



CSCG

Civil Society Consulting Group, LLC

Report on the Performance of 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares

HHSCC Board Meeting
April 17, 2009

Health and Human Services Coordinating Council

for Pinellas County





Background

July 2008 HHSCC Policy Board decides to undertake an “independent analysis of information and referral services and ancillary services delivered by 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares” with funding from Pinellas County Health and Human Services and the Juvenile Welfare Board

November 2008 Consultants selected through competitive process; work commences on study



The Consultants

■ **Kenn Allen**

- Consultant for National 2-1-1 Business Plan and 18 state, regional and local 2-1-1 business plans
- Study of response of 2-1-1s in FL to 2004 hurricanes
- Facilitated collaborative planning discussions between 2-1-1 TBC and 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Crisis Center

■ **Tom Page**

- Implemented Washington's Statewide 2-1-1 System
- Co-founder 2-1-1 US and 2-1-1 State Directors' Assoc.
- Consultant or participant in 14 state and local 2-1-1 plans



Purposes of Study

1. Assess need for and value of 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares services, including community expectations for its services
2. Independent analysis of 2-1-1 TBC program performance
3. Recommendations and analysis of potential alternative futures for 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares



Today's Presentation

- The review and assessment process
- Overview of 2-1-1 and 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares
- Summary of findings
- Assessment of 2-1-1 TBC
- Key Recommendations
- Moving Forward



A Quick Review of the Process

- 90 interviews with elected officials, human service providers, funders
- Review of past studies, financial audits, outside assessments and other documents
- Interviews of 2-1-1 TBC staff and board
- Surveys of staff and selected community agencies
- Independent assessment of 2-1-1 performance



What is 2-1-1?

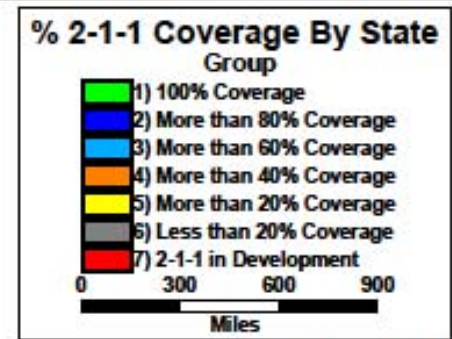
2-1-1 is the national three digit dialing code that supports access to community-based information and referral for community and human services.

“Just like 9-1-1 is core infrastructure for emergency response, 2-1-1 is becoming core infrastructure for health and human services.” -- Tino Paz, United Way of America

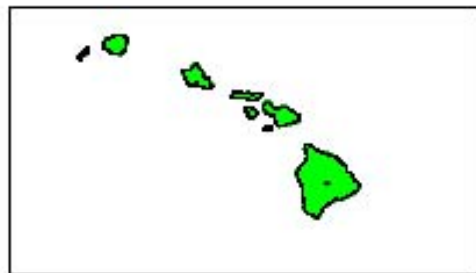
% of Population Covered* by 2-1-1 in each State



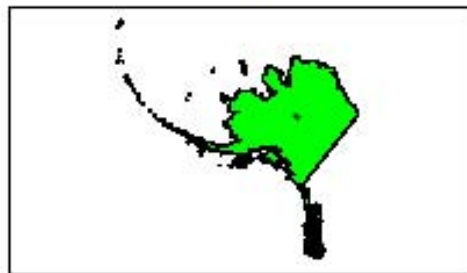
78% Overall Coverage



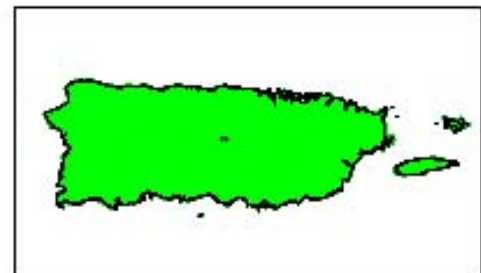
* Includes DC & Puerto Rico



Hawaii



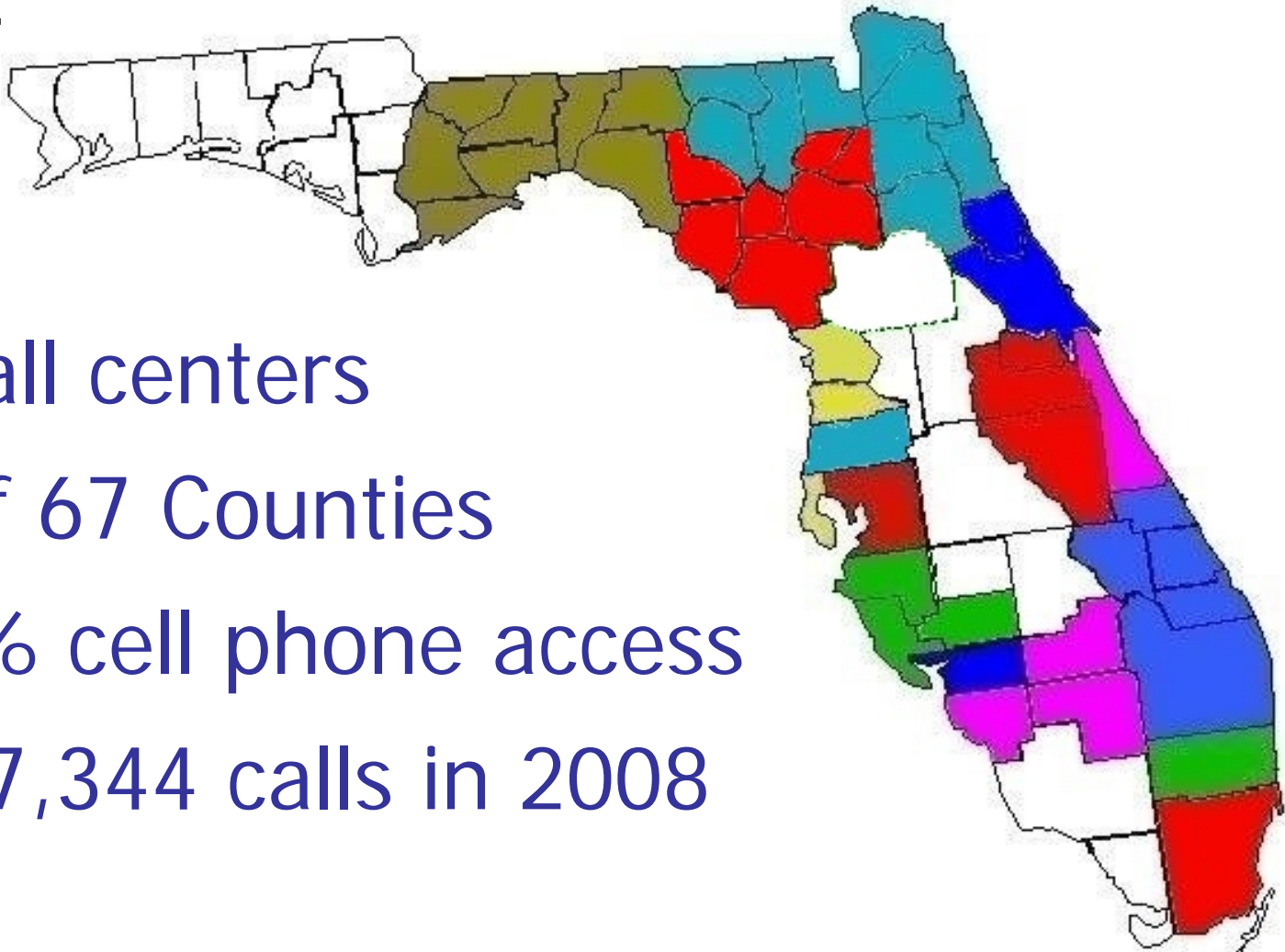
Alaska



Puerto Rico



Florida 2-1-1 Service Regions



- 16 call centers
- 50 of 67 Counties
- 100% cell phone access
- 1,077,344 calls in 2008



2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares

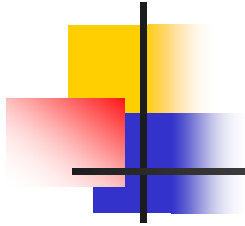
- **35 years service as core infrastructure** for human services in Pinellas County
- **Four major programs** – 2-1-1; Resource Database; TBIN; Community Voice Mail
- **Accredited**
 - Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS)
 - American Association of Suicidology
 - JWB ASSET
- **Regional partner** providing 2-1-1 service in seven counties



2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares Programs

- **2-1-1 Call Center**
 - 94,000 calls in 2008
- **2-1-1 Online Searchable Database**
 - 5,200 Programs and services
- **Tampa Bay Information Network (TBIN)**
 - Aggregates data from 53 programs at 25 agencies
- **Community Voice Mail (CVM)**
 - 1,700 Voice Mail Boxes for homeless & low-income

2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares Assessment Results





Key Findings

1. **Pinellas County needs quality I&R service**
2. 2-1-1 TBC programs are **fundamentally sound**
3. 2-1-1 TBC **shortcomings are fixable**
4. 2-1-1 TBC **needs stable ongoing funding**
5. 2-1-1 TBC has **untapped potential** to collect, organize and share data about Pinellas County



Community Expectations of 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares

- 2-1-1 will be a **high-quality** comprehensive information and referral service
- 2-1-1 and TBIN will play a key role in **data collection**, organization, analysis and sharing
- 2-1-1 will serve as entry point to **some "navigation"** services
- 2-1-1 will play a lead role in **disaster preparedness and response**

"2-1-1 could be the common ground for data, a conduit to come up with the outcomes we need." - Pinellas County Employee

Community Expectations

2-1-1 TBC's Role in disaster

2-1-1 has an essential role in disaster preparedness and response

- Identifying capacity of agencies to support response
- Serving as a main conduit for information between agencies and primary funders and other response systems
- Taking the burden off of 9-1-1 to ensure lines are open

"There is no other mechanism to do this if 2-1-1 ceases to exist."

-Sally Bishop, Pinellas Emergency Management

"If there is no 2-1-1, then human services coordinated disaster response is lost." - Agency Staff



Bottom Line

\$1.0 – 1.1 million per year for full service 2-1-1 in Pinellas County

- Assumes capacity to meet industry standard of 85% of calls answered within 60 seconds
- Based on generally used assumptions for 2-1-1 financial projections.
- Excludes cost of TBIN and CVM which are separately funded.



Compliments and Concerns

- **Over 80% have positive view of 2-1-1 TBC**
 - Staff are widely seen as competent and responsive
- **About 50% expressed specific concerns**
 - Currency of database
 - Quality of call handling
 - Difficulty using online database
 - Need to better promote 2-1-1

“When there are complaints, 2-1-1 is responsive, follows up, tries to understand, explains the circumstances and solves the problems.”



Challenges

- **Incorrect expectations**

- Function of 2-1-1 is to provide connection to services, not to resolve problems

- **Funder requirements**

- Conflicting expectations among funders
- Unrealistic about service levels & reporting

- **Unfunded Expectations**

- Frequent requests to take on new roles
- Fear of consequences for saying “No”

- **Aging Infrastructure**



2-1-1 TBC Infrastructure

2-1-1s require a reliable, redundant technology infrastructure. At 2-1-1 TBC:

- **Hardware systems are aging/out-of-date**
 - 50% of computers are over 7 years old
 - All printers are more than 7 years old
- **Software needs to do more**
 - Develop more user-friendly online search
- **Internet connection is inadequate**

Conclusions and Recommendations





Summary of Conclusions

1. Broad belief in **need for 2-1-1** in Pinellas County
2. Broad and strong **support for 2-1-1 TBC**
3. **2-1-1 TBC is fundamentally sound**; better than average 2-1-1 with some “best practices”
4. **2-1-1 TBC can improve** quality & consistency of its services
5. **Fixes require sustained investment** in improved systems, processes & staffing
6. **Untapped potential** in 2-1-1 TBC
7. 2-1-1 service reasonably will cost \$1 to \$1.1 million per year or about **\$1.10 to \$1.20 per person** in Pinellas County



Health & Human
Services Coordinating
Council for Pinellas County

HHSCC Recommendations

- Give affirmative leadership
- Ensure appropriate funding
- Ensure follow-up and action
- Lead future development



Give Affirmative Leadership

- Formally endorse strategic value of 2-1-1 as essential part of human services network in Pinellas County
- Create environment of support for 2-1-1 TBC
 - Elected officials, funders, human service agencies & 2-1-1 TBC working in partnership
 - Clear, mutually agreed expectations for 2-1-1 TBC
 - Sustained support that enables 2-1-1 TBC to meet expectations



Ensure Appropriate Financing

- Recommend Pinellas County and JWB jointly commit at least \$800,000/year for three years of core support of 2-1-1 TBC
- Urge Pinellas County municipalities contribute at least 15 cents per resident per year to 2-1-1 TBC;
- Urge DCF to fund 2-1-1 TBC consistent with other 2-1-1s
- Recommend to primary funders that they require 2-1-1 TBC undertake fund-raising to cover at least 5% of its budget within three years;
- Request Pinellas County and JWB to identify how to provide significant in-kind support to 2-1-1 TBC.



Ensure Follow-Up & Action

- Team of principals for focused planning and report back by 7/09 – vision, shared expectations, common reporting requirements for 2-1-1 TBC
- Team to review current & potential use of TBIN and CVM and report back by 9/09 – recommendations re desirability & feasibility of expanded use, how, when, cost & financing
- Encourage HHSCC structure to work with 2-1-1 TBC on collaborative funding search



Lead Future Development

- Development of regional 2-1-1 system as outlined in report
- Support for federal funding for 2-1-1
 - Calling for 2-1-1 Act
 - Earmark support for Florida
- Support for state government funding of 2-1-1



2-1-1 TBC Recommendations

- Strengthen board and **governance**
- **Diversify funding base**, particularly private funding
- Continue use of **independent program assessment**
- Work with vendor to **improve online search**
- **Expand Marketing** and Community Awareness
- Increase staffing for **database maintenance**
- Secure funding to **upgrade technology** and ensure continuity of operations in times of disaster
- Work with funders and partner agencies to improve use of **TBIN and Community Voice Mail**

JWB Recommendations



- Recognize and fund 2-1-1 as human services infrastructure
- Designate 2-1-1 TBC as the “partner/vendor of choice” for any of its initiatives that require the support of a call center
- Restore 2-1-1 TBC funding to at least at its previous level.
- Recognize AAS and AIRS accreditations and exempt 2-1-1 TBC from future A.S.S.E.T. certification

Pinellas County Recommendations



- Recognize and fund 2-1-1 as human services infrastructure
- Designate 2-1-1 TBC as the “partner/vendor of choice” for any of its initiatives that require the support of a call center
- Explore feasibility of transferring responsibility for answering existing public information lines to 2-1-1 TBC
- Explore options for creating a dedicated and sustained funding source for 2-1-1 TBC
- Explore specific ways the county can make in-kind contributions to support 2-1-1 TBC



UWTB Recommendations



- UWTB must give higher priority to 2-1-1 TBC to ensure that its annual grants do not continue to erode.
- Provide leadership to support more regional approach to 2-1-1 service delivery in Greater Tampa Bay area



Moving Forward

- HHSCC Policy Board needs to become **a visible and energized champion** for 2-1-1 in Pinellas County.
- Priority attention needs to be given to a truly **collaborative strategic planning process for 2-1-1 TBC** with the principals of its key stakeholders involved.
- UWTB should join with Pinellas County government, JWB and 2-1-1 TBC in active **advocacy and leadership for creation of a regional 2-1-1** as described in the report and for creation of an integrated statewide 2-1-1 system