

Laurie Glaze, Chair  
Adoptation  
Avondale House  
Bering Omega Community Services  
Care for Elders  
Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston  
ChildBuilders  
CHILDREN AT RISK  
Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Church  
Coalition for Behavioral Health Services  
Collaborative for Children Communities In Schools  
DePelchin Children's Center  
Family Services of Greater Houston  
Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse, Inc.  
Gateway to Care  
Good Neighbor Healthcare Center  
Gulf Coast CHIP Coalition  
Harris County Healthcare Alliance  
Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston  
Houston Area Association for the Education of Young Children  
Houston Food Bank  
IntraCare Hospitals  
Jewish Family Service  
Justice for Children  
Legacy Community Health Services, Inc.  
Memorial Hermann Healthcare System  
Mental Health Association of Greater Houston  
NAMI Metropolitan Houston  
Neighborhood Centers, Inc.  
Northwest Assistance Ministries  
San Jose Clinic  
SEARCH  
South County Community Clinic, DBA The Community Clinic  
Spaulding for Children  
Target Hunger  
Texas Children's Hospital  
The Arc of Greater Houston  
The Center for Success and Independence  
The Arrow Project  
The Network of Behavioral Health Providers  
United Way of Greater Houston  
Wesley Community Center  
YMCA of Greater Houston

## Basic Needs: 2-1-1 Texas

### Position Statement approved by One Voice: February 9, 2006

**Issue/Concern:** In 2001 the Texas Legislature funded *2-1-1 Texas*, a public-private partnership that provides persons in need with information and referral to health and human services organizations. In 2003 the state funding was eliminated and then, in 2005, restored. While the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) will provide funding for the 2-1-1 telephone system in its LAR, continuation of the dollars to nonprofits that locally answer the 2-1-1 phone lines is of concern.

### Specific Policy Recommendation(s):

- ★ Include full funding of *2-1-1 Texas* local operations in the HHSC FY 2007-2009 budget.

**How does this issue/recommendation relate to prevention and early intervention or maximizing federal funds for health and human services?** The quicker callers are linked to needed health and human services, the quicker they can receive help. For this to be most effective, one easy to remember number was needed. The FCC and PUC designated this number as 2-1-1. The value of this statewide system was shown during the recent hurricanes, when the *2-1-1 Texas* information and referral system became the hub for both linking callers to needed services, as well as coordinating volunteer efforts. This public-private partnership is a national model and must be continued.

### Supporting Facts/Research/Resources:

- ★ In 2004 the *2-1-1 Texas* Information & Referral (I&R) specialists in Houston answered 157,000 calls for help, a 24% increase over the previous year.
- ★ In 2005 there were 245,000 calls, a 56 % increase. In September and October, during the hurricanes, the Houston *2-1-1* I&R specialists answered 65,000 calls.
- ★ A December 2004 study by the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin found "the net value to society of a national 2-1-1 system could be as high as \$130 million the first year, and a conservative estimate of \$1.1 billion over ten years. Savings include time saved, tax assistance and recovery, volunteer recruitment, 24/7 service, a reduction in the number of 1-800 numbers, and a reduction in non-emergency calls to 9-1-1."

Recognizing the importance of *2-1-1 Texas*, the Senate Health and Human Services Committee was charged by the Lt. Governor to "study the current use of the 2-1-1 network to provide access to information on federal, state, and local resources, and examine and make recommendations on strategies that improve the coordination of service information and expand the availability of information on services currently provided by community and faith-based organizations."

**Legislative Outcome:** Funding is now provided in the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) budget.

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