



Fall/Winter 2014

Great Rivers 2-1-1 is a 24-hour information & referral and crisis line service. The service is free and confidential.

For assistance dial 2-1-1 or (800) 362-8255 in WI, MN, IA and throughout the tri-state area.
 TTY: (866) 884-3620
 Language interpretation available
 Business calls: (608) 775-6339
 Fax number: (608) 775-4766
www.greatrivers211.org

Great Rivers 2-1-1 is a service of Gundersen Health System and the United Way.

Counties served by Great Rivers 2-1-1

Wisconsin

Buffalo
 Chippewa
 Crawford
 Dunn
 Eau Claire
 Grant
 Jackson
 La Crosse
 Monroe
 Pepin
 Richland
 Trempealeau
 Vernon

Minnesota

Fillmore
 Houston
 Winona

Iowa

Allamakee
 Clayton
 Fayette
 Howard
 Winneshiek

Published semi-annually by Great Rivers 2-1-1 as a tool to assist human service personnel, community planners, elected officials, and other interested people in tracking new resources and in identifying and perhaps responding to unmet needs.

Tracing Needs

In the tri-state area

What's New?

Representative Payee Services, Consumer Credit Counseling, La Crosse, Wis. – provides advocacy programs that include assistance in preparing a budget and acting as a Representative Payee; assistance in filing reports required by Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration or county agencies. Payee services are also offered on a voluntary basis and can include managing other sources of income. Serves La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon and Buffalo counties in Wis., and Houston and Winona counties in Minn.

Second Chance Resale, ORC Industries, Inc., La Crosse, Wis. – provides a resale shop that accepts gently used donations including children and adult clothing, household items, books, sporting goods etc. They provide employment for people with disabilities. Proceeds from Second Chance go to New Horizon's Shelter and Outreach Center programs. Serves La Crosse and Vernon counties in Wis. and Houston County in Minn.

Family To Family Education Group, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) SW Wis., Boscobel, Wis. – provides a 12-week education course (currently in the planning stages) for families, friends or caregivers of a person who has mental illness. Course will include information about illnesses of the brain and treatment, coping skills and advocacy information. Serves Crawford, Grant and Iowa counties.

Weekend Food 4 Kids, Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Independence, Wis. – provides weekend food for children in need with bags of food sent home and can include all children in the home. Serves children enrolled in St. Peter and Paul Catholic School, Independence Public Schools and Western Dairyland's Independence Head Start Center.

When Mourning Dawns, Richland Hospital, Inc., Richland Center, Wis. – provides a support group by Home Health United for anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one. Serves Richland, Vernon, Crawford, Grant, Iowa and Sauk counties.

Homeless Shelter, Freeborn County Field Office, Southeastern Minnesota Community Action (SEMCAC), Albert Lea, Minn. – provides a homeless shelter for individuals and families that includes case management helping residents work toward stability and secure permanent housing and transition back into the community. Helps with financial literacy and access to other resources such as transportation, child care, job-seeking skills, medical care and others. Serves Fillmore, Houston, Winona counties and others.

Fix Up and Community Fix-Up Loans for Homeowners, Southeastern Minnesota Community Action (SEMCAC), Rushford, Minn. – provides a Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Loan program available for the rehabilitation or renovation of an owner-occupied home. Serves Fillmore, Houston, Winona counties and others.

Intensive Therapies for Children with Special Needs, St. Croix Therapy, Hudson, Wis. – provides intensive therapies that include auditory integration training, social skills groups and others. Serves Dunn, Pepin and other counties.

Camp Klotty Pine Summer Camp, Great Lakes Hemophilia Foundation, Camp Lakota facility, Wautoma, Wis. – provides a summer camp for children ages 7 to 14 years old with hemophilia and other bleeding disorders and intended to enhance the lives of children affected by a bleeding disorder. Serves Wisconsin.

Call Statistics - First Half 2014

Rent/Housing

Rent payments/deposit assistance	391
Homeless shelter	158
Homeless motel vouchers	122
Low-income, subsidized private rental housing.....	87
Housing authorities	78
Domestic violence shelters	56
Public housing and Section 8 vouchers.....	63
Transitional housing	40
Cold weather shelters/warming centers.....	36
Mortgage payment assistance.....	30

Food

Food pantries	367
Soup kitchens	5
Community meals	28
Food vouchers.....	18

Utilities/Heat

Electric service payment assistance.....	481
Heating fuel payment assistance	112
Gas service payment assistance.....	28

Transportation

Gas money.....	151
Medical transportation.....	96
Bus fare assistance	46
Disability-related assistance.....	29
511 transportation info/Clearinghouse.....	22

Legal

General legal aid/legal information	57
Legal counseling	94
Lawyer referral services.....	14
Legal representation	48

Landlord/Tenant

Landlord/tenant dispute resolution.....	12
Landlord/tenant rights info/counseling.....	56

Additional Categories/Referrals

Homeless financial assistance	17
Undesignated financial assistance.....	138
In-person crisis intervention	326
Individual/personal counseling	110
Domestic violence hotline.....	57

Seasonal

Free tax preparation assistance	172
Summer food service/Brown Bag programs	3

Government Programs

Adult protective intervention.....	19
Aging and Disability Resource Center	328
Food stamp application	117
Medicaid application	75
Child abuse reporting	35
Social Security.....	83
Comprehensive job assistance centers	18
Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC)	61
Unemployment compensation.....	19
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).....	43

Other

Mental health hotlines	106
Alcohol dependency support groups.....	71
Mental health-related support groups	43
Drug dependency support groups.....	19
Community clinics	55

Unmet Needs

The top requests for unmet needs are in the categories of basic needs and support groups. An unmet need may occur even though a service exists in the area; people may be unable to access services, for example, if they have already used the service or are ineligible at this time.

The following are the top unmet needs for the first half of 2014:

Community (homeless) shelters//homeless motel vouchers.....	38
Rent or mortgage payment assistance	12
Health/disability support groups.....	12
Utility payment assistance.....	19
Gas money.....	11

Total Number of Calls – First Half 2014

Information & Referral/Supportive listening	7,665
Information only	3,418
Crisis.....	867

Total Calls..... 11,950



Volunteering: Paying it Forward

Whether it's mowing the green grass of summer, raking autumn leaves or shoveling snow-covered sidewalks, requests for volunteer help with seasonal chores are a familiar call for Great Rivers 211. In the first half of 2014, Great Rivers 211 gave referrals for volunteer help for friendly visiting, errand running, computer skills, meal delivery, gardening, mentoring, respite and more.

In the U.S. last year alone over 62 million people volunteered their time, according to the Bureau of Labor statistics, and despite the economic challenges in recent years overall volunteerism remains strong. In fact, community service continues to contribute significantly to the American economy having provided 5.5% of the nation's entire Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or \$805 billion worth of output.

Volunteer responses are especially striking at times of national, state and local disasters and are part of a very wide spectrum of people giving back in different ways. Our staff hears regularly from callers who want to contribute to their communities by donating their time, their goods, their vehicles, you name it.

Volunteer opportunities come in an infinite variety. Individuals may be motivated by civic and community concerns so want to volunteer for elections, for county history museums or public gardens. Good Neighbor Days (providing yard work and other chores) are a popular event in many counties. People give countless hours to community efforts such as youth centers or mental health drop-in centers, to groups like Big Brothers Big Sisters and Toys for Tots and similar holiday programs. Others help with food pantries, community and holiday meals, health screenings and free tax assistance as well as services run by clubs and by faith-based organizations.

Education is another large draw for volunteers. People contribute their time to schools in countless ways whether through reading programs and tutoring help, getting



involved in school gardens, fundraising and assisting in after-school programs. Working in adult literacy programs, teaching computer skills, or business development mentoring are more ways people give back.

Recreation and the great outdoors provide endless possibilities whether in the form of nature centers and conservation groups, sports and other recreational activities or camps of all kinds. Opportunities exist at animal shelters and in wildlife protection, nature trails, preserves and state and local parks. Cultural opportunities are another area people are involved in whether it's historic preservation, local arts and music mentoring programs, festivals, folk schools, cultural centers or an arts buddy program.

Not only are the numbers of people engaged in volunteering surprising but recent studies suggest that health benefits and benefits like work productivity, job satisfaction and civic engagement also increase. Turns out givers are receivers, too. So, if you're not sure where to start or how to reach programs that interest you, our staff can help. Simply dial 2-1-1 to reach an Information and Referral Specialist who can share resources with you.

The following are just a few of the many programs that utilize volunteers in our service area:

Wisconsin

Telephone Reassurance Program, Coulee Region Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, La Crosse, Wis. – provides free telephone reassurance weekdays by volunteers for adults who are vulnerable and for people 55 years and older. Serves La Crosse and Monroe counties.

Arts Buddy, Causeway Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers, Inc., La Crosse, Wis. – provides a volunteer matching program with older adults and people with disabilities to attend selected events like plays, concerts and more. Serves La Crosse County.



Parish Nursing Services, Faith in Action Volunteers of Monroe County, Tomah, Wis. – provides parish nurses, licensed registered nurses, who promote wellness including public health nursing services within a spiritual framework sponsored by the faith community. May include home, hospital and nursing home visits and other services. Serves Monroe County.

Elderly Benefit Specialist Program, Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Buffalo, Clark and Pepin Counties, Alma, Wis. – provides elderly benefit specialists who offer free advocacy and assistance to Wisconsin residents age 60 or older with issues related to public and private benefits for which they are entitled. Serves Buffalo County and others.

Volunteer Improvement Service in Our Neighborhood (VISION), Chippewa County Housing Authority, Chippewa Falls, Wis. – provides help with community volunteers who make minor home repairs for low-income homeowners. Homeowners who cannot afford costs of materials all at one time may have option of an affordable payment plan.

In Home Support Services, Jackson County Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers, Inc., Black River Falls, Wis. – provides trained volunteers for the following services: running errands, telephone reassurance, assisting with shopping, transportation and escort to both medical and personal appointments, yard work, snow removal, minor house repairs, cooking, respite care, light housekeeping, support for new mothers and mentoring for school-age children. Serves Jackson County.

Minnesota

Senior Companion Program, Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota – SE MN, Winona, Minn. – provides volunteers age 55 and over who visit the frail/elderly and seniors at risk for nursing home placement and provide support to family caregivers. Assists with grocery shopping, appointments, errands and acts as a community resource and advocate. Serves Fillmore, Houston, Winona and other counties in Minn.

Volunteer Driver Program, Southeast Minnesota Community Action Corporation (SEMCAC), Rushford, Minn. – provides transportation program with volunteer drivers for persons age 60 and over for medical and other appointments in Fillmore, Houston, Winona and other counties.



Adult Literacy Program, Winona Community Education, Winona Area Public Schools, District #861, Winona, Minn. – provides workshops to train volunteer tutors who are then matched-up with individuals who need assistance with developing reading, writing, social studies, science and other skills. Serves residents of Winona Area School District including communities in Fillmore, Goodhue, Houston and others.

Iowa

Mentoring Programs at Helping Services for Northeast Iowa, Decorah, Iowa – provides a mentoring program which connects children or youth, 5 to 16 years of age, with a caring adult. Offers ongoing events for mentors and children as well as child's family. Serves Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek counties and others.

Road to Recovery, Veterans Memorial Hospital, Waukon, Iowa – provides American Cancer Society-sponsored transportation program using volunteers from the community who provide cancer patients rides to and from appointments. Serves Allamakee and Clayton counties.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Decorah, Iowa – provides volunteer opportunities for individuals 55 years and older such as tutoring youth, assisting food pantries, visiting nursing home residents and more. Serves Allamakee, Howard and Winneshiek counties.

