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United Way of Greater Toledo
Serving Lucas, Wood,
& Ottawa counties

United Way 2-1-1 Releases Summer Data; Housing Requests Rise

[SEPT. 21, 2021, TOLEDO, OH] – Over the months of June, July and August, United Way 2-1-1 handled 12,915 contacts from community members, with the top needs being housing/shelter, utility assistance and health care/COVID-19 resources.

Recently, 2-1-1 Community Resource Advisors noted a dramatic rise in individuals being unhoused. Through 2-1-1, United Way runs a program called “Coordinated Access,” which tracks active open bed counts at four Toledo-area shelters. Specialists help directly place individuals and families experiencing homelessness in one of these locations as quickly as possible.

“In June, 2-1-1 made 462 referrals to Coordinated Access for our network shelters. Those referrals increased by 47 percent over the course of the summer, after 681 people were referred in August,” said Jill Bunge, vice president of impact and outreach at United Way.

Rent payment assistance was also a leading inquiry, with more than 1,500 requests made from June to August for residents seeking financial help to remain housed.

“In addition to maintaining bed counts, Coordinated Access keeps differing placement lists for those who identify as male, female or a family unit. In June, this list contained 69 individuals and singular family units, and in three months, we saw a 400 percent increase. At the close of August, nearly 350 persons and singular family units were on these three lists.”

When a community member contacts 2-1-1 and is seeking shelter, the Community Resource Advisor will gain further insight on their current situation, asking where they last stayed. Numbers show that, from June to August, 165 individuals said they slept in a place that was not meant for habitation, while 103 had stayed with a friend and 78 with a family member.

“If we are seeing troubling numbers like this over the summer months, our community should be prepared for the winter, when shelter requests historically rise given the cold weather,” said Bunge.

United Way representatives state that, despite homelessness being an ongoing, deep-rooted issue in the community – current statistics are ripple effects of the pandemic, and continued financial hardships being faced by Lucas, Ottawa and Wood County families.

United Way 2-1-1 is a free, 24/7, 365-day health and human service resource available by phone, text or instant message. Simply dial two, one, one; text your zip code to 898-211; or visit www.211nwo.org

United Way of Greater Toledo proudly serves the residents of Lucas, Ottawa and Wood County in Northwest Ohio. Our human services nonprofit fights to strengthen education, financial stability, health and housing resources for every child, adult and family. By uniting the caring power of people through giving, advocating and volunteering, together, we can tackle our community's toughest issues.

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