

211 SNAPSHOT: CRYSTAL AND BRITTANY

The economic landscape in Connecticut is changing, and costs for essentials – food, housing, child care – are on the rise. What is the best way to help a friend or relative struggling to make ends meet?



In 2023, Crystal faced this dilemma: her husband's daughter, Brittany, lost her job. With little savings and a first grader to raise, Brittany soon fell behind on rent. Faced with eviction, she was desperate. Crystal and her husband were deeply concerned: Brittany needed more than family support.

Luckily, Crystal is an Eligibility Services Specialist for Care 4 Kids at United Way of Connecticut, which is also home to 211. She had seen the 211 Health and Human Services team in action, providing free, confidential information and connecting people with essential services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. She convinced Brittany to pick up the phone and dial 2-1-1.

A 211 Contact Center Specialist answered the call. She listened to Brittany, provided emotional support and thoughtfully assessed Brittany's specific situation. Within minutes, she knew which resources and information Brittany might be eligible for, including a charity that could provide two months' rent while Brittany looked for work.

With this support in place, Brittany was able to devote her time to tracking down a new job – and soon landed a new position. Now, she can afford her rent and provide for her son independently.

"Things are much better now," Crystal says. "211 helped my family, and I'm grateful."

The number of CT residents facing hardship and needing help is on the rise; inquiries to 211 have increased by 300% since 2019, not including COVID requests. But 211's core state funding has remained flat since 2009.

Let's invest in 211 in 2025!