

## 211 BACKGROUND

In July 2000, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reserved the 211 dialing code for community information and referral services. The FCC intended the 211 code as an easy-to-remember and universally recognizable number that would enable a critical connection between individuals and families in need and the appropriate community-based organizations and government agencies.

Currently, active 211 systems cover all or part of 50 states. As of February 2015, 211 serves over 291 million Americans (93% of the entire population) covering portions of all 50 states.






**291 million Americans**

The Helpline Center is the only entity in the state accredited by the Alliance for Information and Referral Systems and the only entity in the state that provides a certified crisis line through the American Association of Suicidology. The Helpline Center is a blended call center, meaning that all of the staff are cross trained to handle crisis and information/referral phone calls.

**Contact:**  
Dial 211 or 605-339-4357  
or  
[President@helplinecenter.org](mailto:President@helplinecenter.org)

**DIAL 211**



Text your zip code to 898211   
Email [help@helplinecenter.org](mailto:help@helplinecenter.org)   
Visit [helplinecenter.org](http://helplinecenter.org) 

## WHY YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS



For Simple Answers or Serious Help

**DIAL 211**

  
**helpline center**

[helplinecenter.org](http://helplinecenter.org)

## HOW 211 WORKS

Every day individuals across South Dakota turn to 211 (Helpline Center in South Dakota) for information and support. Trained Helpline Specialists assess the individual's needs, access a database of resources available, and link or refer them directly to an agency or organization that can help. The referral specialists also provide listening and support as often times the callers are struggling emotionally.

### The essence of 211 is in its simplicity:

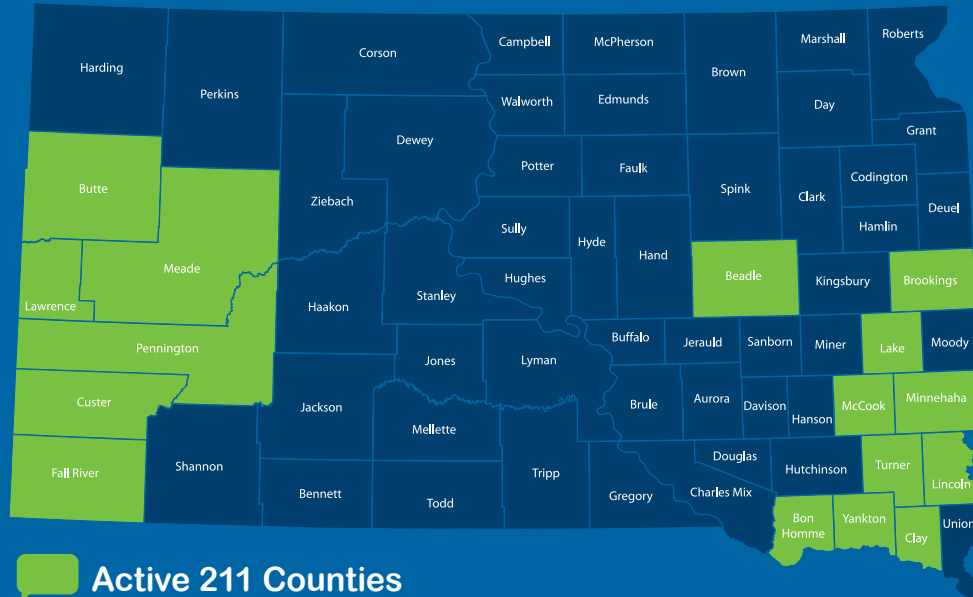
- 211 is for everyone and can be remembered by everyone.
- 211 is free and confidential.
- 211 makes the entire social services system and every level of government work more efficiently.
- 211 has proven itself time after time as an invaluable resource in the aftermath of a disaster.
- 211 is the number to call to give help and to get help.

## TYPES OF REFERRALS OFFERED BY 211

211 provides individuals with information about and referrals to social services for every day needs and in times of crisis. For example, 2-1-1 can offer access to the following types of services:

- **Basic Human Needs Resources** – including food and clothing, shelters, housing, utility assistance.
- **Mental Health and Health Resources** – including counseling, support groups, drug and alcohol treatment, health insurance programs, Medicaid and Medicare, maternal health resources, health insurance programs for children, medical information lines, clinics, hospitals and crisis intervention services.
- **Employment Supports** – including job training, employment services, transportation assistance and education programs.

## 211 IN SOUTH DAKOTA:



The Helpline Center has been the 211 provider in South Dakota since 2001.

- **Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities** – including adult day care, community meals, respite care, home health care, transportation and homemaker services.
- **Children, Youth and Family Support** – including child care, after school programs, educational programs for low-income families, family resource centers, and recreation programs, mentoring, tutoring and protective services.
- **Volunteer Opportunities and Donations** – Individuals who wish to donate time, goods or money to community organizations can find this information by dialing 211.
- **Disaster Support** – 211 works with local emergency management teams to assist in the response and recovery efforts based on the disaster.

## THERE ARE SEVERAL KEY ROLES THAT STATEWIDE 211 WILL PROVIDE:

- Disaster Response
- Veteran's Services
- Basic Needs Assistance
- Mental Health Supports



## BENEFITS OF STATEWIDE 211

The 211 Helpline provides the fastest, most efficient way to connect those in need with organizations able to assist through a single well-recognized, easy to remember number.

### 211 has technology that is flexible and expandable

- Centralized contact center that can respond 24/7
- Expandable technology to meet 'surge' in request during times of crisis or disaster to gather needed information
- Texting option available

### 211 database software

- Social service and government resources are maintained in one centralized database
- Real time updates to database for emerging information
- Ability to provide reports on data collected – as every contact is tracked by zip code, needs of the individual and program referrals provided.
- Resource Database is available online

### 211 staff are trained professionals

- Certified Information and Referral Specialists
- Remain calm; comfortable handling crisis calls or texts
- Offer empathy and understanding
- Hear and/or assess caller's primary and secondary needs
- Assess the safety needs of callers
- Provide support and information
- Knowledgeable about social service and government resources

For Simple Answers or Serious Help

# DIAL 2-1-1