

# Connect2Help™

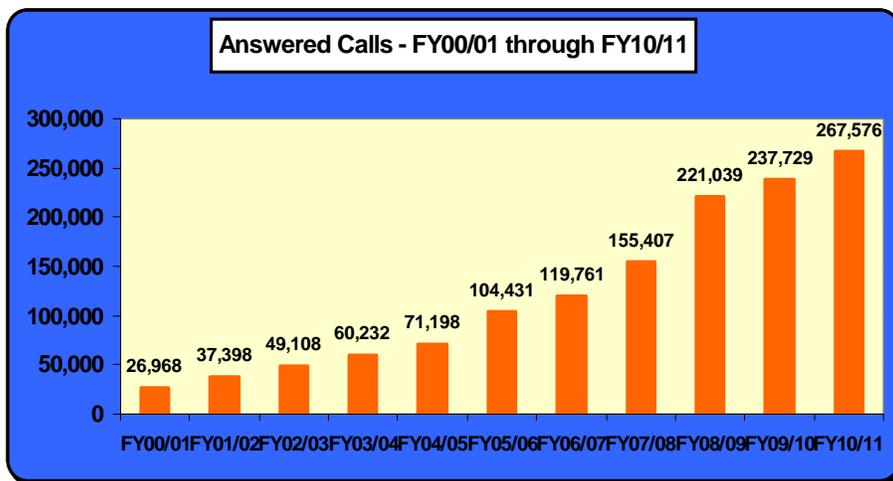
Serving as your 2-1-1 Center for Central Indiana

## One Step Forward, Two Steps Back...The Economic Struggle Continues

**The good news...** Indiana's unemployment rate in June of 2011 was 8.5%. This is a huge improvement compared to 11.1% unemployment in June of 2009, when the country was in the throes of the worst recession in decades.

**The bad news...** according to a July 29, 2011 *Reuters News* article, "Growth in the first half of 2011 was held back by a combination of bad weather, expensive gasoline and supply chain disruptions after the earthquake disaster in Japan. With economic activity yet to show signs of perking up, even with gasoline prices off their highs and the Japan supply constraints easing, there is concern that some of the weakness might be fundamental and linger for a while." This "fundamental" weakness was further exacerbated on August 5<sup>th</sup> when Standard and Poor's downgraded the United States AAA bond rating to AA-plus after the country narrowly averted defaulting on its loans.

**The upshot...** Hoosiers are going to have to do more with less. Congress has warned us that deep spending cuts and/or tax increases are on the way. Every Hoosier will be affected in some way. However, those on the lowest rung of the economic ladder have the most to lose; their very survival - home, electricity, food - is at stake.



**A look at our community...** Connect2Help has continued to see steady increases in calls for help. Outcomes surveys in FY10/11 revealed that **44% of those calling had never called for help before.** This translates into tens of thousands of people.

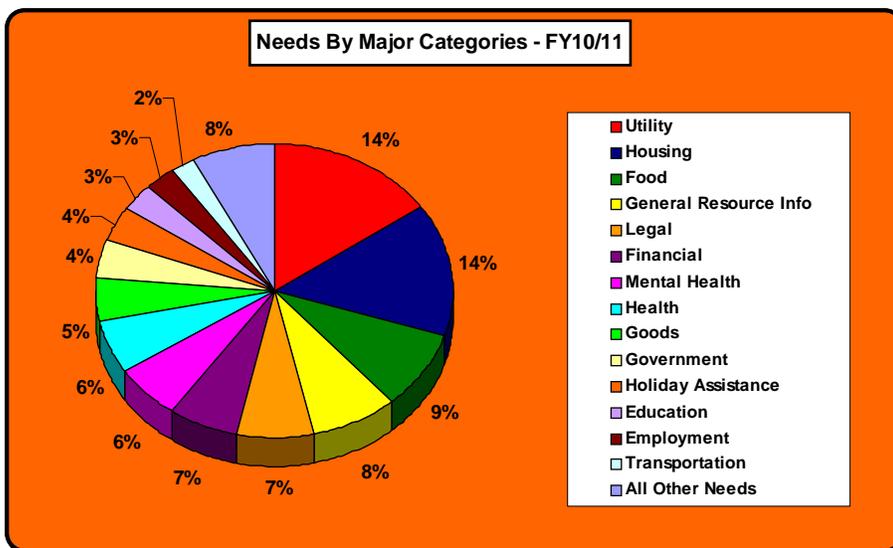
Of those calling in the past year:

- **42,000** reported that at least one person in the household was **unemployed**, making it difficult to pay bills (another **6,400** reported that their **hours had been reduced**);
- **29,000** reported that they or someone in their household had an **illness or disability**, adding extra expenses to their budget;
- **6,800** had **no transportation**, making it difficult to find and keep a job; and
- **6,500** were **uninsured or underinsured**, with healthcare costs reducing some to bankruptcy.

The **top needs** reported by callers were those most basic to survival: **utilities, housing and food**; these were increases of 33%, 19% and 28%, respectively, compared to FY09/10.

Because these needs are essentially financial in nature, there are not enough resources to meet every need. **13% of utility calls, 21% of rent calls and 6% of food calls were recorded as "unmet."**

The funding cuts mentioned above will affect how we can respond to those most in need. **As a single point of entry into the**



human services delivery system, Connect2Help 2-1-1 realizes *it is more critical than ever to ensure that we get the right client to the right agency to ensure the best outcome in the shortest amount of time, saving precious dollars for all involved.* We will continue to monitor community resources and needs and report these via our website, [www.connect2help.org](http://www.connect2help.org).



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

