quickly by several other Southern Californian counties. The Interface 2-1-1 call center has been an Enhanced Call Center for nearly four years, today providing call handling to Ventura and five other counties.

Erik started his professional career in the San Francisco Bay Area, and worked for a hospital-based information and referral line for five years. He went on to get his Marriage, Family Therapist license and practiced for a total of fifteen years. Since then, Erik has gravitated to program administration in high-change, non-profit environments. He believes in the critical importance of providing broad choices and timely information to service consumers. "Our job as service providers is to provide access, information, service and choice. Community members know what they need, and are capable of taking it from there."

Erik is the father and step-father of five and the proud step-grandfather of five, likes to golf, and is a former jazz trumpet player. When asked why 2-1-1 is important to Sternad, he replied, "2-1-1 is one of the great recent innovations in our field. The capacity to melt away access barriers to resources for anyone and everyone is a true breakthrough. I believe we will look back on the creation of 2-1-1 as a seminal moment in the evolution of our system of care."

Please join the CAIRS Board in welcoming our newest member.



CAIRS Board Revises Vision/Mission Statements

At its April meeting, the CAIRS Board of Directors approved revisions to the organization's vision and mission statements and adopted five key areas of focus for the coming year. In coming to decisions about its mission and goals, the Board considered its role as the principal voice for Information and Referral in California and its responsibility to provide quality service and support for the CAIRS membership.

CAIRS envisions a strong network of organizations that ensures everyone can easily access high quality information and referral for health and human services at all times, including disasters. The mission of CAIRS is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of information and referral services based on community needs through leadership, education, and support.

To achieve its mission, the CAIRS Board adopted the following "key results" or outcomes for the coming year along with some specific implementation activities:

- 1. CAIRS is the voice of Information and Referral in California; the general public is aware of Information and Referral services and utilization of these services is robust.** The Communications Committee will compile the best examples of member marketing and outreach materials and develop a statewide communications and marketing campaign.
- 2. CAIRS is highly responsive to members at all levels of development.** The Membership Committee will survey members to determine needs and expectations of CAIRS and will utilize this information to develop training and conference programming and create member feedback mechanisms to increase two-way communication.
- 3. CAIRS membership is delivering culturally competent services aligned with best practices.** The Training/Conference Committee will compile information on members' best practices in delivering culturally competent services and will develop processes for sharing these practices through curricula, conferences workshops, and expert trainers.
- 4. CAIRS members have easy access to collective professional resources, I&R expertise and innovation specific to their needs.** The Training/Conference Committee will be assisted by an Ad Hoc Website Committee to compile resources for posting on an updated and more user friendly CAIRS website, and for developing Webinar trainings for the membership.
- 5. CAIRS members are encouraged to use I&R data for program improvement and to impact public policy.** The Communications Committee will solicit and compile best practice stories from CAIRS members on how I&R data has been used to evaluate and improve programs and to impact public policy, and the Committee will share this information with members.

The outcomes are ambitious and will only be accomplished with the cooperation and engagement of the entire CAIRS network. If you would like to serve on one of the committees charged with implementing this plan to enhance the California I&R network, please contact Nancy Findeisen, Board Secretary at nfindeisen@communitycouncil.org or (916) 447-7063, ext. 328.

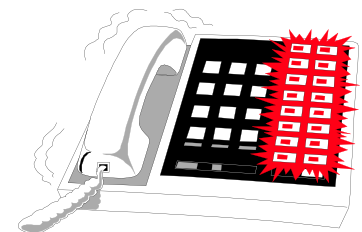
— Nancy Findeisen



Erik Sternad of the Interface Children Family Services and **Pat Clary** of United Way Fresno County at the CAIRS Board Meeting in Asilomar.

2-1-1 Status in California by County

County	Agency Designated by CPUC to Utilize 2-1-1 Dialing Code	2005 Census Population	Active Date	2-1-1 Calls in 2008	Website
Ventura	Interface Children & Family Services	796,106	Feb-05	20,679	211ventura.org
Los Angeles	211 LA County (Los Angeles)	9,935,475	July-05	494,547	211lacounty.org
Orange	211 OC (Orange County)	2,988,072	July-05	77,407	211oc.org
Riverside	Volunteer Center of Riverside County	1,946,419	July-05	58,500	vcrivco.org
San Diego	211 San Diego County	2,933,462	July-05	171,610	211sandiego.org
Santa Barbara	Family Service Agency Santa Barbara	400,762	July-05	17,522	211sbcounty.org
Contra Costa	Contra Costa Crisis Center	1,017,787	Feb-06	17,411	211contracosta.org
San Francisco	United Way Bay Area HELPLINK	739,426	March-06	49,902	211bayarea.org
San Bernardino	Inland Empire United Way	1,963,535	Sep-06	59,979	211sb.org
Alameda	Eden I&R, Inc.	1,448,905	Jul-07	59,903	211alamedacounty.org
Santa Clara	United Way Silicon Valley	1,699,052	Feb-07	23,239	211scc.org
Kern	Community Action Partnership of Kern	756,825	Oct-07	46,417	211kerncounty.org
Stanislaus	United Way of the Stanislaus Area, Inc.	505,505	Oct-07	3,349	uwaystan.org
San Luis Obis.	HOTLINE of San Luis Obispo	255,478	Nov-07	19,234	slohotline.org
Fresno	United Way Fresno - 211 Central Val.	877,584	Dec-07	--	211centralvalley.org
Marin	United Way Bay Area - HELPLINK	246,960	Nov-07	w/SF #	211bayarea.org
Solano	United Way Bay Area - HELPLINK	411,593	Nov-07	w/SF #	211bayarea.org
Napa	United Way Bay Area - HELPLINK	132,764	Feb-08	w/SF #	211bayarea.org
Sacramento	Community Services Planning Council - InfoLine Sacramento	1,363,482	Feb-08	59,563	communitycouncil.org
Monterey	United Way of Monterey	412,104	Oct-08	N/A	211mc.org
Sonoma	United Way of the Wine Country	466,477	Sep-08	N/A	211wc.org
<i>Active 2-1-1's as of February 11, 2009 = 87% of Californians 31,297,773</i>					
Kings	United Way of Kings County	143,420	2010		
Nevada	Community Services Planning Council - InfoLine Sacramento	98,394	2010		
San Mateo	United Way Bay Area - HELPLINK	699,610	2010		211bayarea.org
Santa Cruz	United Way of Santa Cruz	249,666	2010		
Shasta	TBD	179,904	2010		
<i>2-1-1's to be active as of June 2010 = cumulative 90% of Californians 32,668,767</i>					





SB 712

On May 28, 2009, the Senate Appropriations Committee did not let SB 712 off suspense which means it is dead for this year. While very disappointing news, Senator Padilla's office feels we did everything right and this is just how it goes sometimes. The good news is Senator Padilla is ready to be our author again next year.

CAIRS members, the 2-1-1 community and 2-1-1 California did many things very well this year. Senator Padilla's office was constantly complimenting our network for its efforts and fast response. We had great authors and lots of bipartisan co-authors. CAIRS members and United Ways solicited many good letters of support and did wonderful advocacy with local members. The entire process provided an opportunity to educate numerous elected officials on the strength of 2-1-1 and its potential once it is statewide. That is one great advantage to public hearings! This will help us as we move forward.

At this point there are several actions to take as a team to move forward, in addition to all the efforts underway by 2-1-1 CA.

- *We want to thank everyone* who was supportive this year and let them know that we will be asking for their

support in the near future. Please contact support letter writers and members.

- *We need to work harder than ever to get HR/S211 passed at the national level!* We need 218 co-sponsors in the House and 60 in the Senate. California has done all we can in the Senate as both our Senators are on board. But in the House we can help get the additional 98 co-sponsors needed. We only have 23 of our 53 House members signed on. So we need to get at least 20 more California members on board — that's one-fifth of what is needed nationally! So let's all help out and put a renewed effort on this. Because Congress is very busy and focused on many other issues, it will take multiple calls and requests to members to get additional co-sponsors. Let me know if you get objections or questions so that I can help you get the answers needed to overcome their concerns.

Please let me know if you have any questions about the process going forward. Thank you all again for the amazing work being done to bring statewide 2-1-1 to reality.

— Judy Darnell

Director of Public Policy
United Ways of California

Reach a Statewide Audience with CAIRS

Have a conference, service or product you want to promote statewide? Consider purchasing ads in the CAIRS Newsletter. The current circulation is over 200, with membership in CAIRS continuing to grow. We are offering very low advertising rates:

- **For-Profit rate = \$400 for 4 quarter page ads (\$100 per ad)**
- **Non-Profit rate = \$200 for 4 quarter page ads (\$50 per ad)**

If you are interested contact Barbara Bernstein at (510) 537-2710, ext. 8; or by email: bbernstein@edenir.org





Disaster Websites

Emergency Preparedness Information Sites

<http://www.whatsyourrq.org/>

What's your Readiness Quotient? – tool to evaluate person's readiness for emergencies

<https://www.citizencorps.gov/>

Citizen Corp site with information on preparedness, training, volunteer opportunities during disasters

<http://www.homeland.ca.gov/>

CA Homeland Security website

<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/>

Department of Health & Human Services – information on emergency preparedness

<http://www.hrsa.gov/emergency/>

Health Resources & Services Administration – include scenarios from natural disasters to terrorist attacks

<http://www.fda.gov/>

US Food & Drug Administration – Protecting & Promoting Your Health

<http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/bioterrorism.html>

US Food & Drug Administration – role of FDA in counter-terrorism

<http://www.aoa.gov/prof/preparedness/preparedness.asp>

Emergency preparedness by Administration on Aging (AoA) on the special needs of older disaster victims

<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/2p-emergency-response.html>

Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry information on emergencies involving hazardous substances in the environment

<http://www.fema.gov/hazard/index.shtm>

FEMA's Disaster information page

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/>

Center for Disease Control & Prevention information on public health emergencies

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/fsgdisas.html>

Government food safety information

<http://www.disastersafety.org/>

Institute for Business & Home Safety – tips & information for preparing home & businesses for disasters

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/index>

US Department of Education site on emergency planning for schools including information on various natural disasters & terrorism

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Become a California Leader in the Information and Referral Field. Explore Joining the CAIRS Board!

CAIRS is looking for new leadership, new ideas and fresh energy on the Board.

Like any other professional association CAIRS does not run itself. It takes the leadership, hard work and cooperation of its members to simply survive, much less flourish, prosper and succeed. Because we do not have paid staff, it has taken the participation, planning and implementation efforts of Board members and other individual CAIRS members for our conferences, training, newsletters and advocacy to succeed.

Right now, making 2-1-1 a reality in every California community is our priority! This is a remarkable opportunity and challenge to us as the premier Information and Referral organization in the State. This is the moment for increased involvement from more of you in the field.

If you are interested in being on the Board or would like to nominate someone, please send the appropriate information to Ed Schoenberger, Nominations Committee, CAIRS at eschoenberger@uwba.org.

Write *CAIRS BOARD* in the subject line.

—Ed Schoenberger