

PRESS RELEASE

United Way's 2-1-1 Navigator - Your Most Up-to-Date Link to Benefits Eligibility

Welcome to the 2-1-1 Navigator



Take two minutes to find out if you qualify for 24 state and federal programs that can help you pay for food, child care, health insurance, prescriptions and more.

During these challenging economic times, it's nice to know that the United Way 2-1-1 Navigator provides an up-to-date resource that can help Connecticut's residents get connected to the benefits they need. The 2-1-1 Navigator is an online tool that instantly screens for eligibility for various State and federal benefit programs. Eligibility criteria for some of those programs have changed in recent months and the Navigator is always kept current to reflect those changes.

It can be challenging for both residents and human services providers to understand the many state and federal benefit programs for which they, or their clients, may qualify. There are many different programs to navigate, often with many different eligibility requirements. The Navigator, located on the United Way 2-1-1 website at <http://navigator.211ct.org>, includes a brief survey that asks a few basic questions about income and household make up. A list of the programs for which a resident or a client may qualify is then immediately generated. Twenty-four different state and federal programs are listed including the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Dependent Care Tax Credit, Medicare, SNAP (food stamps), utility assistance and child care subsidies.

Since its inception in 2007, an estimated 26,000 individuals and human services providers have used the 2-1-1 Navigator. In 2009, the Navigator is averaging approximately 1,000 inquiries per month with about 15 percent originating from State of Connecticut websites and about 25 percent more coming from providers working with their clients to help them secure the benefits for which they may be eligible. UWC has provided training to community-based nonprofits, state and local government representatives, employers, and individuals to help them utilize the 2-1-1 Navigator and the entire United Way 2-1-1 human services website and database.

The vision for the 2-1-1 Navigator has evolved through direct feedback solicited through the 2-1-1 website and through conversations with nonprofits and service providers, government agencies and end users in the state. United Way of Connecticut also plans to employ new technological solutions to enable ongoing improvements to this benefits screener. Future enhancements will continue to support traditional face-to-face work with clients as well as individual inquiries, all to ensure that people have choices for how best to use the 2-1-1 Navigator.

The 2-1-1 Navigator represents the latest chapter in United Way of Connecticut's work connecting people in Connecticut to the health and human services they need. The 2-1-1 Navigator leverages UWC's 35 years of experience as the place to turn in Connecticut to learn about, and access, health and human services.

United Way 2-1-1 is a health and human services information and referral system which can be accessed directly by people seeking help or by social service providers, by phone or computer. Over the past 35 years, the 2-1-1 system has been built up with support from the state government (DSS) and local United Ways. United Way 2-1-1 and the Navigator are available and free of charge to everyone.

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The mission of United Way of Connecticut is to help meet the needs of Connecticut residents by providing information, education, and connection to services. United Way of Connecticut furthers its mission by providing 24/7 toll-free call center access to health and human services information through United Way 2-1-1; specialized services in child care, child development and disabilities, and HUSKY health insurance; and by collaborating with local United Ways and Connecticut state agencies and elected officials.

For more information about United Way of Connecticut, visit www.ctunitedway.org or call Maria Dynia at 860-571-7215.