



211 IMPACT REPORT

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

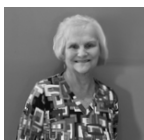
Ten years ago, United Way of Southern Kentucky launched 211 with a simple belief: our community needed a trusted place where people could find help when life became difficult. We knew the need was there, but we never imagined just how vital this service would become.

Over the past decade, 211 has become far more than an information and referral line. It has been a lifeline during tornadoes, the COVID-19 pandemic, floods, and other emergencies, while also serving as a trusted resource for emergency management agencies, government officials, nonprofit partners, and thousands of individuals and families every year.

As our communities have grown, so has our impact. What began as a 10-county service has expanded to 15 counties. During that time, we've experienced a **109% increase in calls** and a **123% increase in the needs** shared by callers. Behind those numbers are nearly **21,000** requests for utility assistance, almost **18,000** housing-related needs, and **11,000+** food requests, along with countless connections to transportation, employment, elder care, clothing, school supplies, mental health resources, and more. Every call represents someone who found hope because someone answered.

As you read this report, I hope you'll see the incredible impact 211 has made—and the opportunity that still lies ahead. One of the simplest ways you can help is by sharing 211 with your family, friends, neighbors, and community. You never know when someone will need help, but knowing to call 211 can make all the difference. Thank you for believing in this work and for helping us ensure that everyone in Southern Kentucky knows where to turn when they need hope, help, and connection.

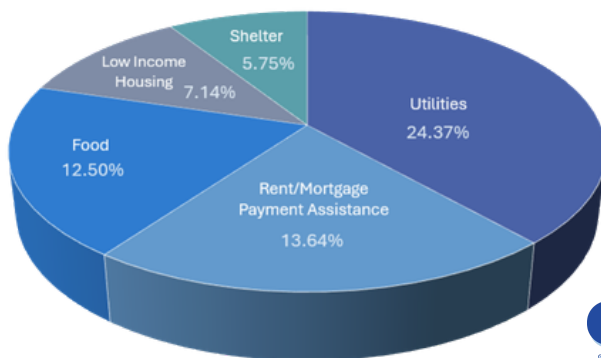
With gratitude,



DEBBIE HILLS
President & CEO



TOP PRESENTING NEEDS FROM 2017-2026



10 YEARS OF ANSWERING THE CALL

211 is a free, confidential helpline available **24 hours a day, seven days a week**, connecting residents with local resources like food, shelter, healthcare, crisis support, and more. There are no eligibility requirements to access 211 – anyone, including residents, caregivers, service providers, and community partners, can call, text, or visit online to get connected to help.

United Way of Southern Kentucky launched its 211 Contact Center on July 18, 2016, initially serving the 10 counties of the Barren River Area Development District (BRADD).

The center opened with just two staff and answered **5,074 contacts in its first year**, operating Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm by phone or walk-in. What began as a modest operation quickly proved how deeply the community needed a central point of connection.

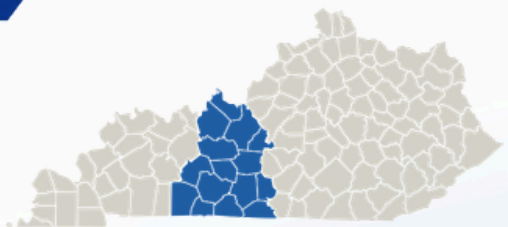
As demand grew, so did the program. **211 expanded to 24/7 availability in July 2017**, ensuring that no call for help would go unanswered — day or night. In July 2020, access expanded again, allowing residents to text their zip code and connect directly with a resource specialist. Over the decade, the Contact Center grew from two to a team of seven.

In 2025, the service area expanded beyond Southern Kentucky to include five counties in Central Kentucky, bringing the total coverage to 15 counties. In Fiscal Year 2026, the Contact Center answered **10,500 calls, texts, and emails**.

What started as a local lifeline has become a regional resource — and after a decade, the need for connection is as strong as ever.

15 COUNTY SERVICE AREA

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1 Allen | 9 Larue |
| 2 Barren | 10 Logan |
| 3 Breckinridge | 11 Meade |
| 4 Butler | 12 Metcalfe |
| 5 Edmonson | 13 Monroe |
| 6 Grayson | 14 Simpson |
| 7 Hardin | 15 Warren |
| 8 Hart | |

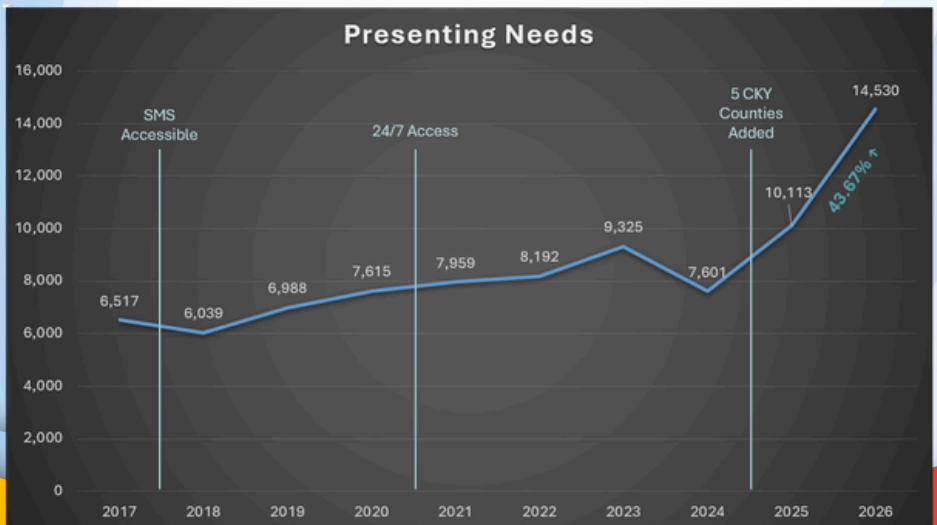


THE NUMBERS THAT TELL THE STORY

IN THE PAST DECADE, 211 HAS ANSWERED A TOTAL OF:

75,533 CALLS, TEXTS, EMAILS

84,878 NEEDS



ANSWERING THE CALL IN TIMES OF CRISIS



2021 Bowling Green tornado

Photo By Grace McDowell, Bowling Green Daily News

Over its 10-year history, the UWSK 211 Contact Center has proven time and again that when crisis strikes, Southern Kentucky has somewhere to turn.

COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020

- By April 2020, call volume increased by 95%, as the pandemic caused major social and economic disruptions.
- Record-high call volume continued for an entire year following the onset of the pandemic.
- Top Needs: Utility/Rent Assistance, Food, and Housing.

Tornadoes of 2021

- Two tornadoes struck the area on December 11, 2021.
- Call volume doubled and, on some days, even tripled, in the months following the disaster.
- Record-high call volume continued for two years.
- Top Needs: Disaster Services, Housing/Shelter, and Food.

Severe Weather & Flooding in 2025

- April and May of 2025 brought severe storms and flooding across Kentucky.
- UWKY partnered with Airbnb to provide housing for displaced victims.
- 172 individuals across our region were housed in Airbnb units at no cost to them.
- Top Needs: Housing/Shelter, Disaster Services, and Food.

These moments reflect what 211 was built for — not just connecting people to resources on ordinary days but showing up with consistency and compassion when the need is greatest.

211: REAL IMPACT



2025 Bowling Green Flooding

Photo By Grace McDowell, Bowling Green Daily News

When severe flooding swept through Kentucky in 2025, they took nearly everything from one family — their home, their savings, and the sense of security they had worked a lifetime to build. The home had been fully paid off, a hard-earned milestone, but without flood insurance, the loss was total. Insurance offered nothing. A family that had done everything right found themselves starting over with almost nothing.

The 211 caller — a devoted wife and mother — had already made one of the most selfless decisions a person can make: she left her job to become a full-time caregiver for her husband and adult son, both of whom live with disabilities that were worsened from exposure to contaminated standing flood water. Years of savings kept them just above the threshold for public assistance, leaving them in the gap that so many families quietly fall into — too much to qualify, not nearly enough to survive.

By the time she called 211, the family had been displaced to a temporary rental home, which was above their budget but was the only thing available that met their needs. This quickly depleted their entire life savings. She needed help — and she needed someone to really listen.

WHEN THE WATERS ROSE, SO DID STRENGTH

That's exactly what she found. Her 211 Contact Specialist took time to understand not just her housing crisis, but her whole situation. Her husband's limited mobility prevented him from being able to navigate stairs. An apartment complex wasn't a realistic option. She needed a rental house and one that was financially feasible. That distinction mattered, and it was heard.

She received referrals for rent assistance, low-income housing resources, and — perhaps most meaningfully — information about the AARP Family Caregiver Program and the Family Caregiver Subsidy. No one had told her about these programs before. Despite having already navigated other non-profits in the community on her own, this was the first time someone had connected the dots between her caregiving role and the support she was entitled to access.

She was appreciative in the way that only someone who has been overlooked before can be — genuinely, deeply grateful that someone had finally seen the full picture.

Her family's road is still long. But she left that call with more than referrals. She left with options she didn't know existed, and with the knowledge that 211 would be there if she needed to call again.

This is what 211 does. Not just connecting people to resources — but seeing people fully, meeting them where they are, and making sure that no one falls through the cracks simply because no one thought to ask the right questions.



211

Get Connected. Get Help.™

HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

**211 IS FOR EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY.
RESIDENTS, CAREGIVERS, CASE MANAGERS, AND COMMUNITY
PARTNERS CAN REACH OUT.**

211 CAN BE REACHED THREE WAYS:

CALL: DIAL 2-1-1 OR 1-844-966-0906
TEXT: SEND YOUR ZIP CODE TO 898-211
ONLINE: [UWSK.ORG/2-1-1](https://www.uwsk.org/2-1-1)

211: CONNECTING KENTUCKIANS TO THE HELP THEY NEED MOST.

