

EDEN I & R, Inc.

2-1-1 Alameda County Monthly Narrative Report: February 2009

Noteworthy Updates

2-1-1 Alameda County celebrated its second "2-1-1 Day" on 2/11/09. The festivities included city and county proclamations as well as a regional 2-1-1 staff recognition party hosted by The United Way of the Bay Area. Only one Eden I&R staff member could represent the agency since staff was needed at the office to answer the ever-increasing number of calls coming into the 2-1-1 call center everyday. Each 2-1-1 Resource Specialist did get a personalized certificate of appreciation from The United Way as well as a free lunch at our Hayward facility (who says there aren't any more of those!?!).

Countywide 2-1-1 callers are increasingly in need of basic services (e.g. food and shelter). Individuals and families who have never needed nor requested assistance before are entering the human services network for the first time. 2-1-1 is available 24/7 to assist them in navigating a very confusing and ever-changing system of programs and services. The phone calls tend to be longer for these callers as Resource Specialists listen to people express their fear, anger, sadness and frustration with their current situations.

Eden I&R's Information Management department is staying on top of the cutbacks and closures of social service programs due to the current funding decreases. As we hear about changes in programs or agencies we contact that department or organization to verify the new information and enter it into our health and human services database. That updated information is then available not only to our 2-1-1 Resource Specialists but also to the public and their advocates, free of charge, online at www.211.alamedacounty.org.

Since we are in the midst of tax season, 2-1-1 has received over a thousand calls so far requesting information about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program as well as the statewide free Turbo Tax workshops. 2-1-1 Resource Specialists are referring people to the most convenient EITC VITA sites, as well as Turbo Tax workshop sites, so that they can receive their tax refunds due them in a timely manner.

Eden I&R's Executive Director continues to meet with city and county elected officials and government representatives, and is pleased to report that the vast majority of 2-1-1 funders are extremely satisfied with the 24/7 services being provided to their constituents. They acknowledge and appreciate the way in which the 2-1-1 communication system is complementing the services provided by their municipal staff, making the social service assistance to those most in need more efficient and effective.

Call Information

Call Examples	~ A Castro Valley resident called seeking food stamp information for a friend who had recently lost his job. She was given information on where he could apply for food stamps and on other food resources.
	~ A San Leandro resident called looking for medical care. He had just received notice from his medical provider that he no longer had Medi-Cal. He was given information on where he could obtain low/no cost medical services and on organizations that provide benefits advocacy.
	~ An Oakland resident called looking for transitional housing for her son who had lost his job. She was given 3 referrals to organizations providing this service to single men.
	~ A family of 3 from Pleasanton called seeking information on shelter or transitional housing options. They were given referrals to 4 transitional housing facilities in Alameda County.
	~ A single mother from Newark with 3 children called seeking assistance with utility payments. A Resource Specialist was able to facilitate a call to PG&E to establish a payment plan.
	~ A Hayward resident called seeking information on low cost dental care. She was given 2 referrals.
	~ A Berkeley resident called seeking information on local Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. She was given one referral
	~ An Emeryville resident called looking for information on first offender DUI programs. He was given 3 referrals.
Staff Inservice Training Sessions	~ Bank On Oakland Program In Service Presentation
	~ ECHO Housing In Service Presentation
	~ Community Resources for Independent Living In Service Presentation

Resource Information And Technology Updates

Services Database	~ 170 non-directory agencies in the service database have been updated.
	~ This month 24 new agencies were added in the services database, this included 10 banks and their branches for the Bank on Oakland Program.
	~ The services database contains 951 agencies and 2268 programs.

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Housing Database	<p>~ The housing database contains 66,644 Total Housing Units.</p> <p>~ 541 New Units were added this month.</p>
Technology	<p>~ Worked with Trilogy Integrated Resources to modify and upload data for the Online Services Directory to match the new Services Database design.</p> <p>~ Performed routine maintenance and trouble-shooting of work stations and servers such as the installation of software and Operating system updates, virus and spy ware scans, etc.</p> <p>~ Upgraded software on Avaya phone system and set up phone service and hunt group for Turbo Tax Statewide free tax assistance program.</p> <p>~ Installed system status program on 2-1-1 Manager's computer to assist with the 2-1-1 program operations.</p> <p>~ Worked with AT&T to transfer Earned Income Tax Credit calls from Contra Costa County residents to 2-1-1 Contra Costa.</p>

Outreach/Public Information Activities

Meetings	<p>~ Staff attended a monthly meeting of the Alameda County VITA site coordinators for the Earned Income Tax Credit program sponsored by United Way of the Bay Area.</p> <p>~ Staff attended Nor Cal VOAD meeting to discuss disaster case management and to clarify the role of 2-1-1 as regional resource.</p> <p>~ The Executive Director was asked to participate in a Safety Net Providers collaboration, consisting of a select group of CBOs and funders, who are strategizing about the best ways in which to serve very low-income individuals and families during this prolonged economic downturn.</p> <p>~ The Executive Director was asked to strategize and negotiate the ways in which Eden I&R (especially 2-1-1) could be used to help publicize the food stamp program countywide as well as pre-screen potential food stamp recipients.</p> <p>~ Staff attended planning meeting for Project Homeless Connect event in April 2009.</p> <p>~ Staff participated in Tri-Valley Housing Scholarship Meeting to review requests for housing assistance.</p> <p>~ The agency was asked to submit a proposal to the statewide Department of Aging to assist them with after-hours Adult Protective Services calls.</p> <p>~ The Executive Director spoke with our partners at PG&E about the growing need for utility assistance for individuals and families during these difficult economic times.</p> <p>~ Staff attended Rental Property Owner briefings with Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) and Rental Housing Association (RHA) to explain our free listing service and the benefits of 2-1-1.</p> <p>~ Staff attended Alameda County VOAD meeting to discuss local collaboration and disaster response.</p> <p>~ The Executive Director continued to meet with elected officials, city managers and county officials to keep them updated with this year's 2-1-1 program as well as plan for next fiscal year's leveraged funding.</p> <p>~ The Executive Director met with the regional 2-1-1 partners to continue mutual efforts in providing standardized 2-1-1 outreach and services to all Bay Area residents.</p> <p>~ Staff participated in Alameda County Emergency Volunteer work group meeting to discuss role of 2-1-1 in volunteer management during disasters.</p> <p>~ Staff facilitated a Housing Workshop for Beyond Emancipation clients, an organization which serves Foster Youth transitioning out of the foster care system.</p> <p>~ The Executive Director hosted the agency visit and tour of representatives from the City of Livermore. Discussions were held as to the most of effective ways of increasing the visibility of 2-1-1 throughout that city and the Tri-Valley area as a whole.</p> <p>~ Staff continue to attend meetings and provide services (over 2-1-1 and in person) to low income Oakland residents who are being displaced from several Oakland buildings.</p>
Fairs/Events and Outreach	<p>~The Executive Director was one of two featured speakers at the Oakland Human Services Department's full staff meeting. Over 100 staff were in attendance. Hundreds of 2-1-1 PR materials were left for the department staff to distribute to their clients.</p> <p>~ Staff attended a Spanish-speaking parents meeting at GreenLeaf Elementary School in Oakland to present 2-1-1 information and materials.</p>

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Fairs/Events and Outreach	~ The Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program included a full page 2-1-1 ad (in English and Spanish) in their "Guide to Lead-Safe Housing" printed and distributed to tenants and home owners throughout the county.
	~ Staff hosted booths at two events to promote the 2-1-1 service: Maria Shriver's WE Connect Kickoff event in Oakland and Oakland's Promise Options Fair.
	~ Staff attend the NAHRO Housing Conference in Monterey, CA promoting 2-1-1 in assisting with housing referrals.
	~ The Fremont Chamber of Commerce printed an article about 2-1-1 in their January/February 2009 Business Review Newsletter.
	~ Oakland Unified School District's Family and Community Office included a full page 2-1-1 ad in their Transitional Students and Families Resource Guide (in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Khmer).
	~ Staff increased 2-1-1 outreach efforts to include heavily trafficked for-profit businesses (e.g. coffee shops, laundromats, mini marts, liquor stores, etc.)
	~ The agency conducted DTV Conversion test in partnership with all television stations that informed analog TV owners that their TV sets would stop working in February due to the new FCC regulations. 2-1-1 was involved in this test because many analog TV owners are elderly and low income, both of whom depend on their televisions for emergency information during a disaster.
	~ The Executive Director and staff attended numerous city council meetings (e.g., Dublin, Berkeley, and Union City) during which the agency received proclamations naming 2/1/09 "211 Day". Additional proclamations were received from the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, City of Hayward, City of Alameda, City of Newark and City of Livermore.
	~ The United Way of the Bay Area hosted a regional 2-1-1 Staff Recognition Event at their offices in San Francisco. Awards were distributed and successes were highlighted.
	~ The Executive Director attended the Oakland Chamber of Commerce's Business Showcase at the Scottish Rite Temple. Numerous businesses and organizations participated and 2-1-1 literature was distributed.
	~ The Executive Director met with representatives from the Fruitvale-San Antonio Senior Center during which time 2-1-1 materials were left for distribution in English and Spanish.
	~ The Executive Director attended the Oakland City Council meeting during which the Alameda County EITC program was being praised for its ability to assist low-income working individuals and families in obtaining their income tax refunds. 2-1-1 is used to assist in publicizing the EITC program as well as directing people to their most convenient VITA sites.
	~ The Executive Director and the 2-1-1 Manager co-presented at a Hayward Neighborhood meeting located at Southland Mall. A wide variety of residents (especially seniors) and public advocates (police, fire, faith-based representatives, and the Mayor) were in the audience. Hundreds of 2-1-1 PR materials were distributed and terrific questions were asked and answered.
	~ PG&E invited the Executive Director to be their guest during the Oakland Mayor's Address at the Oakland Marriott Hotel. There were hundreds of local officials, business leaders, and funders in attendance. 2-1-1 was discussed and promoted by Ms. Bernstein to numerous attendees.
	~ The Executive Director attended Maria Shriver's WE Connect Kickoff event at the Unity Council and personally distributed 2-1-1 cards to participants, the press, and speakers (including Ms. Shriver, and the CEO of Intuit).