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211 HELPLINE OFFERS “AFTER HOURS” CALL SERVICE TO LOCAL NONPROFITS

Palm Beach County, FL (April 26, 2013) – Ever face a crisis requiring immediate help, but it was before or after the hours that most nonprofits are available? Unfortunately, in the current economic climate when many nonprofits are forced to “do more with less,” they simply can’t afford to operate longer business hours in order to accommodate early and late hours. But the reality is that many people who have questions or need services typically don’t need them Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast is now coming to the rescue. 211 already operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and has a state-of-the-art telephone system which can handle high call volume. It also has trained staff who can schedule appointments, answer specific questions and make further referrals. So, it was only natural that 211 now offers its staff and technology to other nonprofits in the community to handle after-hour phone calls, for a contract fee to health and human services providers. Further, if an organization has a need for weekday daytime telephone support for their operation, 211 can be looked to for that as well.

“Access to services and supportive assistance 24 hours a day becomes all the more essential for residents in this day of growing needs,” said Susan Buza, executive director of 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast. “With decreasing funding, nonprofit and governmental agencies must collaborate and build on other organization’s assets and resources in order to be responsive,” she added.

This initiative opens new doors to nonprofits at a low cost without the high price tag of hiring staff to accommodate those in crisis. It also results in fewer missed crucial calls and less frustrated clientele—because their calls will be met by a friendly, compassionate voice.

Currently, 211 is taking after hours crisis calls for Alzheimer’s Community Care and providing appointment-setting services for C.R.O.S Ministries all day, every day. “The staff at 211 are fantastic and are easy to work with,” said Juanita Bryant Goode, C.R.O.S Ministries’ South County coordinator. “Working with 211 is a huge relief for us and is well worth the money.” In addition, the St. Lucie County Fire Department designated 2-1-1 as the number to call for residents who are in need of smoke detectors.

“We are very pleased by the partnerships that are being initiated in this regard and look forward to building more partnerships within the nonprofit community,” said Buza.

If you are interested in learning more about how your nonprofit can use 211’s resources, please contact Susan Buza, executive director, at 561-533-1099.

About 211

2-1-1 in the five-county service area. Resource Center specialists provide an array of support and assistance, including information, assessment, advocacy, referral and linkage to appropriate community agencies, as well as crisis intervention and suicide prevention. In addition, the Resource Center, through its Elder Crisis Outreach component, provides vulnerable, distressed elders with intensive, short-term support in navigating the complex health and human services system and through its Health Navigation component provides individuals with health-related needs support assessment, along with assistance in the application process for benefits programs and follow-up.