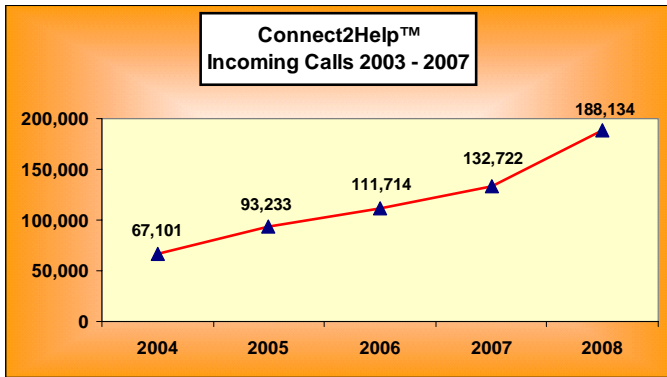


Connect2Help™

Serving as your 2-1-1 Center for Central Indiana

Calls for Help Skyrocket as Recession Takes Hold



- According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the U.S. has been in a recession since December 2007.
- **More than 188,000 calls for help** from people in Central Indiana and around the state to Connect2Help (C2H) during 2008 demonstrated the effects of this downturn in the economy.
- **Calls spiked 42% in 2008** compared to 2007; this is the largest yearly percentage increase in the agency's history. Calls for help have **soared 180% in the last 5 years**.
- In 2008, 30,920 callers with 37,053 children reported living in a household where someone had been recently laid-off or was unemployed. **This is a 50% increase compared to 2007.**

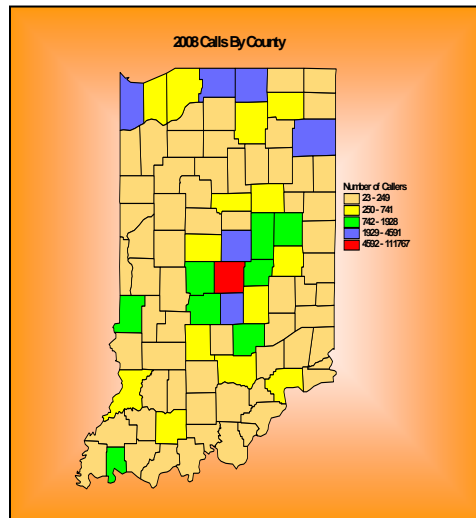
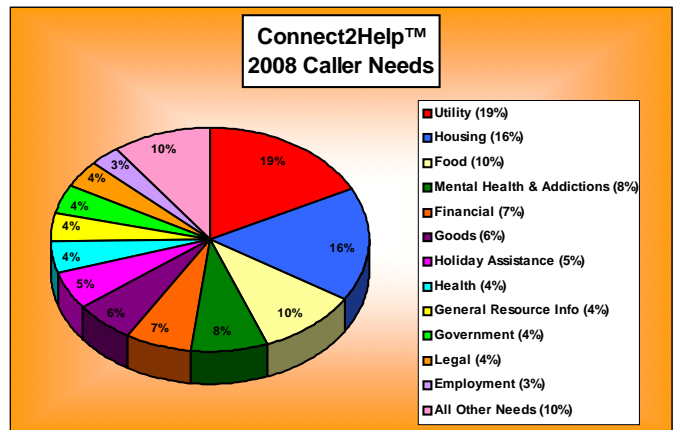
- Requests for **help paying utility bills emerged as the most pressing need during 2008**, slightly edging out housing issues, which had been at the top of the list for the past 3 years. Help with emergency food rounded out the list of the top 3 categories of needs.

- Calls for help paying a gas bill jumped 90% compared to 2007; electric bill requests rose 69%.
- Within the **housing category**, calls for help making home repairs rose 61%; most of these calls were the result of the summer floods. Rent assistance calls increased 47%; requests for help finding shelter from homeless callers (with 8,363 children) rose 23%; and calls for help finding low-cost or subsidized housing went up 21%.

- Calls for **emergency food** continued to rise. There was a 44% increase in the number of people who called for food assistance who were NOT receiving Food Stamps. These are often people referred to as the "working poor" or the "newly poor." They often do not qualify for Food Stamps but do not have enough income to pay for groceries after paying for other expenses such as rent and utilities. Among those receiving Food Stamps, there was a 29% increase in requests for a referral to a food pantry.

- **16% of all needs reported by callers were not able to be met** (as coded by C2H), mainly because of a lack of community resources for the needs. It's much more difficult to help people find money to pay bills than it is to find goods and services (such as clothing or home health care) to meet their other needs. The top 3 unmet needs were help paying rent, gas and electric bills.

- C2H answers 2-1-1 calls from most areas of the state in the evenings and 24 hours on the weekends. We also answer calls statewide from people calling one of 4 FSSA mental health and addictions lines, as well as from people calling the 1-800-CHILDREN child abuse hotline, two National Suicide Prevention hotlines (1-800-273-TALK and 1-800-SUICIDE) and the Child Abuse & Sexual Assault hotline (1-866-FOR-LIGHT).



- Most of the people calling C2H (73%) lived in Marion County. Another 8% lived in the 7 counties surrounding Marion. The remaining 19% lived in counties outside of Central Indiana.

For assistance or more information about human services needs in Central Indiana dial 2-1-1 or (317) 926-4357.



Community Partner

