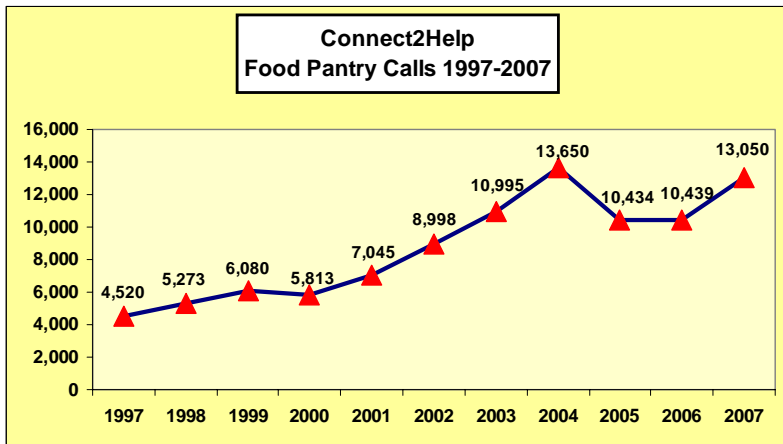


Connect2Help™

Connect2Help™ facilitates connections between people who need human services and those who provide them.

P.O. Box 30530, Indianapolis, IN 46230-0530; (317) 920-4850; Fax: (317) 920-4885; www.Connect2Help.org

Connect2Help™ 2-1-1: dial 2-1-1 or (317) 926-4357



Requests for assistance from food pantries continue to be one of the most frequently reported needs of Connect2Help™ (C2H) callers. On average, these requests have accounted for 13% of all recorded needs.

The chart to the left shows a decrease in calls after 2004. This is largely a result of a new C2H protocol put in place at the beginning of 2005, rather than a decline in overall food needs.

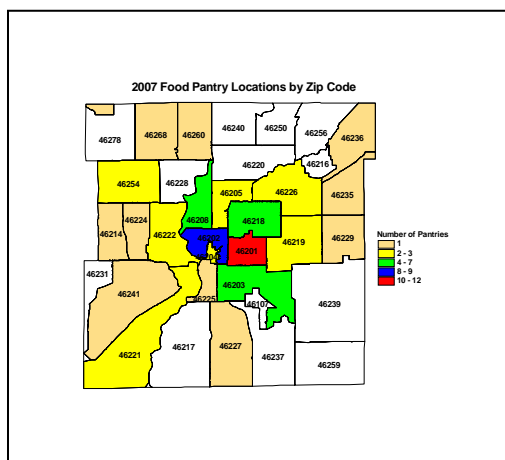
Early in 2005, after much discussion and partnership with area food pantries, C2H began providing callers with referrals to at least 2-3 pantries in their area, rather than requiring callers to go through C2H every time they needed food, as had been the practice prior to this change.

One of the main goals of the protocol is to encourage callers to establish relationships with food pantries in their area, especially those that provide commodity foods. While Connect2Help™ 2-1-1 does not collect information on unduplicated callers, anecdotal evidence from callers indicates that more “new” food pantry callers are contacting Connect2Help™. This may help to explain why the 2005 and 2006 numbers are nearly identical.

In 2007, however, the number of food calls jumped by 25%. This rise may be explained in part by noting that there was a 28% increase in the number of callers who were NOT receiving food stamps compared to 2006. Many of these callers are the “working poor;” they are trying to save any available cash resources for rent and utilities (for which there are few community resources) by using food pantries instead of buying groceries.

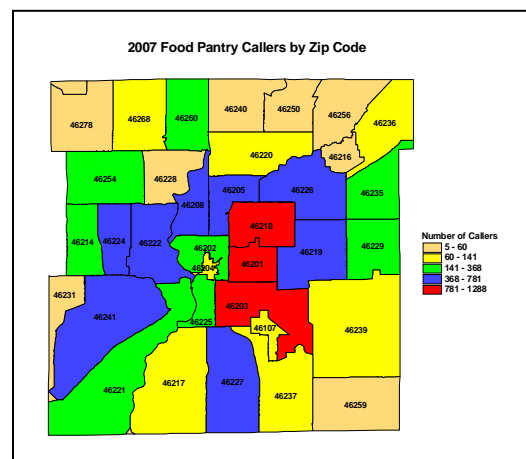
While there ARE more food than financial resources, the maps below demonstrate that the demand for food outweighs the supply of food pantries. The map on the left shows the **location of pantries** by zip code in Marion County. The map on the right shows the **location of pantry callers** by zip code in Marion County.

Currently, in the C2H resource database, there are 68 food pantries located in Marion County. (There are an additional 41 that serve the Central Indiana area). However, most of the food callers (86% - over 11,000) lived in Marion County. The maps suggest that there are not enough food pantries in some areas of the county where the need is greatest. In many cases, callers have to travel outside of their zip code to get food. For callers with already limited resources, the cost of transportation adds another hardship.



Community efforts are ongoing to meet these emergency food needs. Increasing use of existing pantries is stretching them to capacity. Capacity, here, refers not only to the availability of food, but also to the availability of volunteers, transportation to move the food and storage space at the pantries.

For more information, call Connect2Help™



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