

Official Launch of 211 for Lake County

Largest County in Illinois to Launch 24/7 Helpline for People in Need

LAKE COUNTY, IL. - United Way of Lake County is proud to announce the launch of 211 services for Lake County, Illinois. 211 is a free, confidential, 24-hour information and referral helpline that provides a central access point to health and human services in Lake County.

"Through 211, the people of Lake County will get the help they need, when they need it," said Kristi Long, President and CEO of United Way of Lake County. "United Way of Lake County is proud to fulfill this decades-long vision, joining with the Lake County government and our many community partners to deliver a best-in-class, robust solution for Lake County—the largest county in Illinois to implement 211."

211 is available to everyone in the community and connects people in need to resources by phone, text and online, including mental health services, addiction support and rehabilitation, crisis counseling, supplemental food programs, shelter and affordable housing options, employment and education support, financial support, and more.

To access 211, simply call 211 or text your zip code to 898211. Resource navigators at the 211 contact center, who are experienced, trained specialists, will guide people to the help they need. The comprehensive 211 service is multi-lingual with English and Spanish speaking staff, as well as interpretations to more than 150 languages.

"United Way of Lake County's new 211 service is a huge asset for Lake County, offering an efficient, safe, and confidential place where community members can instantly get access to the resources and information they need," said Megan McKenna, Director of Strategy & Development at Mano a Mano Family Resource Center. "Mano a Mano is honored to have been part of the planning process and grateful to United Way of Lake County for its leadership on this project."

211 works with health and human services providers in Lake County to provide accurate,

concise information and referrals for anyone looking to get connected to critical resources.

"As long-time service providers in Lake County, Catholic Charities knows the importance of providing people the help they need quickly and competently," said Maureen Murphy, Associate Vice President at Catholic Charities. "211 will make a significant difference in ensuring residents are connected to that support when they need it most."

211 reduces the burden on service providers by helping people find the right solution in one call. The approach helps reduce the time agencies spend redirecting calls to other agencies and more time addressing needs of their own clients. Over time, 211 reduces the ultimate cost of services and makes sure dollars are spent most efficiently.

"Over the last year, North Shore Gas has helped United Way of Lake County achieve several key milestones," said Polly Eldringhoff, Director of North Shore Gas. "Today we stand proud in support of the launch of 211 Lake County, which will improve lives and enhance the future of many residents. Together we are working to grow a stronger Lake County community."

"There is no doubt in my mind that 211 Lake County will improve and save lives," said Steve Carlson who represents District 7 on the Lake County Board and is a member of the United Way of Lake County board. "I am proud of the Lake County Board's decision to contribute funding toward this vital program, and of all those who have worked to bring it to fruition."

211 is a vital service and proven solution leveraged by millions of people across North America to improve and save lives. Through 2018, more than 94% of the United States, but less than 30% of Illinois, had access to 211.

To learn more about United Way of Lake County's 211, visit 211LakeCounty.org.

If you have any questions, please contact Lori Nerheim, Marketing Director, by email, or call 847-775-1038.



Get Connected. Get Help.™



FIRST RESPONDERS card



211 LAUNCH Event



BRUCE JOHNSON, Vicky Tello and Deanna Olmem