



2008 Annual Community Report



A program of United Way of Jackson County in partnership with Capital Area United Way, Eaton County United Way, Hillsdale County United Way, Lenawee United Way, LifeWays & Livingston County United Way

AN INTRODUCTION FROM OUR PARTNERS

On behalf of the collaborative development team of Central Michigan 2-1-1, we are pleased to present the community with this annual report of our activities. Central Michigan 2-1-1 is an easy to remember, free phone services that links callers with the health and human services information they need, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

This annual community report summarizes demographic data and reflects the problems or needs of those individuals who contacted Central Michigan 2-1-1 seeking information and referrals during 2008. The goal of this report is to summarize the daily issues facing the residents of our community as expressed to our 2-1-1 call center, and to bring these issues to the attention of the health and human services network and the community service planners throughout our service area.

In July 2000, the Federal Communications Commission designated the three digit number '2-1-1' nationally to serve as the abbreviated dialing code for access to community information and referral (I&R) services. On August 4, 2003, First Call for Help of Jackson County began providing I&R to the Jackson County community through a 7-digit local number. Effective December 6, 2004, the services of First Call for Help of Jackson County became accessible in Jackson County by dialing this easy to remember three digit dialing code. At this time, First Call for Help of Jackson County changed its name to Jackson County 2-1-1.

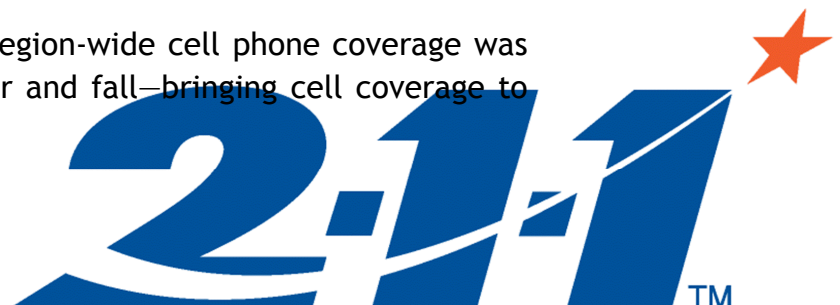
During 2006, Jackson County 2-1-1 received approval from the Michigan Alliance of Information & Referral Systems and Michigan 2-1-1 to expand to a regional call center. Throughout 2006, the program worked diligently with Capital Area United Way to coordinate the upcoming partnership.

On March 27, 2007 Jackson County 2-1-1 became Central Michigan 2-1-1 when the program kicked off service to Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties. This new name reflects our multi-county partnership.

Through work with Michigan 2-1-1, region-wide cell phone coverage was implemented throughout the summer and fall—bringing cell coverage to all residents in our region.

Mission Statement:

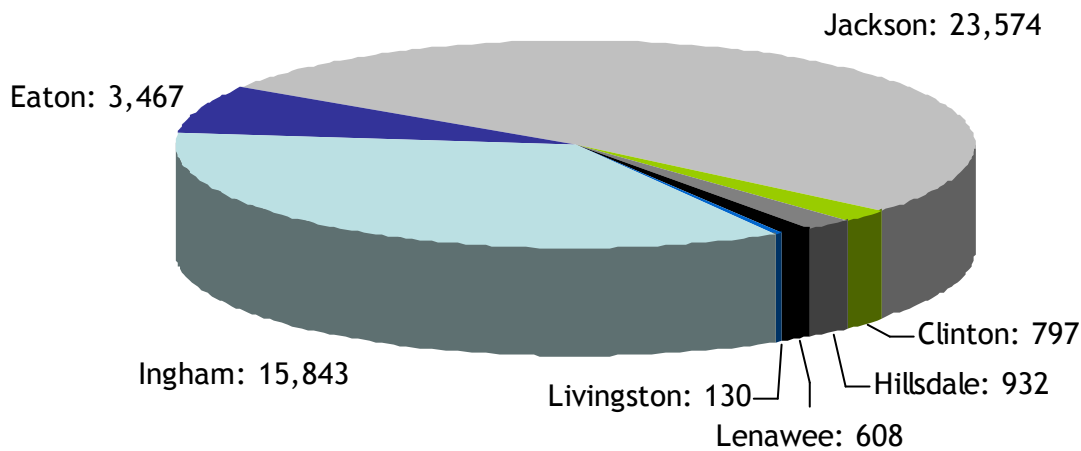
To provide accurate information and streamlined access to health and human services in an effort to build a stronger community.



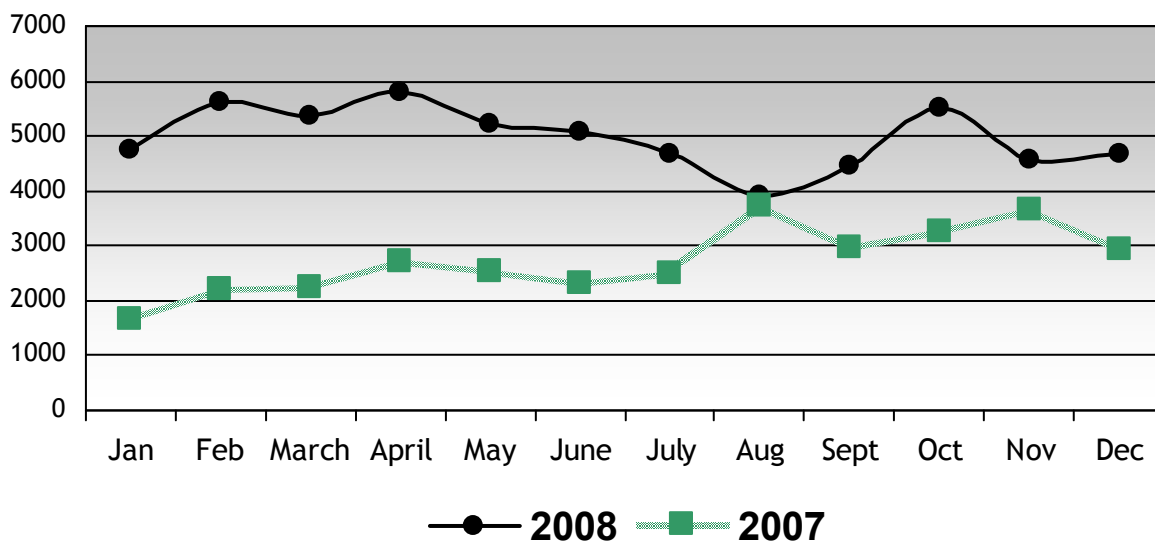
Connecting People and Services

Central Michigan 2-1-1 receives the majority of its calls from the Jackson County Area. The most obvious reason for this is that the 2-1-1 service has been available to Jackson since December 6, 2004, while service to Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties didn't officially begin until March 27, 2007. Service to Hillsdale, Lenawee, and Livingston Counties officially began in February of 2009. Central Michigan 2-1-1 looks forward to developing its recognition and involvement in these counties in the future not only by providing excellent customer service but also through collaborative efforts with other local agencies.

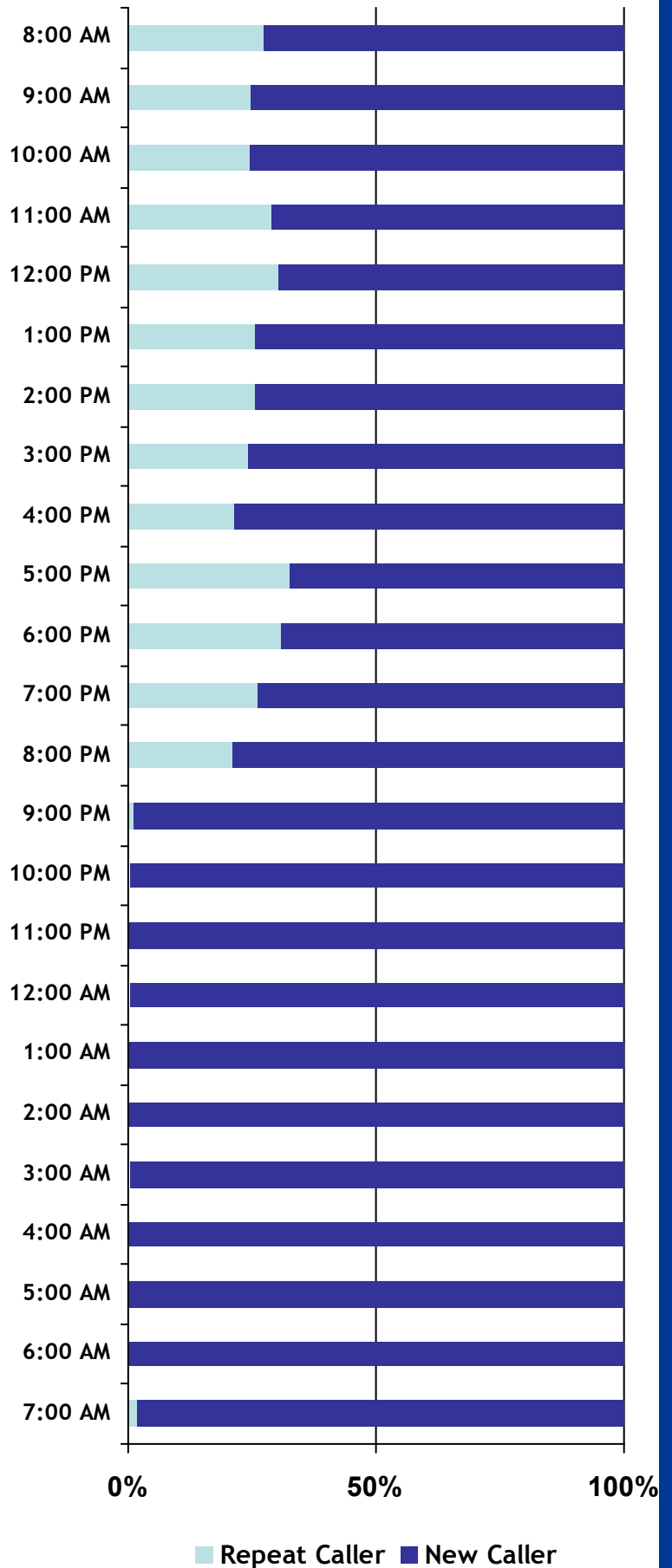
Call Distribution by County



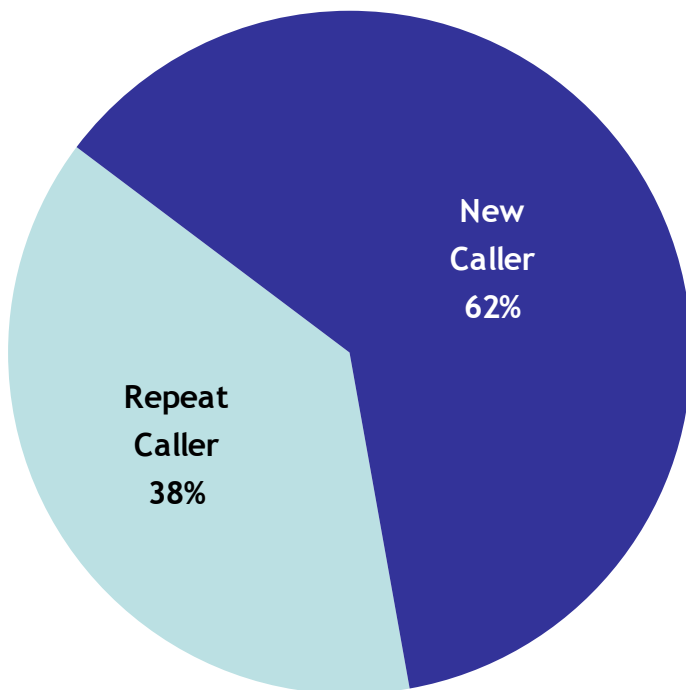
Call Volume: All Counties



Illustrated at right is the proportion of new versus repeat clients. While more new clients are calling in general, they are much more likely to call between the hours of 9 p.m. and 8 a.m. specifically. New callers are also slightly more likely to receive the service they're requesting. While 10.9% of repeat clients have unmet needs on any particular call, only 9.5% of new clients hang up without a referral.



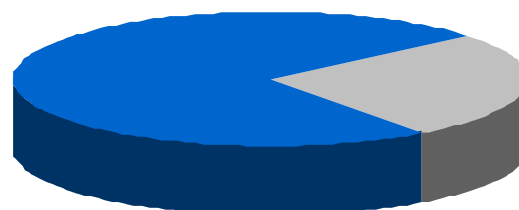
Proportion of New vs. Repeat Callers



Central Michigan 2-1-1 receives considerably more of its calls from female callers than male. This may be because single-parent households that call 2-1-1 for referrals are primarily run by women. This disparity is illustrated at right. While 2-1-1 callers are not required to exchange their personal information for referral assistance, each caller is asked the number of people in their household and whether or not they are the head of that household, implying that theirs is a single-parent family.

Single Parent Families by Gender of Head of Household

Female
74%



Male
26%

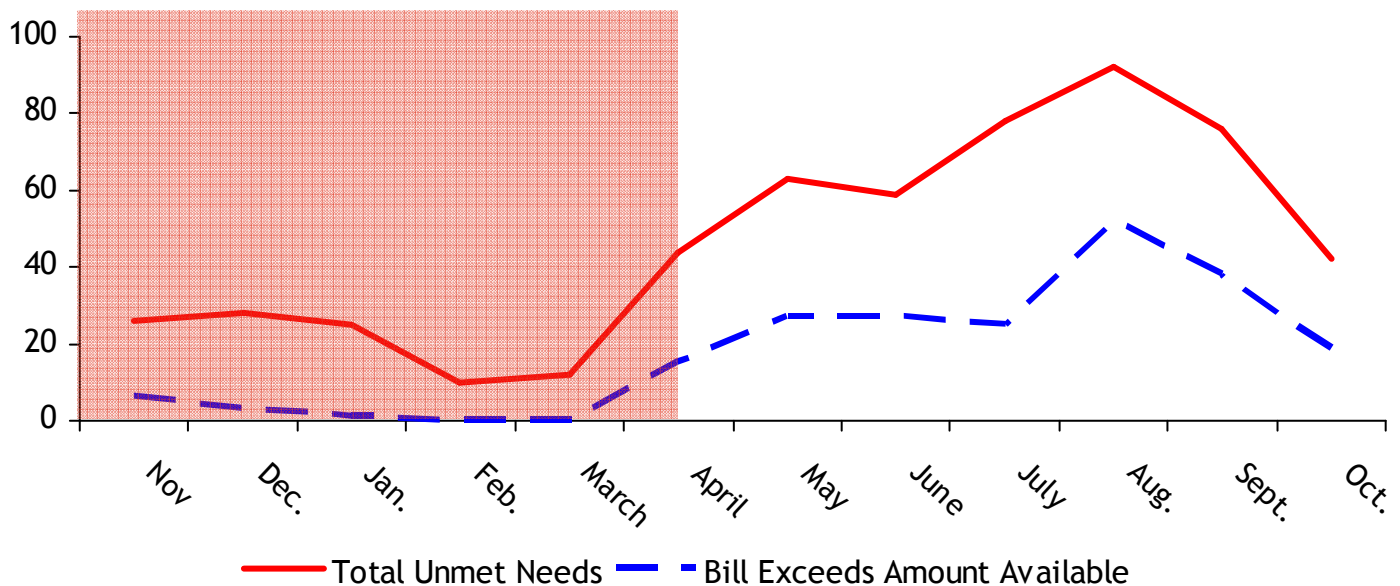
The services requested by each gender do not vary substantially, though. Listed below are the top five requests for 2008 by the gender of the caller, counting only single-parent households. This indicates that while more single-parent households calling 2-1-1 are run by women, most share the same needs, regardless of the gender of the parent. However, men are more likely to call 2-1-1 to determine their eligibility for services before submitting an application, evidenced by the “Benefits Screening” referral.

MALE	FEMALE
VITA Program Sites	VITA Program Sites
Electric Bill Payment Assistance	Electric Bill Payment Assistance
Food Pantries	Food Pantries
Benefits Screening	Rent Payment Assistance
Rent Payment Assistance	General Furniture Provision

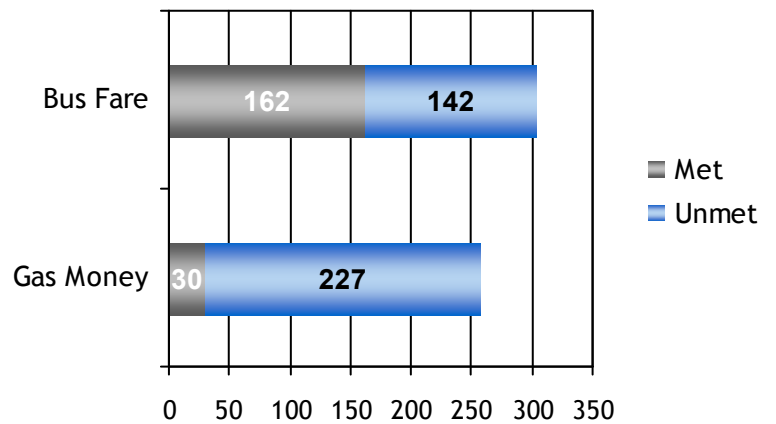
The most common basic needs request Central Michigan 2-1-1 receives is for Electric Bill Payment Assistance. In fact, more than 24% of all basic needs calls in 2008 were for such assistance. To compare, the next most prevalent request was for Food Pantries which constituted 18% of basic needs calls. This type of need is also one of the most frequently unmet at the time of the call (meaning no referrals can be given) - 14% of callers seeking electric bill payment assistance find themselves in this predicament. The table at right shows the four most common reasons that electric bill payment requests are not satisfied by an appropriate referral.

Bill exceeds amount available	40%
Client Ineligible/No Documentation	20.2%
No Immediate Resource Available	14.8%
Client Ineligible/Previously Assisted	11.5%

The number one unmet need reason, “bill exceeds amount available”, mirrors the lopsided frequency of unmet electric bill payment requests in general. One possible reason for this is illustrated below. The Michigan Public Service Commission requires all public utilities in Michigan to offer a Winter Protection Plan for eligible clients from November 1 through March 31 of each year (shaded area on graph). This program allows the client to pay a lower flat fee for their energy during winter months. During the summer, the client is then required to pay off the difference between that lower rate and what they actually used, the goal being a reduction in cold-weather shut-offs. As the graph indicates, this goal is achieved. A problem for some clients is that summer bills are no longer substantially lower than those of winter so the client’s “fair weather” payments - inclusive of both current and past due amounts - are much higher. Those who then default on their payment plan owe the balance accrued over the winter immediately and in full. Many of these clients find that community resources are not sufficient to assist with their arrearage.



One of the most recurrent unmet needs reported for 2008 was for transportation. Specifically, this includes assistance requests for gas money and bus fare. With the continued unpredictability of gas prices one can only expect that these will become ever more prevalent needs.



While most counties within the Central Michigan 2-1-1 service area have at least one agency that assists with transportation, most of these strictly narrow their eligibility requirements to conserve limited resources. Some of these requirements are listed below.

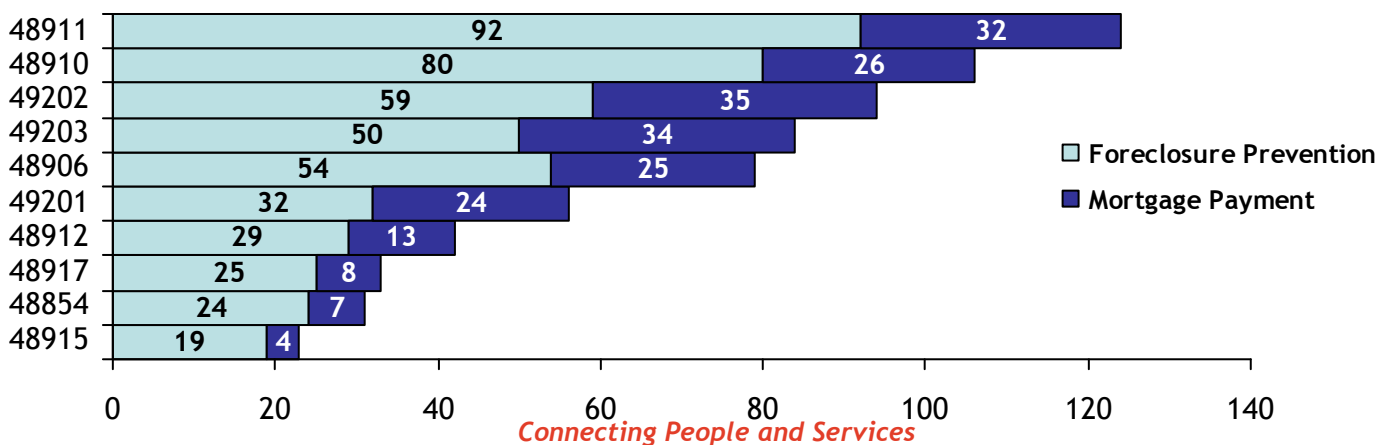
Agency	County	Service	Limitations
Salvation Army	Ingham	Bus Fare	For funerals of immediate family members only
Love, Inc.	Ingham	Bus Fare	Specific, verifiable appointments
Family Resource Center	Clinton	Gas Money	Must be an existing Family Resource Center client
Grand Ledge Emergency Assistance Program	Eaton	Bus Fare	Client must live within the Grand Ledge school district
Catholic Charities - RSVP	Ingham/Jackson	Volunteer rides	Client must be over age 55 or a veteran. Only has funding for medical appointments.

All of these agencies strive diligently to meet this need within their communities. However, they cannot expand their eligibility requirements due to the insurmountable gulf between the amount of requests and the available resources in the community. There's not enough money to go around and many people don't need just one or two bus tokens; they need help to get to work every day or to make ongoing medical appointments. One of the ways Central Michigan 2-1-1 has attempted to help those with ongoing transportation needs who are ineligible for the above services is to locate donated bicycles for them. It's inexpensive, requires no expansion of existing programs, provides the client with a long-term solution to their problem and, most of all, conserves limited community resources for those with no other options. Central Michigan 2-1-1 welcomes any information related to the availability of donated or low-cost bicycles in any of its counties.

One common request received by 2-1-1 is not frequently unmet but still bears closer scrutiny. That request is for mortgage foreclosure prevention or mortgage payment assistance. Most callers are eligible only for the former because they've not yet entered into the foreclosure process. Mortgage payment is also more difficult to obtain because besides requiring a foreclosure notice, the relevant agencies also require that the client have the financial ability to make normal payments once the arrearage has been covered. Many clients are experiencing a long-term loss of income or have committed to an adjustable rate mortgage that is unsustainable. Only earnest communication and cooperation with their mortgage lender will allow them to retain their property. The graph below shows the increase in frequency of foreclosure-related calls received by Central Michigan 2-1-1 for the calendar years of 2006, 2007 and 2008.



Not all areas have been equally affected by the increase in mortgage foreclosure. Listed below are the ten zip codes within Central Michigan 2-1-1's service area that have reported the greatest need for foreclosure prevention and mortgage payment assistance.



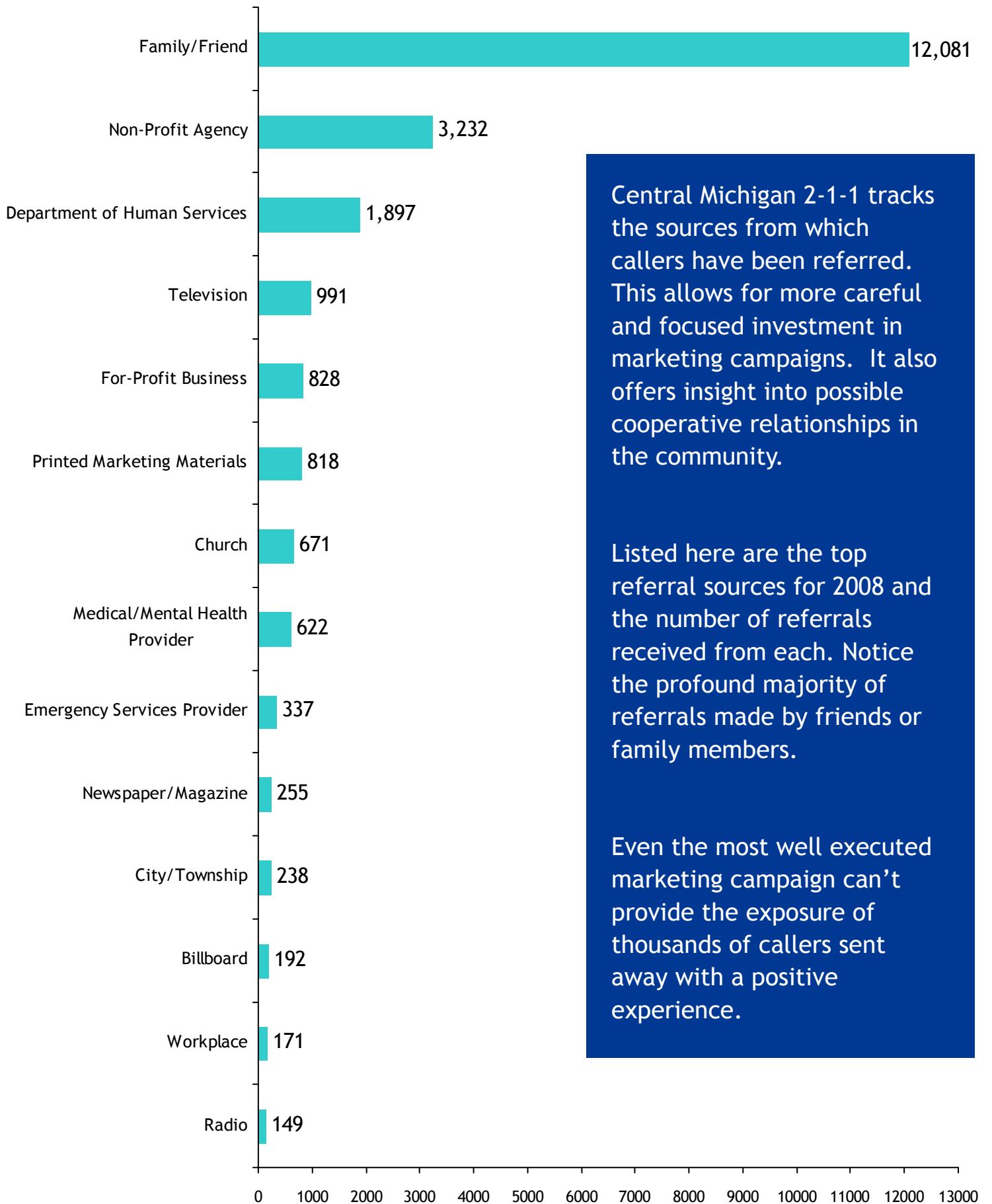
One of the most valuable aspects of the 2-1-1 service is its ability to step in and help local agencies with specific programs or services. Whether this involves disaster management or community events, 2-1-1 is there to support the agencies that keep Mid-Michigan on its feet in troubled times. What follows is a list of some of the programs and initiatives in which Central Michigan 2-1-1 has participated during 2008 along with a description of the service provided and the number of related calls received.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA): The goal of this program is to provide free tax preparation services to low-income clients. Volunteers are trained by the IRS to determine eligibility for a number of tax credits including the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Home Heating Credit. The goal is to ensure that the client receives all of their tax refund instead of spending it on expensive for-profit preparation companies. While VITA was implemented for Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties in 2008, only Jackson County was served by 2-1-1 in 2007. Central Michigan 2-1-1 was the initial point of entry for interested callers and determined their eligibility for the program based on income, scheduling those who were eligible and coordinating their appointments with local VITA agencies. In 2007, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 776 calls for the VITA program. In 2008, 2-1-1 received 5,979 calls for VITA appointments.

Benefits Screening: Benefits Screening is a general term used to describe the process whereby a client's information is matched against the eligibility criteria for a particular program. This might include food stamps or State or local health insurance. In 2008, the number one Benefits Screening service was provided for those looking to determine their eligibility for that year's economic stimulus rebate. Specialists at 2-1-1 stayed up to date on the rebate's evolving nature and ensured that caller's were given the most exact information available. Many callers with SSI, Social Security or other types of untaxed income were scheduled for VITA appointments when it was determined that they would be eligible for a rebate. During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 received 2,390 Benefits Screening calls related to the stimulus rebate.

Voter Information: Given that 2008 was a presidential election year, Central Michigan 2-1-1 developed a protocol to handle callers with questions about their voting rights or the voting process. Call specialists did not give specific information on prospective candidates or ballot proposals but did refer callers to resources where that information was available and helped interested callers locate voter registration sites and polling places. Central Michigan 2-1-1 was also available on election day to refer callers who felt that their voter's rights had been violated.

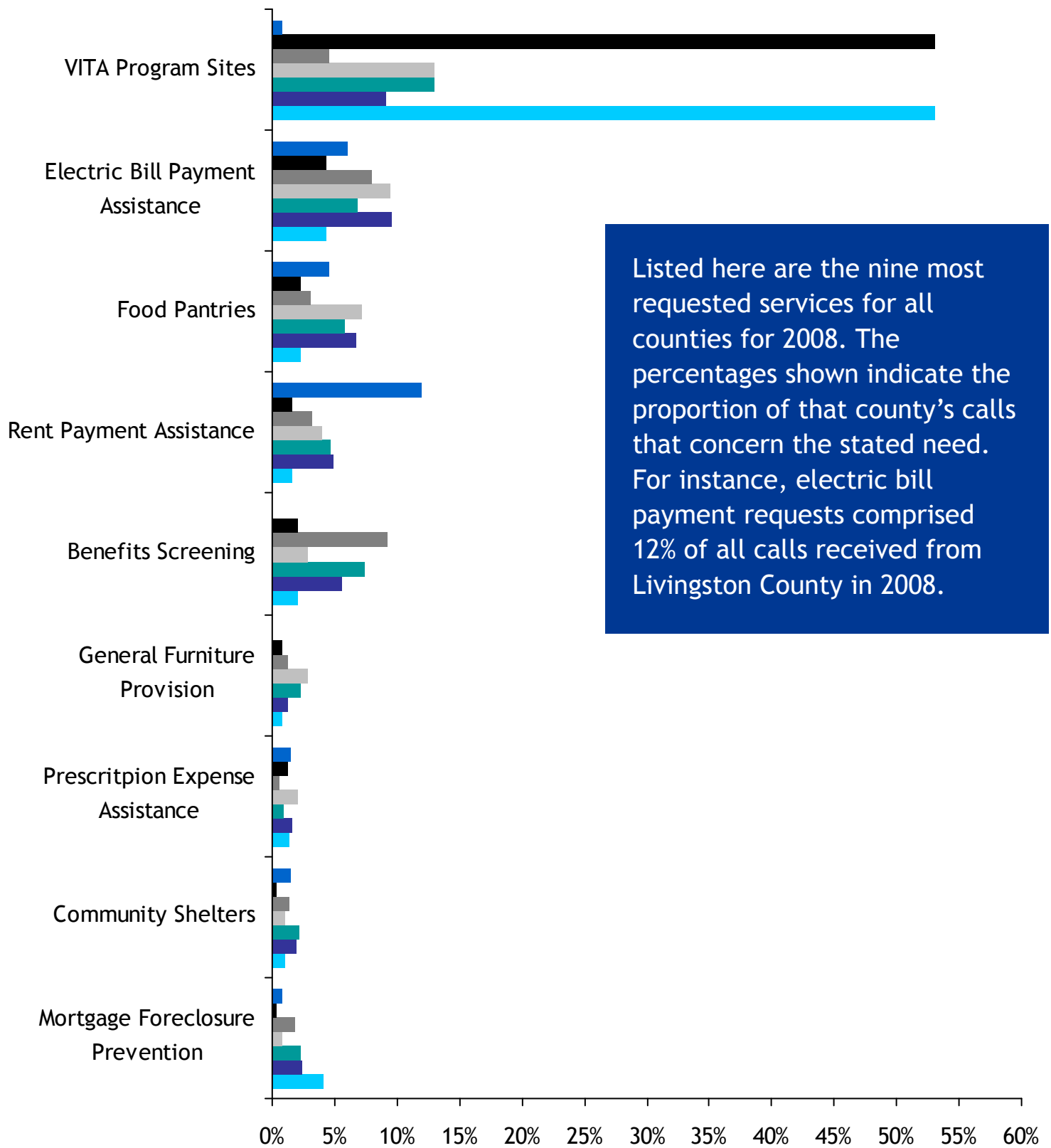
Community Warmth Initiative: Central Michigan 2-1-1 determined eligibility for a community winterization program that provided a number of energy saving improvements to the callers' homes. Over 100 volunteers provided winterization services to 69 households, promoting a long-term solution to the financial difficulties many experience during the winter months related to spiraling energy prices. Central Michigan 2-1-1 was also the contact point for clients who had scheduling or other problems, ensuring that issues were reported to the right people and handled quickly.



Central Michigan 2-1-1 tracks the sources from which callers have been referred. This allows for more careful and focused investment in marketing campaigns. It also offers insight into possible cooperative relationships in the community.

Listed here are the top referral sources for 2008 and the number of referrals received from each. Notice the profound majority of referrals made by friends or family members.

Even the most well executed marketing campaign can't provide the exposure of thousands of callers sent away with a positive experience.



Listed here are the nine most requested services for all counties for 2008. The percentages shown indicate the proportion of that county's calls that concern the stated need. For instance, electric bill payment requests comprised 12% of all calls received from Livingston County in 2008.

Top Needs per County by Percentage of Total Calls

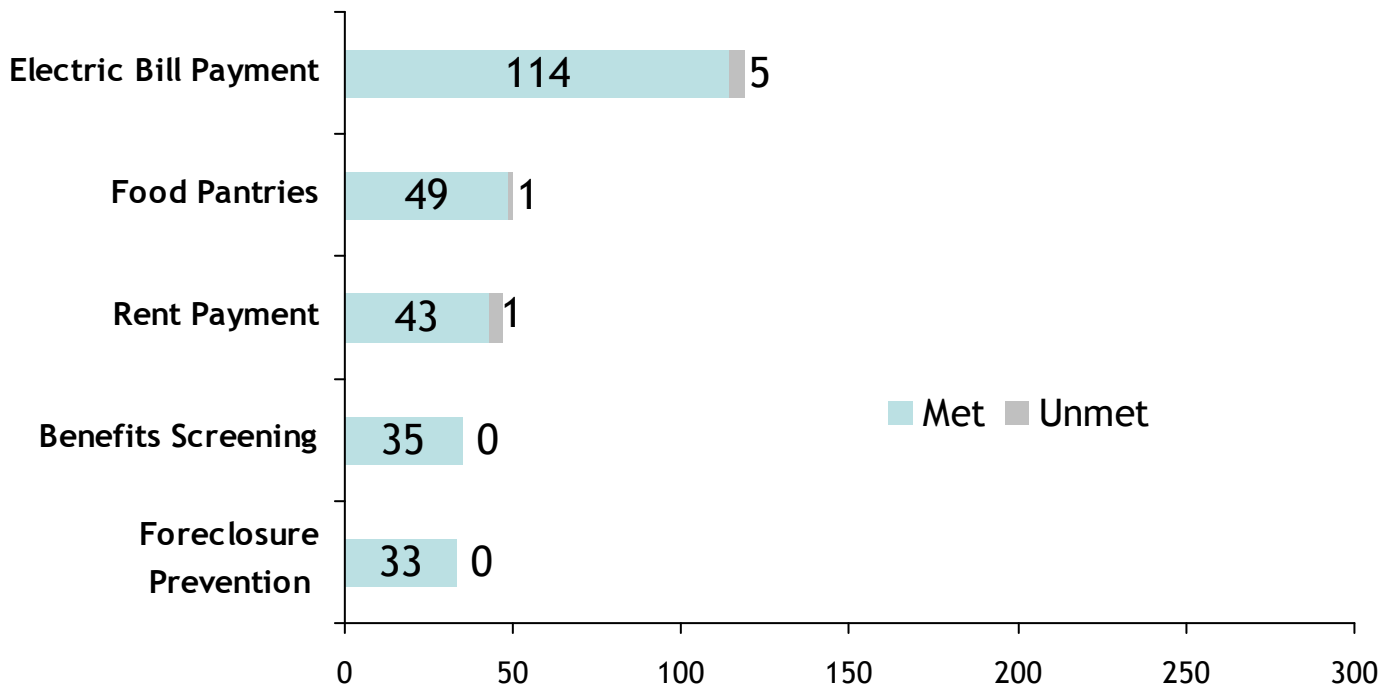
■ Clinton
 ■ Eaton
 ■ Ingham
 ■ Jackson
 ■ Hillsdale
 ■ Lenawee
 ■ Livingston

Top Ten Referred Agencies

Clinton County Family Resource Center	176 (22%)
Department of Human Services	148 (18.6%)
Capital Area Community Services	140 (17.6%)
St. Johns Seventh Day Adventist Community Service Center	127 (15.9%)
Society of Saint Vincent DePaul	120 (15%)
Capital Area Salvation Army	52 (6.5%)
Mid-Michigan District Health Department	46 (5.8%)
LifeWays (for Benefits Screening)	43 (5.4%)
Mt. Hope St Johns Family Church	30 (3.8%)
Lansing Network Centers	29 (3.6%)

CLINTON COUNTY

During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 797 of its calls from Clinton County. Listed at left are the top ten referred agencies in the county and the number of referrals to each. Below, the top five requested services for Clinton County are listed along with the frequency by which they were both met and unmet.

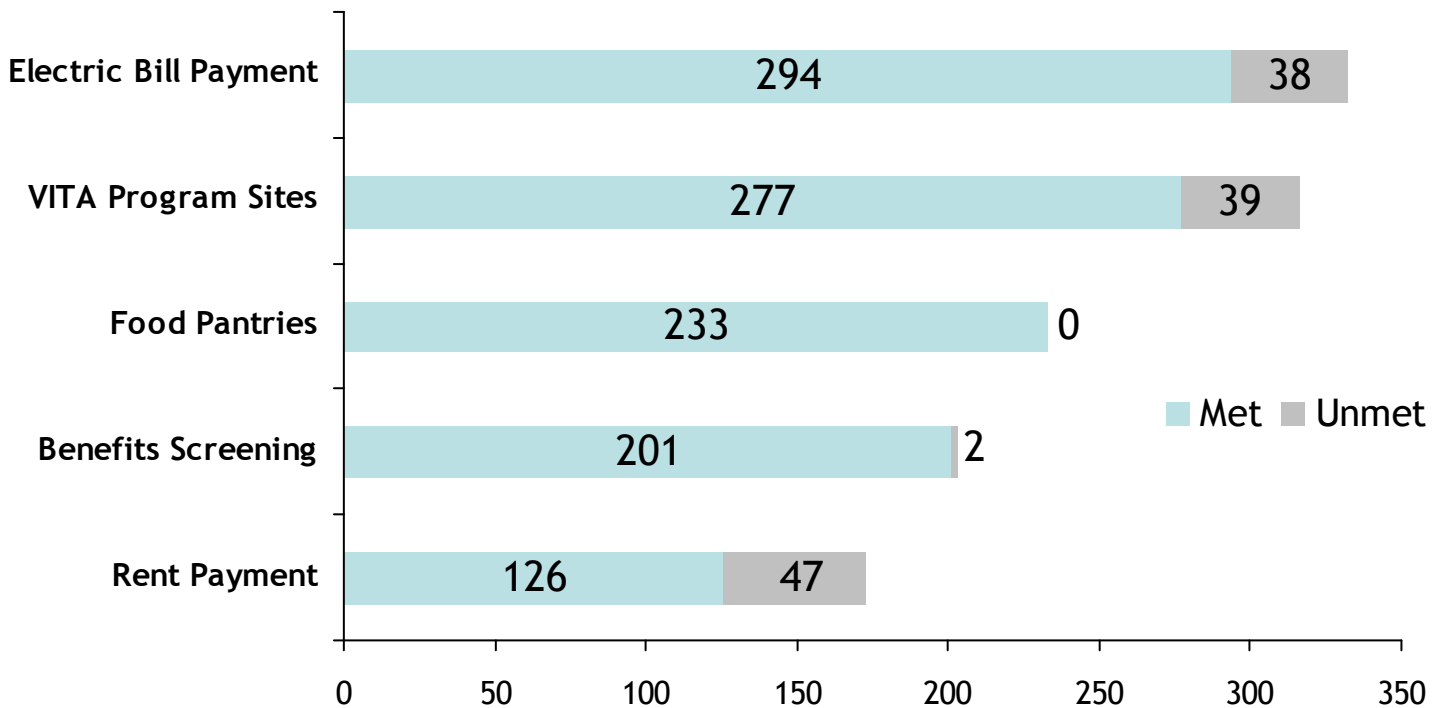


Top Ten Referred Agencies

Capital Area Community Services	579 (16.7%)
Department of Human Services	505 (14.6%)
Society of Saint Vincent DePaul	296 (8.5%)
Capital Area Salvation Army	261 (7.5%)
LifeWays (for Benefits Screening)	230 (6.6%)
Housing Services for Eaton County	188 (5.4%)
Capital Area Michigan Works!	135 (3.9%)
Grand Ledge Emergency Assistance Program	135 (3.9%)
Lansing Network Centers	132 (3.8%)
Cristo Rey Community Center	100 (2.9%)

EATON COUNTY

During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 3,467 of its calls from Eaton County. Listed at left are the top ten referred agencies in the county and the number of referrals to each. Below, the top five requested services for Eaton County are listed along with the frequency by which they were both met and unmet.

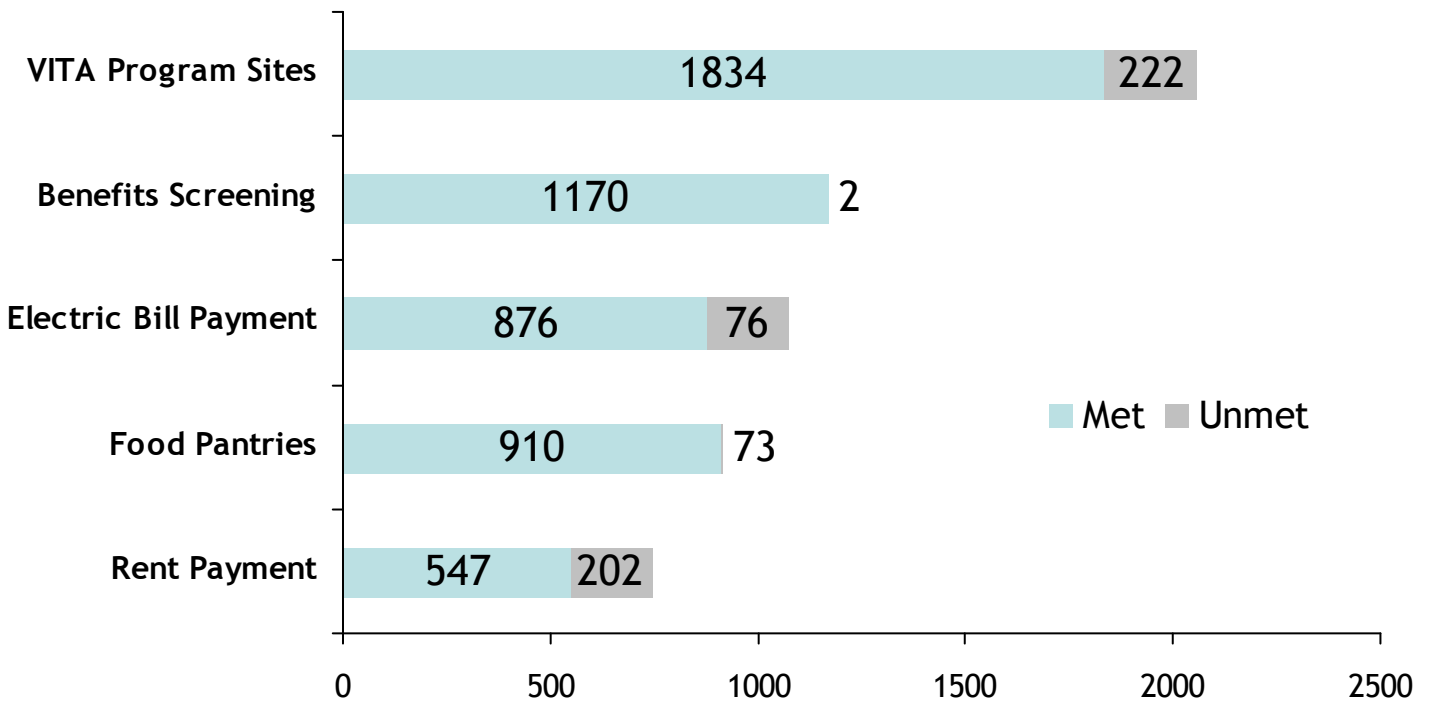


Top Ten Referred Agencies

Capital Area Community Services	1,683 (10.6%)
Department of Human Services	1,633 (10.6%)
Society of Saint Vincent DePaul	1,587 (10%)
Capital Area Salvation Army	1,351 (8.5%)
LifeWays (for Benefits Screening)	1,346 (8.5%)
Lansing Network Centers	1,093 (6.9%)
Love, INC.	762 (4.8%)
City Rescue Mission	751 (4.7%)
Cristo Rey Community Center	741 (4.7%)
American Red Cross	534 (3.4%)

INGHAM COUNTY

During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 15,843 of its calls from Ingham County. Listed at left are the top ten referred agencies in the county and the number of referrals to each. Below, the top five requested services for Ingham County are listed along with the frequency by which they were both met and unmet.

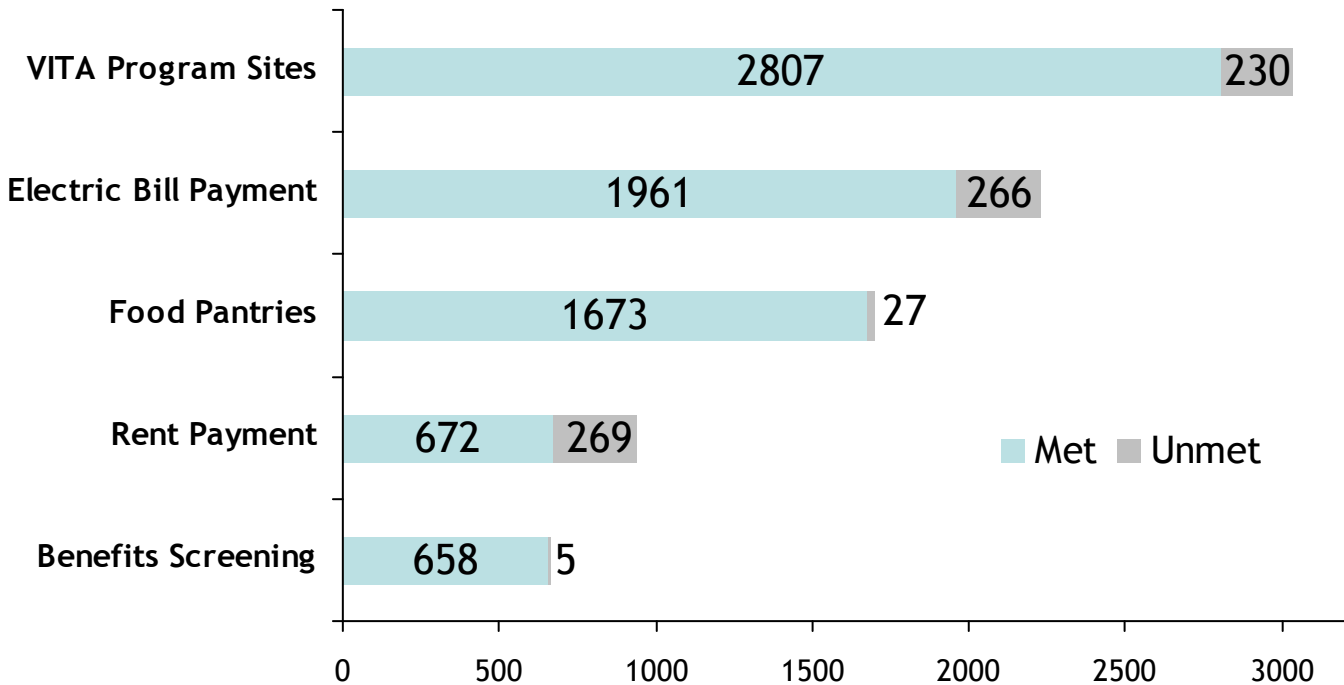


Top Ten Referred Agencies

Community Action Agency	4,378 (22.4%)
St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Stores	3,534 (15%)
Love, INC	3,014 (12%)
The Salvation Army	2,602 (11%)
Department of Human Services	2,144 (9.1%)
LifeWays	950 (4%)
Harmony Baptist Church	727 (3%)
Project Access	640 (2.7%)
Trinity Wesleyan Church	516 (2.2%)
Center for Family Health	417 (1.8%)

JACKSON COUNTY

During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 23,574 of its calls from Jackson County. Listed at left are the top ten referred agencies in the county and the number of referrals to each. Below, the top five requested services for Jackson County are listed along with the frequency by which they were both met and unmet.

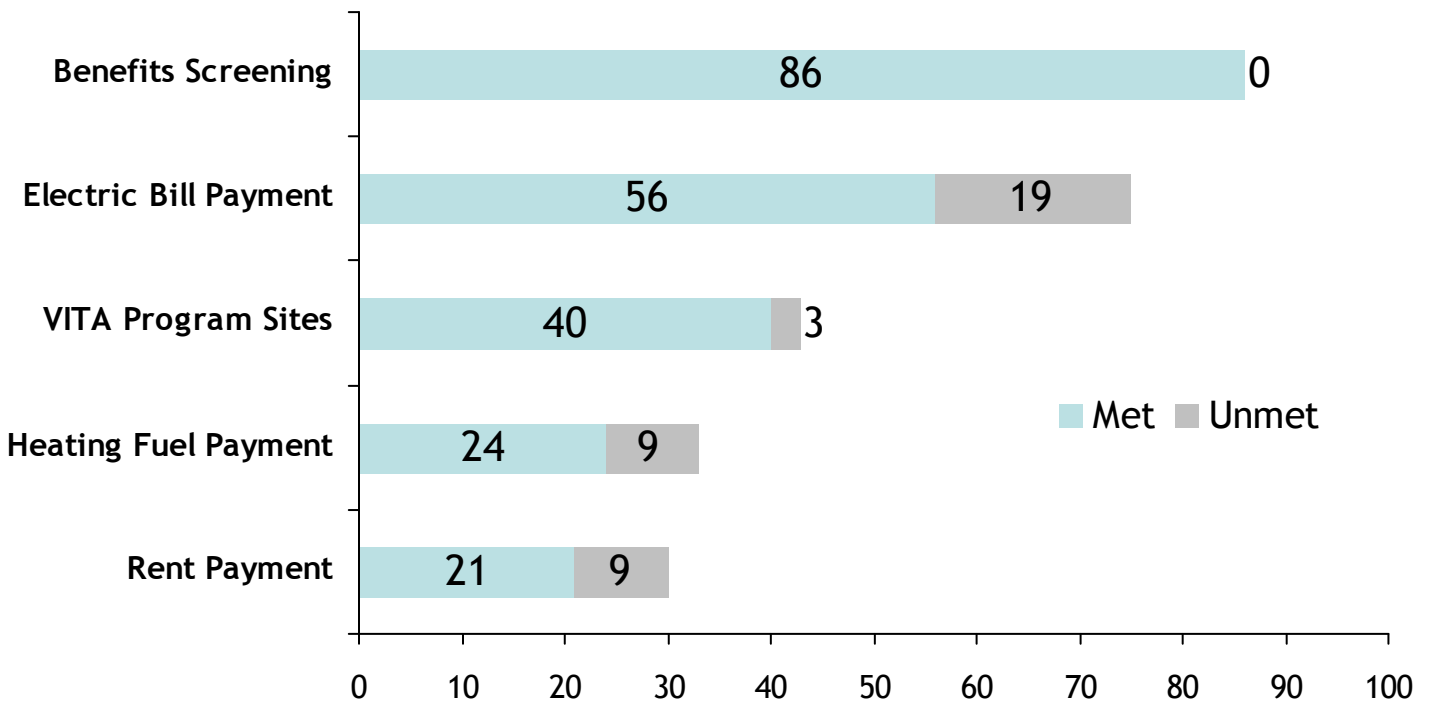


Top Ten Referred Agencies

Department of Human Services	142 (15.2%)
Community Action Agency	141 (15.1%)
LifeWays	113 (12.1%)
The Salvation Army	95 (10.2%)
Key Opportunities	34 (3.7%)
Hillsdale Community Health Center	24 (2.6%)
Legal Services of South Central Michigan	23 (2.5%)
Trinity Lutheran Church	22 (2.4%)
Internal Revenue Service	18 (1.9%)
Saint Anthony's Catholic Church	16 (1.7%)

HILLSDALE COUNTY

During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 932 of its calls from Hillsdale County. Listed at left are the top ten referred agencies in the county and the number of referrals to each. Below, the top five requested services for Hillsdale County are listed along with the frequency by which they were both met and unmet.

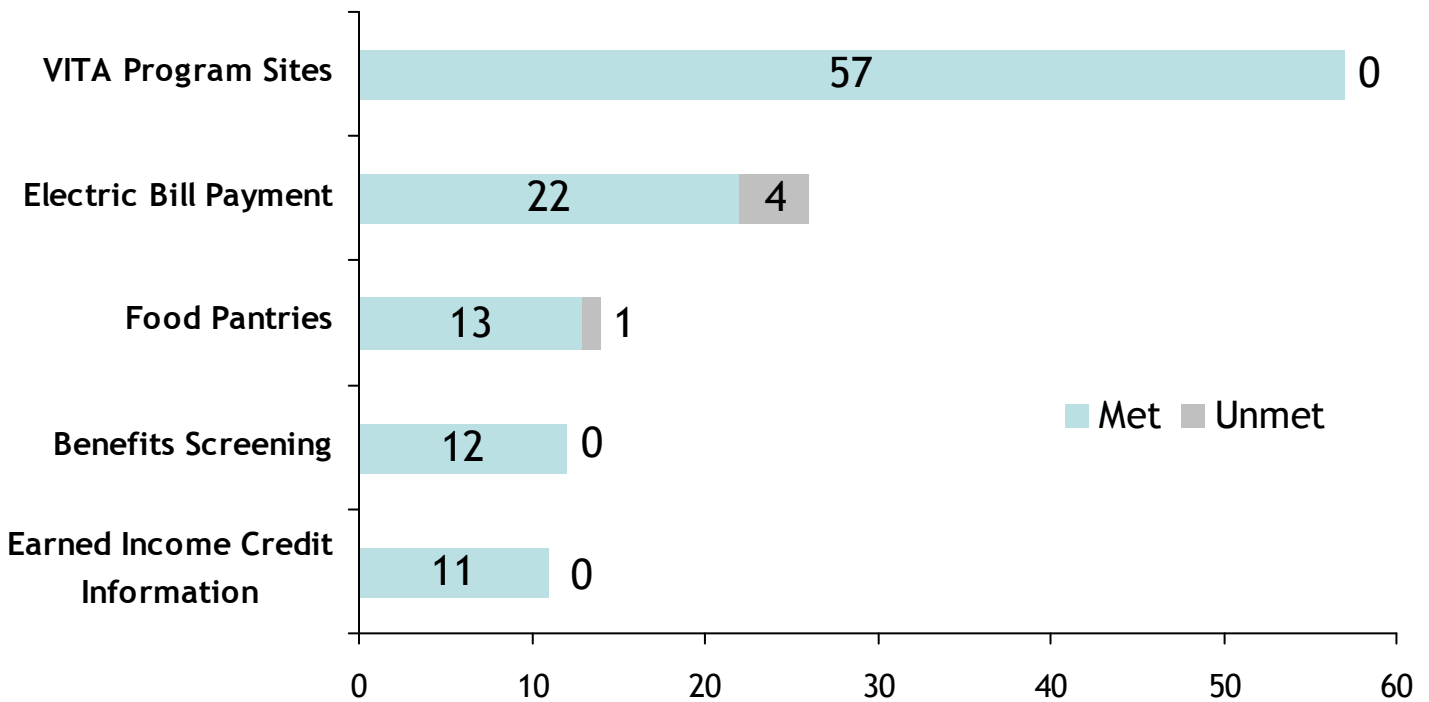


Top Ten Referred Agencies

Community Action Agency	288 (47.4%)
Department of Human Services	42 (6.9%)
The Salvation Army	33 (5.4%)
Saint Mary of Good Counsel	25 (4.1%)
LifeWays (for Benefits Screening)	24 (3.9%)
Associated Charities of Lenawee County	15 (2.5%)
Lenawee Emergency and Affordable Housing Corporation	12 (2%)
Family Medical Center of Michigan, INC	7 (1.2%)
Lenawee Community Mental Health Authority	7 (1.2%)
Internal Revenue Service	6 (1%)

LENAWEE COUNTY

During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 608 of its calls from Lenawee County. Listed at left are the top ten referred agencies in the county and the number of referrals to each. Below, the top five requested services for Lenawee County are listed along with the frequency by which they were both met and unmet.

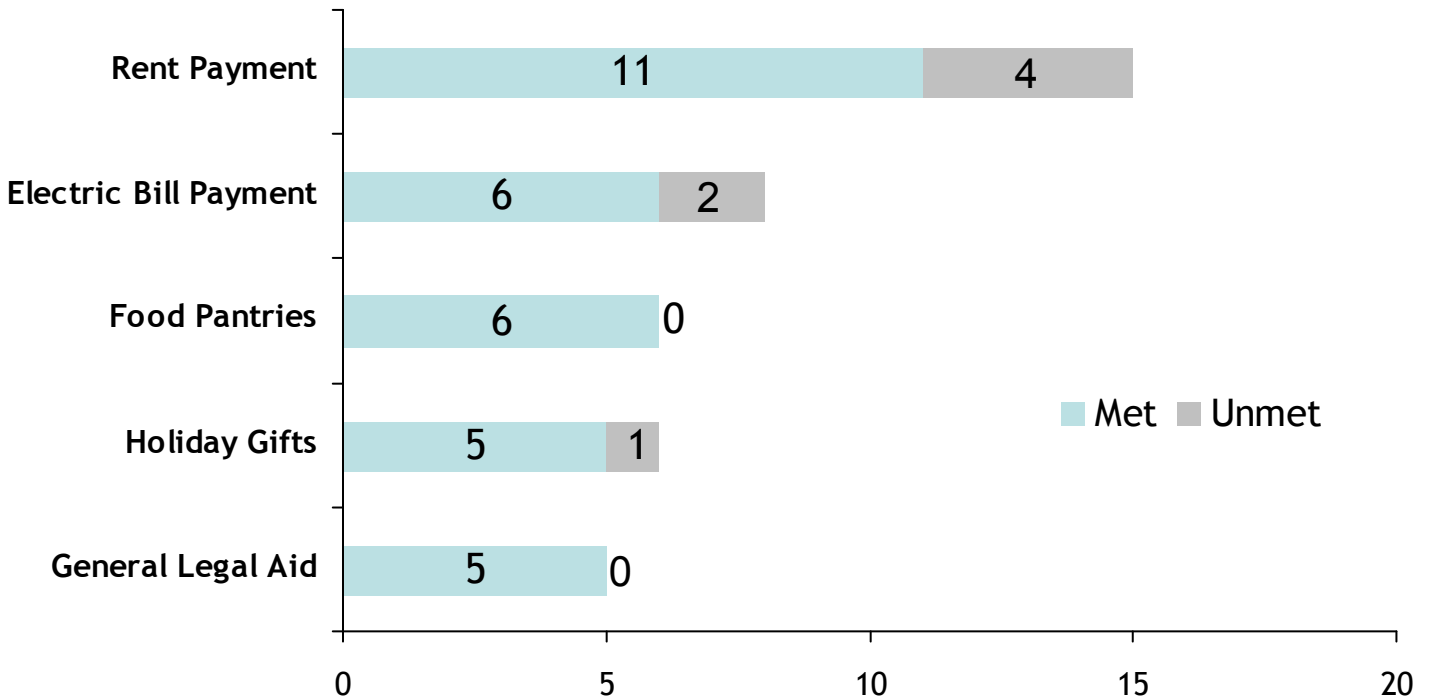


Top Ten Referred Agencies

Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency	27 (20.7%)
The Salvation Army	27 (20.7%)
Department of Human Services	19 (14.6%)
Washtenaw United Way	14 (10.7%)
Love, INC	4 (3%)
Michigan State Housing Development Authority	4 (3%)
Women's Resource Center of Livingston County	4 (3%)
Charity Motors	3 (2.3%)
Howell Assembly of God	3 (2.3%)
Saint Joseph Mercy Livingston Hospital	3 (2.3%)

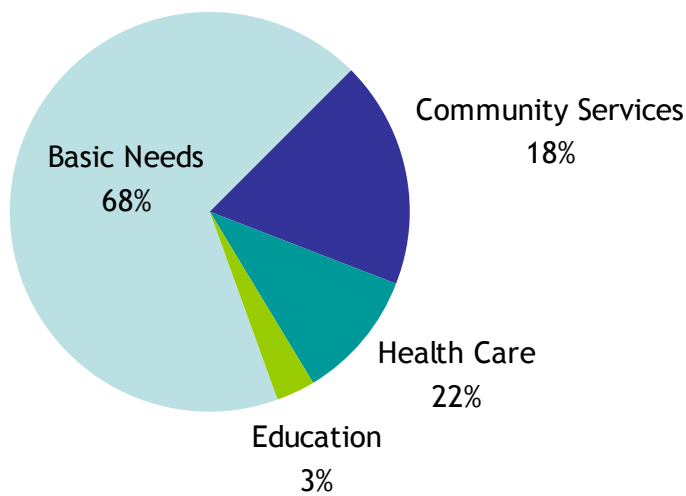
LIVINGSTON COUNTY

During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 took 130 of its calls from Livingston County. Listed at left are the top ten referred agencies in the county and the number of referrals to each. Below, the top five requested services for Livingston County are listed along with the frequency by which they were both met and unmet.



Central Michigan 2-1-1 follows up with callers to gauge the effectiveness of its referrals and gather other pertinent demographic information from its callers. During 2008, Central Michigan 2-1-1 performed 2,701 follow-ups. Clients are not required to participate and may answer only those questions with which they're comfortable. Illustrated below is information not only about the efficacy of referrals and the general satisfaction of callers with the 2-1-1 service but also details about the callers themselves including type of service requested and income level.

Type of Service Requested



Did you receive referrals that were related to the services you requested?

YES 98.2%

Did you receive the services you requested from the referral agencies?

YES 56.9%

NO 24.9%

Did not contact agency 13.5%

If no, can you tell me what happened? (top 5 reasons)

Waiting on approval: 30.4%

Ineligible for service: 18.5%

No response from agency: 14.2%

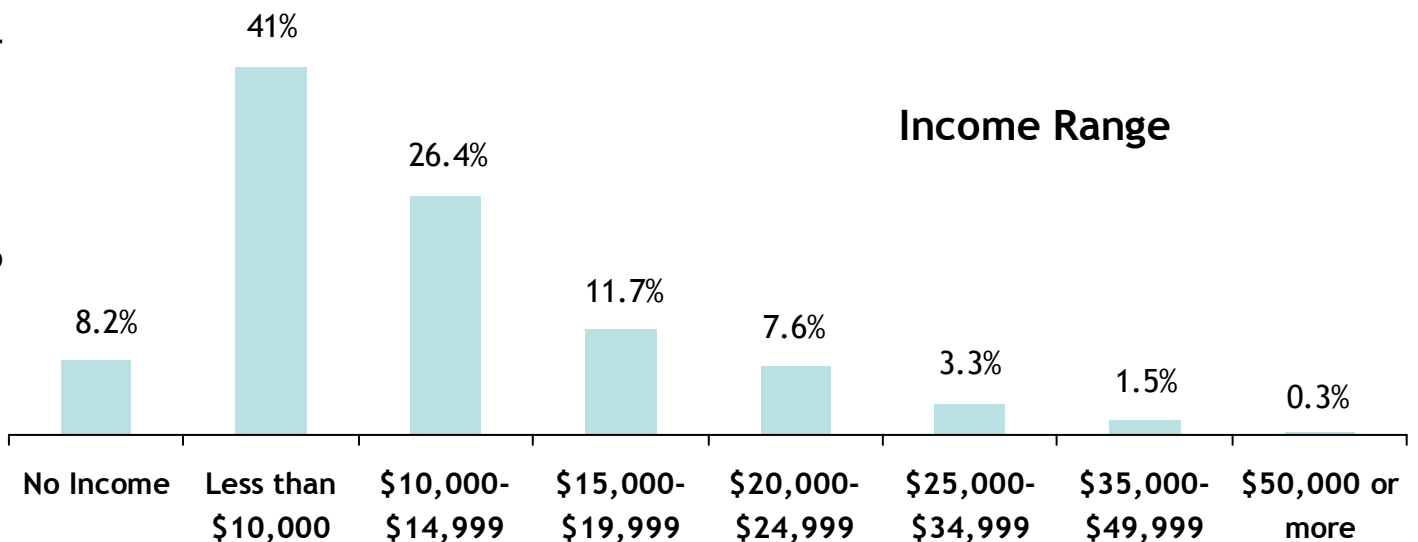
Agency out of funds: 9.3%

Refused service: 4.9%

Would you recommend 2-1-1 to a relative or friend?

YES 99.1%

Percentage of Callers Reporting



WHERE WE'RE HEADED NEXT:

Continue to support a statewide 2-1-1 system through partnerships with new communities.

February 11, 2009: Second kickoff 2-1-1 service to Hillsdale County through a partnership with Hillsdale County United Way.

February 11, 2009: Kickoff service to Lenawee & Livingston Counties through a partnership with Lenawee United Way & Livingston County United Way.

Central Michigan 2-1-1
1200 North West Avenue
Jackson, MI 49202
866.561.2500
www.CentralMichigan211.org
211@lifewaysmco.com

