

EDEN I & R, Inc.

2-1-1 Alameda County Monthly Narrative Report: January 2011

Noteworthy Updates

January was the highest call volume month thus far for Alameda County's 2-1-1 communication system: 8,898 calls were handled by 2-1-1 Resource Specialists who provided over 16,900 health, housing and human service referrals. Of the unduplicated callers, 78% were females, 36% were single female headed households with minor children, and 35% were disabled. Additional people are also relying on Eden I&R's online health and human services resource directory. During the month of January, the online directory received 669,672 hits from 30,389 visitors.

Now that the Tax Season is here again, 2-1-1 Resource Specialists began taking calls for the Earned Income Tax Credit Program through Earn It! Keep It! Save It! Thus far in January, 2-1-1 has assisted 1,806 callers with 2,745 referrals to VITA sites in Alameda County.

Statewide 2-1-1s are collaborating to ensure the distribution of information during an emergency or disaster. 2-1-1 Disaster Plans from 2-1-1 centers throughout the State were collected by 2-1-1 California in order to analyze the commonalities and differences between the plans. The ultimate goals are to assist centers with outdated plans (Eden I&R has a recently updated plan); as well as standardize, as much as possible, the disaster plans so that 2-1-1 centers have the back-up needed to stay in business even if their building(s) and staff are temporarily unavailable.

Call Information

Call Examples

~ A woman in Union City called to inquire about benefits assistance as well as resources for food and clothing. The caller was referred to Homeless Action Center for assistance with public benefits programs; and to Tri-City Volunteers, Viola Blythe Community Service Center, and Centro de Servicios for free food and clothing.

~ A woman in Alameda called to inquire about rent and utility payment assistance. The caller was referred to the Salvation Army and the Alameda Municipal Power - Project EASE (Energy Assistance through Supportive Efforts) for utility bill assistance; and to Operation Dignity and ECHO Housing for rental assistance.

~ A man in Fremont called to inquire about free or low-cost dental care. The caller was referred to Tri-City Health Center, Chabot - Las Positas Community College District, and Tiburcio Vazquez Health Center for dental care.

~ A woman in Pleasanton called to inquire about food pantry information, mortgage resolution/delinquency resources, and utility payment assistance. The caller was referred to Tri-Valley Haven and Alameda County Community Food Bank for food pantry and emergency food clearinghouse information; to Tri-Valley Housing Opportunity Center, ECHO Housing, and Homeownership Preservation Foundation for mortgage resolution/delinquency resources; and to Salvation Army for utility bill payment assistance.

~ A woman in Berkeley called to inquire about mental health services, CalFresh information, and affordable housing options. The caller was referred to Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services for mental health services; Alameda County Social Services Agency Economic Benefits Department for CalFresh information; and to Affordable Housing Associates and the Center for Independent Living for housing information. In addition, she was given three apartment listings which met her financial and location needs.

~ A homeless woman in Hayward called to inquire about emergency and youth shelters. The caller was referred to Emergency Shelter Program, Inc., Family Emergency Shelter Coalition, and ABODE Services for emergency shelter information. The caller was also referred to Covenant House California and Youth Engagement Advocacy Housing for youth shelter information.

~ A man in San Leandro called to inquire about rental deposit assistance and child custody information. The caller was referred to ECHO Housing and Operation Dignity for rental assistance; and to Bay Area Legal Aid and Centro de Servicios for child custody information. The caller also expressed a need for low cost internet services and computer donation programs. The caller was referred to DSL Extreme, AT&T, the Alameda County Computer Resource Center and the STRIDE Center for low cost internet and computer donation programs.

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Call Examples	~ A woman in Oakland called to inquire about emergency food and low income and subsidized rental housing information. The caller was referred to City Team Ministries, Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, St. Mary's Center, Project Outreach, and the Alameda County Community Food Bank for emergency food information. The caller was also referred to three low income and subsidized rental housing listings that met her financial and location needs.
Caller Feedback	~ "I just want to tell you guys that [the Resource Specialists] are the best thing in the world, and [the Resource Specialists] helped me out. [The Resource Specialist] was very very great, helping and understanding and very very helpful."
	~ "Thank you for your good service, [the Resource Specialist]...was so sweet and just took me to everything I needed and carefully made sure I had everything I asked for...It was a very pleasant experience and it just really helped me out a lot and I am very grateful to her and her kindness."
	~ "[The Resource Specialists] have helped me in other ways and I think your organization is fantastic and really good."
	~ "Thank you very much for the 2-1-1 assistance program...[The Resource Specialist] has been so helpful to me and gave me all the information and the options that I needed..I've been homeless...and 2-1-1 gave the resource that I am looking for...I did not realize how informative it is, and also how caring your [Resource Specialists] are."
Staff Inservice Training Sessions	~ Earned Income Tax Credit In-Service Presentation
	~ Hayward Community Action Network In-Service Presentation
	~ Crisis Support Services of Alameda County Suicide Assessment and Intervention Training

Resource Information And Technology Updates	
Services Database	~ Eight (8) new agencies were added in the services database this month.
	~ The services database contains 1,075 agencies and 2,711 programs.
	~ The 2011 Big Blue Book: Directory of Human Services for Alameda County has been printed and 300 copies are available for sale.
Housing Database	~ The Housing database contains 74,180 total housing units.
	~ 140 new units were added to the Housing database this month.
	~ Housing Subscriptions (mail, PDF & OHIP) with the inventory of available units in Alameda County were sent to Community Based Organizations in Alameda County and San Francisco County.
Online Services Website	~ Eden I&R's health and human services data is provided free through the agency's public accessible websites at www.edenir.org , www.211alamedacounty.org , www.alamedaco.info as well as through www.networkofcare.org/aging/resource/find.cfm . This month the websites received 669,672 hits from 30,389 visitors.
Technology	~ Staff continued working with Alameda County Public Health Department on the development of a Medical and Health Resource Directory connected to Eden I&R's health and human services database. Testing of the system has begun and staff are currently working with the Public Health Department to identify additional agencies and programs that will be added to the system.
	~ Staff worked with 2-1-1 Contra Costa County to setup a phone number in their system that will receive 2-1-1 Alameda County calls if Eden I&R's phone lines becomes inoperable (e.g. in the event of a disaster).
	~ Staff reviewed and evaluated new call reporting software for the agency's Avaya phone system. The new software provides more accurate statistics, has "live status" capabilities, and offers more reporting options than Eden I&R's current reporting software.
	~ Staff participated in a 2-1-1 Partnership Meeting for Healthy City to review changes to the Healthy City website's design and handling of data provided by 2-1-1s throughout California.
	~ Staff participated in a 2-1-1 California webinar related to the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) program in which 2-1-1 is providing low income communities with referrals to technology resources.
	~ Staff performed routine software and hardware maintenance, updated the agency website, and provided updated services data for the CETF and Alameda County Area Agency on Aging (Network of Care) websites.

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Outreach/Public Information Activities

Meetings	<p>~ The Executive Director attended the Board of Supervisor's State Budget Update meeting which featured Jean Ross' very sobering and depressing financial outlook for the next few years. It is obvious that non-profit agencies, like Eden I&R, will need to continue seeking additional grants and contributions from the private sector in order to compensate for the inability of the State to financially support the critical services needed by local communities and provided by CBOs.</p>
	<p>~ After many months of negotiation, Eden I&R and Bonita House (as a contractor with the Alameda County Behavioral Health Department) signed a contract for Eden I&R to provide additional access to housing opportunities for the mentally ill.</p>
	<p>~ The Executive Director was offered the opportunity of updating the Dublin Grant Commission about 2-1-1 as well as request continued funding for FY 2012. The presentation was very well received and the Commissioners only had positive feedback about the 2-1-1 Communication System.</p>
	<p>~ The Executive Director participated in a well attended meeting, called by EveryOne Home, and related to the Veteran Administration's recently released NOFA related to housing veterans. There was agreement amongst the various participants as to lead agencies and next steps to possibly bring into Alameda County \$1 million dollars dedicated to homeless vets.</p>
	<p>~ Staff attended the Alameda County Emergency Managers' meeting and provided the group with a brief update about the 2-1-1 service in Alameda County.</p>
	<p>~ The Housing Outreach Coordinator attended the East Bay Housing Organizations (EBHO) Affordable Housing Week planning meeting and introduced our event "Rental Property Owner Appreciation Day."</p>
	<p>~ Staff is working in collaboration with the American Red Cross to develop a curriculum for Rental Property Owners to prepare for disaster related scenarios.</p>
	<p>~ The Executive Director attended the monthly 2-1-1 Bay Area Partnership meeting during which there were discussions about planning for 2-1-1 Day (2/11/11); the sharing of statistics regionally and statewide; the regional disaster-related donation's management project; and much more.</p>
	<p>~ The Executive Director was invited to participate in the United Way of the Bay Area's strategic planning process related to the goal of greatly reducing poverty throughout the Bay Area within ten years. There were representatives from both the public and private sectors, of all ages and backgrounds, who had a frank discussion as to how to approach this lofty, yet attainable, goal.</p>
	<p>~ The Housing Outreach Coordinator is working in collaboration with the Oakland Housing Authority to do outreach to Rental Property Owners, on a monthly basis, to inform them of the opportunities with OHA and Eden I&R. Through this outreach property owners throughout the County are able to list their properties with 2-1-1.</p>
	<p>~ Staff attended Rental Property Owner Briefings facilitated by Rental Housing Organization for Southern Alameda County (RHO) to outreach to property owners in Southern and Eastern Alameda County.</p>
	<p>~ The Executive Director, as the Public Relations Chair, participated in the quarterly statewide California Alliance of Information and Referral Services (CAIRS) Board meeting. Various topics were discussed including: additional testing sites so that more 2-1-1 Resource Specialists could attain national AIRS certification; while some 2-1-1 centers are experiencing their call volumes leveling off, Eden I&R's call volume continues to grow; the movement toward more standardized statistics and telephone systems were discussed; the PUC petition to cover rural counties with 2-1-1 services during and after a disaster is still being favorably reviewed; and possible festivities for 2-1-1 Day were shared.</p>
	<p>~ The Executive Director attended the Hayward Human Services Commissioner's "meet and greet" meeting held at Hayward City Hall. It was a relatively informal way of giving and getting updated information about the programs provided by the city's various Community Based Organizations.</p>
Fairs/Events/ and Outreach	<p>~ The Executive Director represented Eden I&R at a lively and well-attended event provided by Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters (CARD) during which nonprofit agencies and government officials and their staff were encouraged to share updated information with one another. Many future meetings were scheduled and business cards exchanged, all with the long-term purpose of better assisting the thousands of at-risk men, women and children countywide.</p>

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Fairs/Events/ and Outreach	<p>~ The Executive Director attended the Online Social Networking for Jobs workshop held in Livermore and sponsored by the Alameda County Workforce Investment Board. It was a terrific opportunity to explain the benefits of 2-1-1 to the large cross section of unemployed people in attendance.</p> <p>~ Staff hosted a booth at Satori's Circle's Annual Health and Resource Fair on two separate days (once at the Boys and Girls Club in East Oakland and the other in West Oakland) to inform and remind community members about the 2-1-1 service.</p>
	<p>~ The School of Imagination (Happy Talkers) was provided with 2-1-1 materials for placement at their facilities and for distribution to each of its 300+ students.</p>
	<p>~ Staff conducted an in-service presentation about the 2-1-1 phone line for the staff of Brighter Beginnings.</p>
	<p>~ The Housing Outreach Coordinator attended the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) Section 8 briefing on the opening up of their waitlist for applications. 2-1-1 was used to provide 24/7 access to answer questions about the process. 2-1-1 Resource Specialists fielded approximately 400 calls the first day when applications were being submitted electronically because the OHA website went down.</p>
	<p>~ The 2-1-1 Community Program Manager attended the National Earned Income Tax Credit, EKS Kick Off 2011, at People's Federal Credit Union. The 2-1-1 Community Program Manager answered questions about 2-1-1 and distributed information at the event.</p>
	<p>~ Staff facilitated an in-service for Cal State University, East Bay nursing students. Marty Farga, the instructor, says she learns something new everytime she brings a new class to learn about 2-1-1.</p>
	<p>~ Staff gave an in-service training to 12-15 Homeless Action Center staff about Eden I&R and the multi-faceted services that can be accessed through 2-1-1 Alameda County.</p>
	<p>~ A total of 7,095 pieces of 2-1-1 outreach materials were distributed during the month, with extensive outreach conducted in the City of Dublin.</p>
	<p>~ 2-1-1 materials were provided for distribution at the Burbank Neighborhood Partnership Meeting in Hayward and for the various events held at Santa Rita Jail.</p>
	<p>~ After seven years of negotiations and demonstrations of need, Eden I&R's Executive Director (representing the 2-1-1 Communication System) was approved for a formal, photo ID which admits her into the county's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) before, during and after a disaster. Although there was a letter from the Sheriff previously used as entrance into the EOC, the photo ID is the last step in a series of meetings and correspondences that establishes 2-1-1's formal presence in the EOC. This also further solidifies that 2-1-1 is an integral part of the communication of updated information to the public during and after a disaster, especially to at-risk populations.</p>
	<p>~ The Executive Director represented Eden I&R staff, Board and clients at the retirement luncheon for Yolanda Baldovinos, former Alameda County Social Services Agency Director. She will be missed!</p>