



2-1-1 and Library Partnerships

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2-1-1 and Library Partnerships

WebJunction Online Conference
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What is 2-1-1?



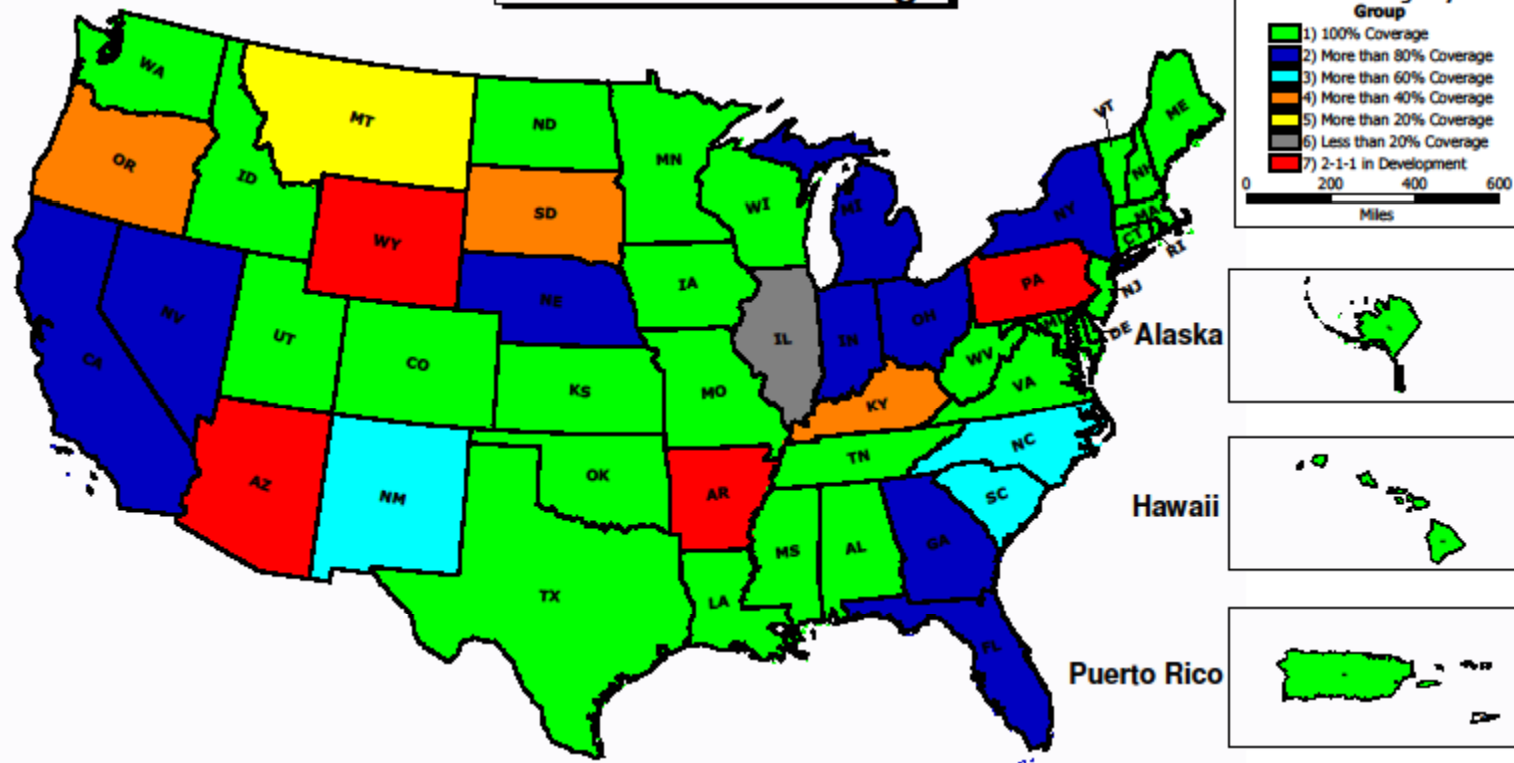


- 2-1-1 is the telephone number designated by the Federal Communications Commission for access to community information and referral services
- 2-1-1 has been part of the N-1-1 system (e.g., 9-1-1 for emergencies, 4-1-1 for directory assistance) since 2000
- 2-1-1 has been in existence since 1997, beginning with United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta

% of Population Covered* by 2-1-1 in Each State



81% Overall Coverage





- 2-1-1 is the “one-stop shop” to find needed social services referrals. Studies have shown it can take up to 7 phone calls to find needed agencies or services. 2-1-1 can direct callers to the right agency or service.
- 2-1-1 is strongly supported by United Way Worldwide and the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS), the national organization for information and referral professionals



2-1-1 services provide referrals to these types of resources:

- **Basic human needs resources:** emergency food, shelter, clothing, rent, mortgage and utility assistance, low-cost housing
- **Physical and mental health resources:** community clinics, crisis hotlines, counseling, support groups, substance abuse programs, health insurance programs, prescription assistance
- **Employment support:** employment and unemployment programs, job training and education, educational financial aid programs, free tax assistance



And these....

- **Support for seniors and people with disabilities:** advocacy, home health care, housekeeping, meals, adaptive equipment, caregiver support, lifelong learning
- **Support for children, youth and families:** child care, after-school programs, mentoring and tutorial programs, recreation, parenting classes, counseling, family activities
- **Legal assistance and advocacy:** advocacy and protective services, legal aid, lawyer referrals,
- **Volunteer and donor opportunities** for individuals, families and groups



And....

- **Emergency and disaster services** (local, regional, state, and national)
 - 2-1-1 has a special role to play in disaster communications, often working directly with local emergency management departments, government officials, American Red Cross, and other disaster services providers

How do I find 2-1-1 services in my area?



www.211.org



This is the result of a www.211.org search for Washington, D.C.'s 2-1-1 service

211 ANSWERS, PLEASE (WASHINGTON DC)

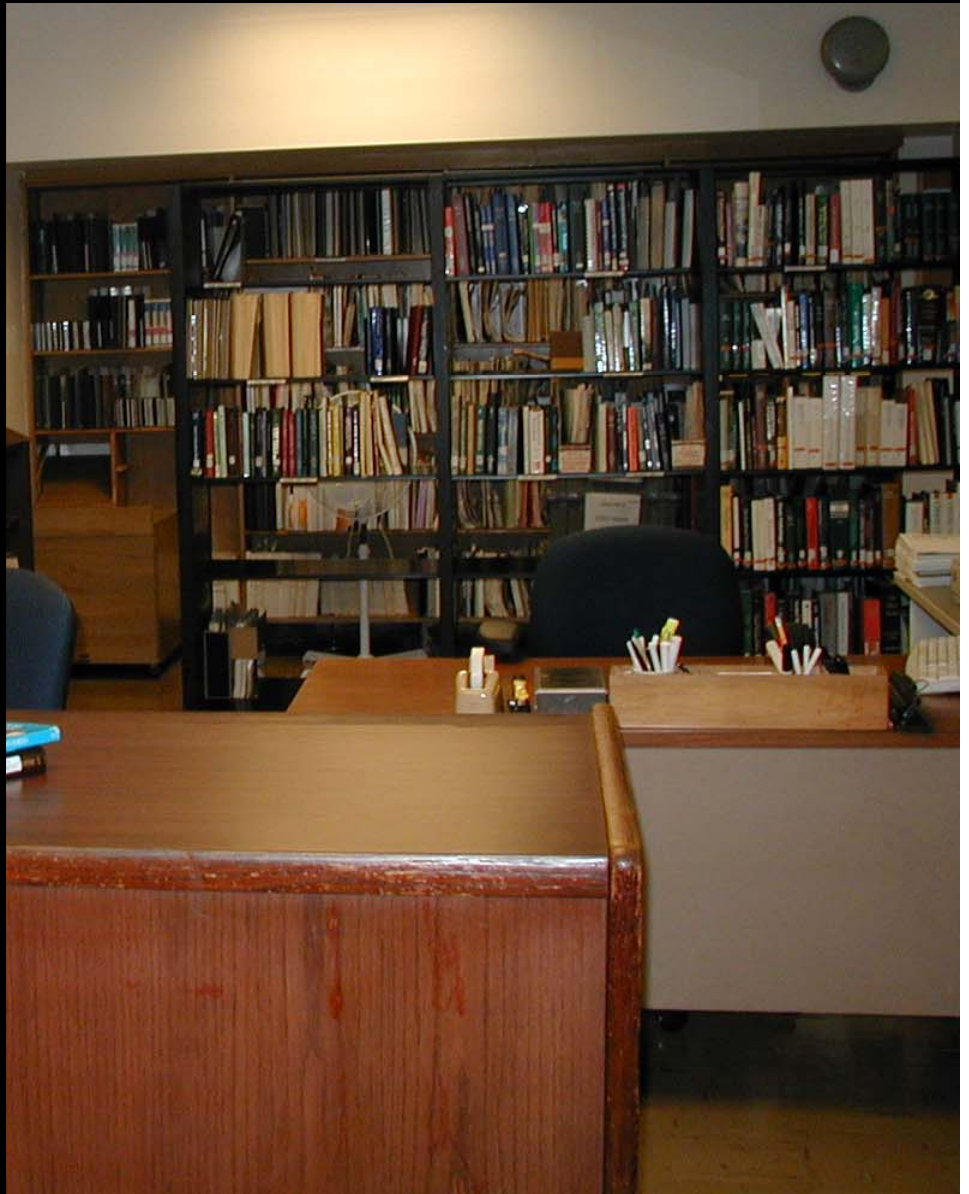
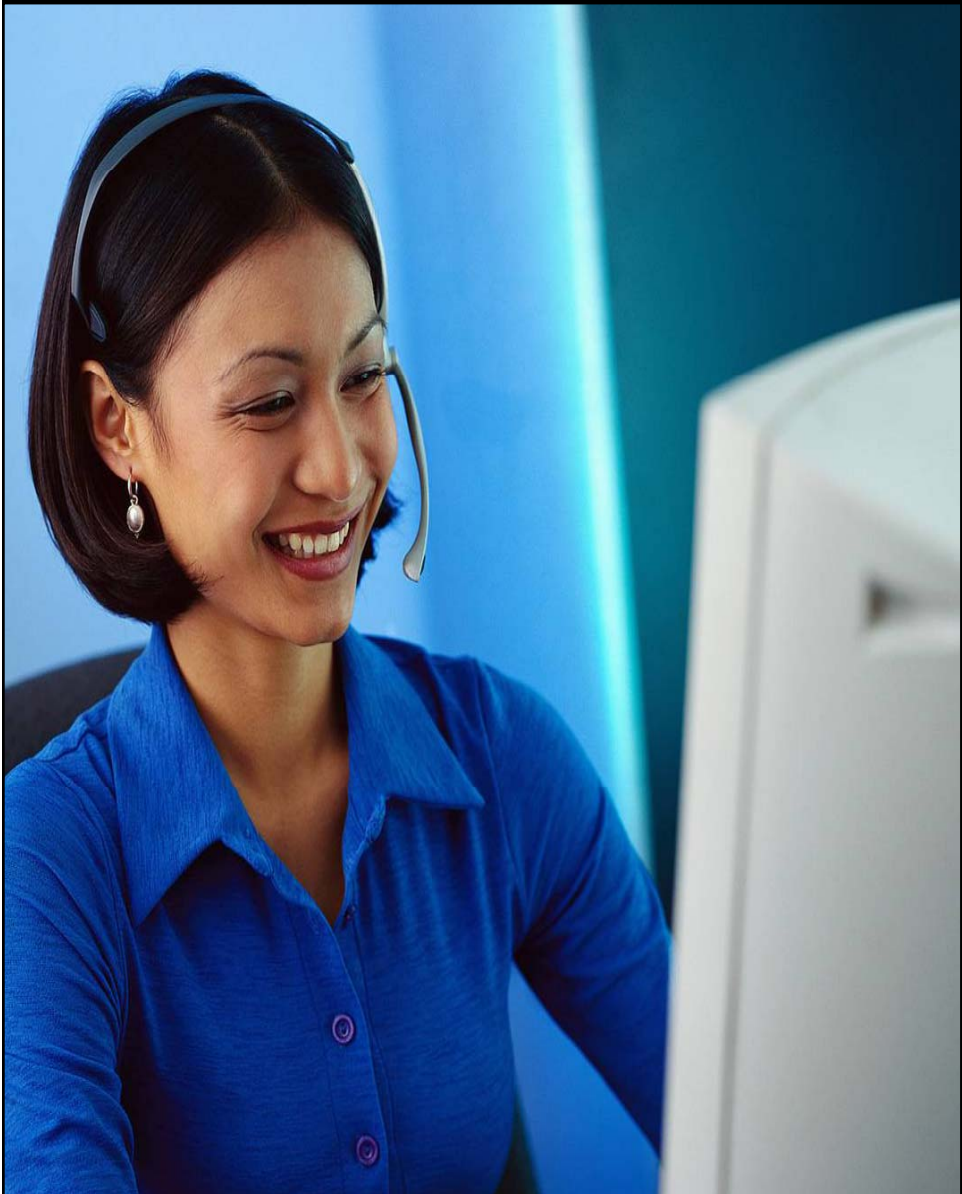
www.answersplease.dc.gov

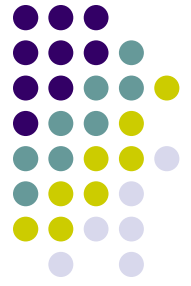
(202) 463-6211 Alternative Number

211 Call 2-1-1 from service area

211 information and referral service for Washington, DC

Libraries and 2-1-1s provide similar services





- Library reference skills are similar in many ways to skills used by 2-1-1 professionals
- These similarities can form bridges of understanding between the professions
- There are also some important but complementary differences between the two professions
- These differences can highlight each profession's special strengths

Librarians collect, organize and disseminate information

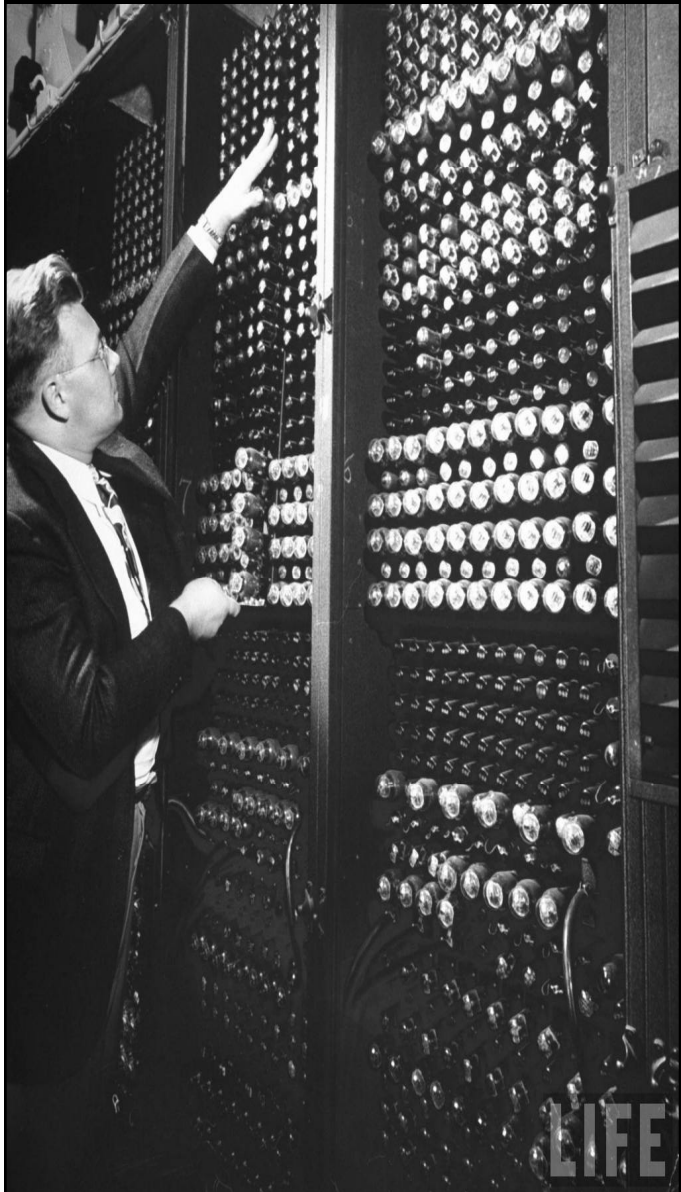


Libraries have a history of providing community I & R services



- Social changes of 1960s caused many institutions, including libraries, to examine services and roles in the community
- Proliferation of community groups also made different kinds of information available and in demand
- Public libraries developed library information and referral centers: brochures, community information files, “information kiosks”

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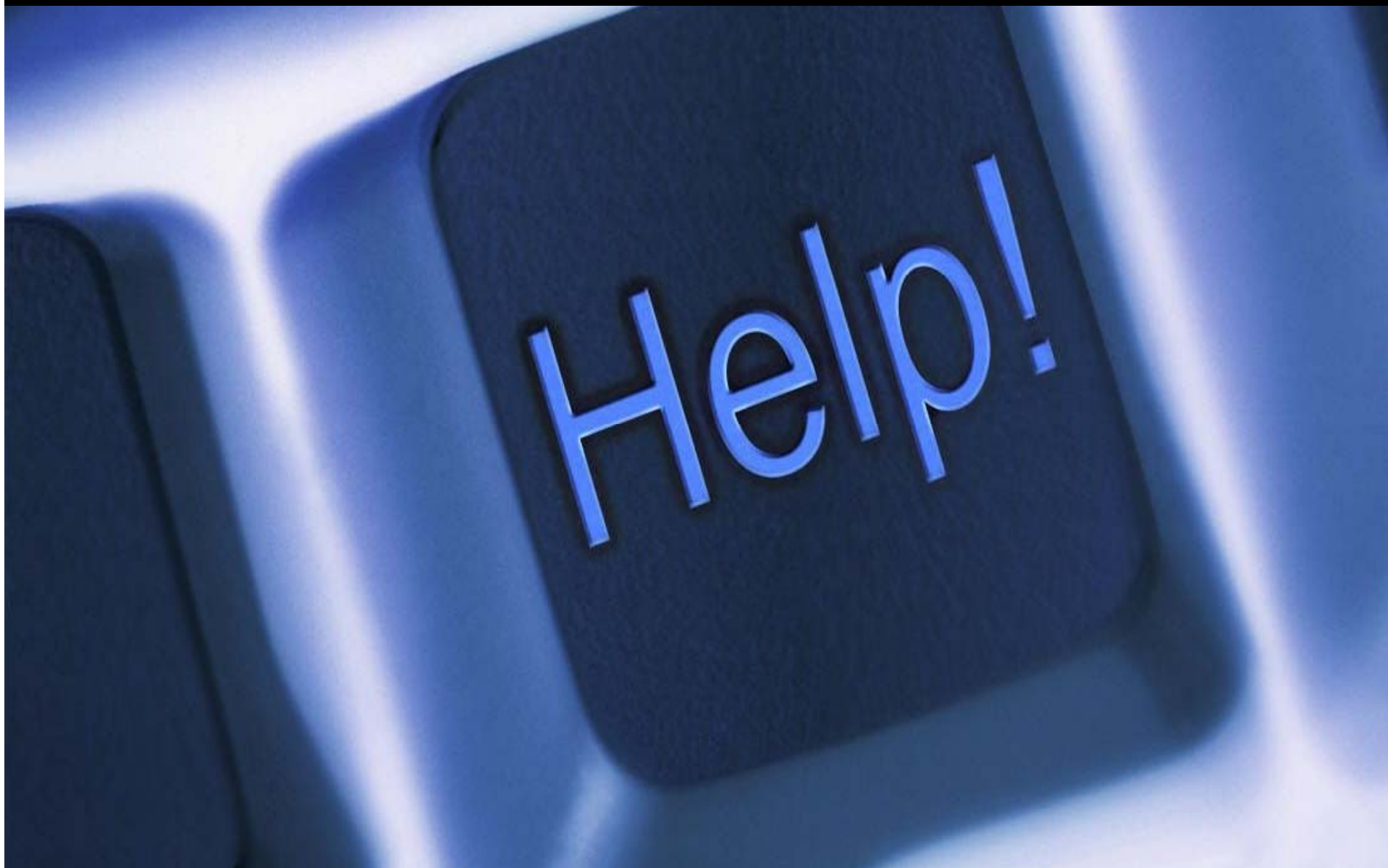


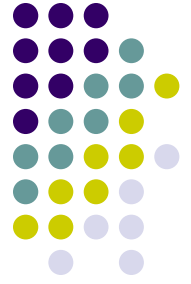
- Librarians began getting “out from behind the reference desk” through outreach and networking with community groups
- Library-based I&R applied traditional library services to a more engaged role in the community
- Computerization made management of larger amounts of complex information and greater access possible

Current recession has increased community needs.



**People contact libraries to get referrals to
community resources**

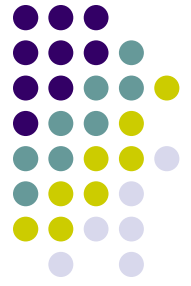




A few examples

- A customer who needs books on cancer may also need to know where to find a cancer support group
- A customer who needs free tax forms may also need referral to free tax preparation assistance
- A customer who needs referrals to home repair programs may also need how-to books on home repair or information about licensed contractors

Some similarities between libraries and 2-1-1s



- Library catalog organization is similar to 2-1-1 database organization
- Both rely on a complex yet logical national taxonomy of subject headings used to describe entries
- Both can be used to organize a huge array of information into a format accessible by professionals and the general public

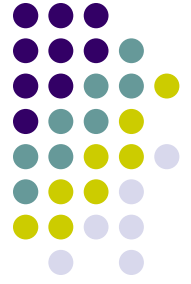


And...

- Similar policies for inclusion of information/resources (2-1-1's inclusion/exclusion policy and libraries' collection development policies)
- Professionals must exhibit strong customer service, searching, problem-solving, and technology skills
- Interviews with patrons/callers have clear boundaries
- Each profession has a national professional association and state or regional affiliates

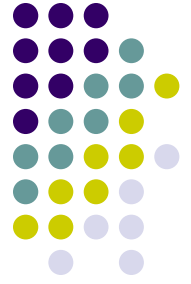
What do 2-1-1 service providers and librarians know about each other?





Often, librarians and 2-1-1 service providers know surprisingly little about each other, even though....

- ✓ The work we do is similar
- ✓ We have many of the same customers
- ✓ There are many opportunities for collaboration



How can libraries and 2-1-1s collaborate?

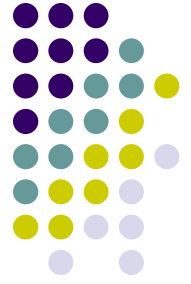
- Check out your area's 2-1-1 website
- Talk to your library administrator about promoting and/or upgrading your library I&R services to meet the increased need in your community
- Provide a link to the 2-1-1 community information database on the library website



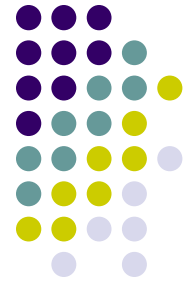
More ideas....

- Get acquainted with the local 2-1-1 call center
 - Arrange a tour of the call center for library staff and schedule tours of the library for call center staff
 - Offer to provide training for the local 2-1-1 call center staff and ask about reciprocal training, such as telephone skills and searching the 2-1-1 database
 - Invite 2-1-1 staff to write for library publications, such as blogs and newsletters, and offer to do the same for them

More ideas....



- Be aware that 2-1-1 call centers have similar missions but may carry them out in different ways
- Offer to promote local 2-1-1 services and ask the 2-1-1 call center to do the same with the library's programs, collections and services
- Look for projects of mutual interest, like grants and database collaboratives, in which libraries and 2-1-1s can work together
- Add 2-1-1 staff to your email listserv or PSA or marketing distribution list, and ask them to add you



More ideas....

- Attend 2-1-1 meetings and conferences as a participant or vendor
- Encourage the 2-1-1 service to set up a booth and/or present a program at library meetings and conferences
- Invite 2-1-1 staff to appropriate community meetings in which you take part, such as non-profit and community coalitions
- Ask your new 2-1-1 friends to explain 2-1-1 lingo and offer to explain library lingo!



More ideas....

- Join AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems). Basic membership begins at only \$50 and offers access to great I&R resources
- Review the national AIRS Standards as possible guidelines for providing information and referral services in your library
- Review and consider using the AIRS Taxonomy for organizing print or electronic information about community resources



Examples of 2-1-1 and library partnerships

- Memphis Public Library's LINC 2-1-1, the Library Information Center (Tennessee)
<http://www.memphislibrary.org/linc/211.htm>
- Springfield-Greene County Library and United Way 2-1-1 Missouri (UW of Greater St. Louis)
www.thelibrary.org and www.211missouri.org
- Mansfield/Richland County Public Library's First Call 211 (Ohio) <http://www.mrcpl.org/community/first-call>
- Detroit Public Library's TIP service (Michigan)
<http://www.detroit.lib.mi.us/tip/database.htm>

Presenter Contact information

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