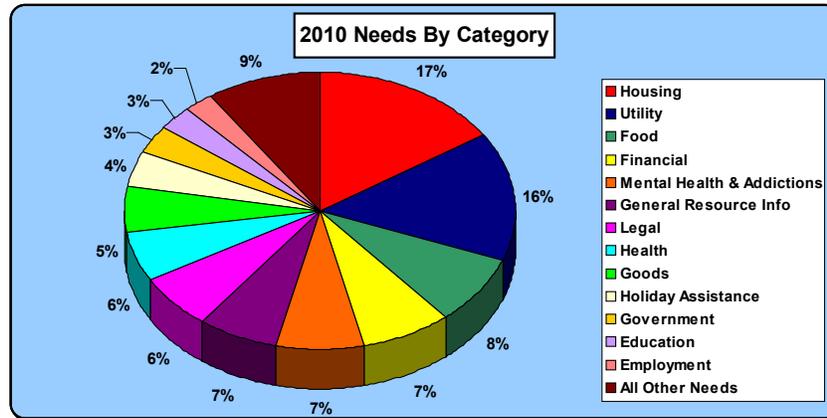


"Anemic Recovery" Not Enough to Help Many Meet Life's Basic Necessities

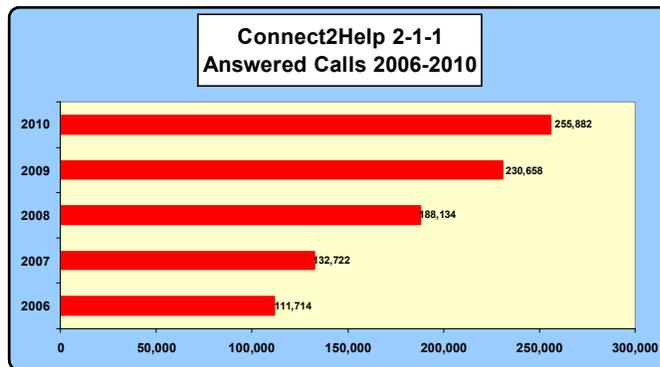
Sarah, a single parent in her 30's, called for help paying her rent and electric bills. She had just recently returned to her full-time position after having surgery. Although she had health insurance, she also still needed help paying for her portion of the hospital expenses.



Jim, a married father of 4 in his 40's, called because he was overwhelmed with financial responsibility. His wife had lost her job, and his brother and nephew had just moved in with him because his brother also had lost his job. He was working full-time, but couldn't keep up with the rent, utilities and food expenses.

These are just 2 of thousands of examples that demonstrate that, while the "Great Recession" that started at the end of 2007 has "officially" ended, many are still struggling to survive financially. According to an October 25, 2010 *Indiana Economic Digest* article, "Even the [National Bureau of Economic Research](#)...admitted the recovery is not a strong one. While there were more than 8 million jobs lost during the 2007-2009 recession, just 1.3 million of those had been recovered as of last month." Robert Guell, an economist at ISU in Terre Haute who was interviewed for the article noted, "Even nationally, this recovery seems 'rather anemic'...Coming out of the recession of 1982-83, quarterly economic growth was soaring by as much as 8 percent...In this recovery, quarterly growth remains below 2 percent."

More than a **quarter of a million calls to Connect2Help** in 2010 helped to demonstrate the effects of the economic climate. Nearly 1 in 6 callers (17%) reported that at least one person in the household was **unemployed**.



Data from outcome surveys conducted with C2H callers revealed that **49% were first-time callers** for help in both 2009 and 2010. While C2H does not collect unduplicated call data on the initial call, this statistic suggests that **tens of thousands of people who never needed help before are calling**. The addition of all of these new clients has put an enormous strain on the existing human service delivery system.

Callers' most pressing needs included help with housing, utilities and food.

Help making a **rent or mortgage** payment was the number one need in the housing category; there were nearly **15,000 requests** in 2010, an increase of 6% compared to 2009. More than **14,000 callers** were past the point of asking for rent assistance. Instead, they were asking for help finding **emergency shelter**; this was an increase of 30% compared to 2009. Locating **safe, affordable housing** was the goal for almost **10,000** more callers, a rise of 18% compared to 2009.

Utilities, another basic necessity, were the focus for more than **40,000 callers**. Adding insult to injury, the annual Energy Assistance Program ran out of funding in December 2010. Calls for help paying **utility bills jumped more than 100% in December 2010**, compared to December 2009. Many who would have otherwise qualified for assistance were left without any resource to help them maintain utilities to heat, light and cook in their homes. (**Fortunately, on January 14, 2011, Connect2Help received notification that the Energy Assistance Program had received additional funding, renewing hope for thousands in need of utility help**).

For more than **20,000 callers**, cooking in their homes meant that they first had to have food in their pantries. **Emergency food** calls **rose 10%** in 2010, compared to 2009, straining an already over-burdened safety net of food pantries.

More year-end data will be available on our website, www.connect2help.org, in the coming weeks. Check back regularly for updated information on community needs and resources.