

211 Caller Stories

Christine, a mother from Pleasanton, texted 211 for support for a variety of basic needs affecting her family. She shared that she was having difficulty affording clothing, childcare, utility bills, and food—needs that are essential for her family's daily stability and well-being. 211 staff responded by providing a comprehensive set of referrals tailored to each of her concerns. For help with utility bills, Christine was referred to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) through Spectrum Services. To address food insecurity, she received information on both CityServe Support Services and a Community Food Pantry in her area. For clothing, specifically baby clothes, she was connected to Pregnancy Decision and Support Services. To support her childcare needs, she was referred to CalWORKs Child Care Program, 4C's of Alameda County, and Bananas Inc., all of which provide various forms of childcare assistance, from financial aid to placement resources.

Cara, a single mother from Hayward, contacted 211 seeking assistance with two pressing needs: housing information and finance support. 211 staff provided Cara with several targeted referrals to address her needs. For housing-related and financial support, she was referred to Mid-East County BACS, Housing and Economic Rights Advocates (HERA), and Women's Turning Point, all of which offer services ranging from housing navigation to financial and legal advocacy. To assist with her tax concerns, Cara was connected with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Programs and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), which provides financial education resources.

An unhoused help seeker from Oakland contacted 211 while fleeing a domestic violence situation with her young daughter. She was in urgent need of emergency shelter and safety resources, expressing fear and uncertainty about where they could go that night. Referrals were provided by 211 staff to several local domestic violence resources to help meet her urgent needs. These included the domestic violence hotline at Building Futures with Women and Children, A Safe Place, and the Bay Area Rescue Mission for emergency shelter options. She was also referred to Shiloh Domestic Violence Shelter and Services for additional support and protection.

Veronica was a caller from Oakland who sounded very upset. She asked 211 staff for free therapy resources. She sounded like she was trying really hard to stay calm, but then her voice started shaking. Staff stopped the screening questions and asked Veronica if she was safe and she said yes. Staff then asked if she wanted to be transferred to the Crisis Support Services of Alameda County's hotline and she said yes. Veronica was then immediately transferred to the crisis line for emergency support.