



# 211 SAN JOAQUIN ANSWERS THE CALL

## 211 SAN JOAQUIN 2020 Executive Summary Report

At 211 San Joaquin (211SJ), the work is all about connection. We connect San Joaquin County residents with programs and services they need. Our Information and Referral Call Specialists help identify caller's needs to find the best resources for their unique situation. 211SJ is accredited by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS), meeting the standards for professional information and referral organizations. Whether by phone or online, 211 brought together those in need with the programs and services available. In 2020, 211SJ connected tens of thousands of residents to local help and resources.

As the COVID-19 pandemic struck, 211 San Joaquin took immediate action, expanding the staffing in the Call Center to respond to the 5-time increase in call volume. There are over six thousand programs and services across San Joaquin County in the 211 database and the 211 team worked feverishly to ensure they could provide residents with accurate information about what was available-making continuous updates to resources in the database.

On April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, 211SJ celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as the pandemic continued to unfold. During the onset, new services were created and existing health and human services adapted, and utilized more frequently, which impacted the volume of calls, texts, and email requests for referrals and resources, yet 211SJ's highly trained Information and Referral specialists were able to respond to the unique needs of each individual caller, despite the surge. Over 25,000 referrals for COVID-19 health and economic resources were provided to callers seeking assistance, including information on general COVID-19 questions, available drive-up testing centers, and COVID-19 rent and utilities financial relief assistance.

Access to food and transportation was a top need in 2020. 211 San Joaquin became the first 211 in any county in the state to collaborate with Door Dash to help solve our community's transportation and food access challenges. In 2020, 211 connected 2,034 homebound, food insecure seniors and families with children under 6 years of age to 25 lb. emergency food boxes through contactless delivery in partnership with the Emergency Food Bank and Door Dash. 212 hot meals were delivered to seniors from local restaurants via the Great Plates Delivered program, a partnership with the City of Stockton, local restaurants and 211SJ. The Call Center also fought against social isolation, a challenge for quarantined and isolated seniors during the outbreak, by making wellness calls to county residents 65 and over.

211SJ, through United Way Worldwide, collaborated with Lyft to address transportation needs during this pandemic. 211 provided direct access to Lyft services, providing free rides to grocery stores, pharmacies, health care appointments, and essential jobs to support low-income individuals, the elderly, and people with disabilities with their transportation challenges.

Also new this year, 211SJ provided vouchers for flu vaccines for underserved and uninsured communities in San Joaquin County through a partnership with FamilyWize, Walgreens, and United Way Worldwide. 211SJ played an important public health role in providing access to the Flu vaccination in light of the COVID-19 environment, reducing the spread of influenza. The evolving partnerships with national brands has allowed 211SJ to remain agile to meet the needs of our community.

If the COVID-19 experience demonstrated anything, it has been the importance of having trained 211 Call Specialists give assurance and provide answers and direction to callers with questions about virus

exposure, symptoms, testing, and how to best protect themselves. 211SJ deployed a COVID-19 text line and responded to hundreds of text requests for vital community resources and connected residents to the latest pandemic information, including CDC recommendations and San Joaquin County Public Health guidelines.

211SJ's texting service, with over 4,657 subscribers, sent 35,794 outgoing push mobile notifications to residents providing information on how to complete the US Census, register to vote, where to find access to available winter shelter beds for the homeless population, and information on COVID-19 financial relief. 873 unique clients were helped via 211SJ text, completing 40,451 text exchanges.

The 211SJ Call Center received a surge in calls from all areas of the County immediately following CA State Governor Newsom's press briefings announcing new initiatives as the State's response to COVID-19. Residents were directed to call 211 to get connected to real-time help and support, promoting 211s across the State as a one-stop-shop to answer their questions and get assistance during this time.

Serving as an integral part of a countywide response to the COVID-19 crisis, 211SJ worked hand-in-hand with the San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services and Public Health Department to field their calls for questions about COVID-19. 211SJ also was a point of contact in responding to emergency services during the SCU Lightning Complex Canyon Fire from 8/20/2020-9/2/2020. 211SJ was called upon to be an information channel for residents, quickly connecting them with supports available, especially evacuation information

Helping people discover and remember 211 when they need help is an ongoing challenge. We rely on our ambassadors and partners to grow awareness about 211 locally and integrate it into protocols and solutions that meet the community's needs. 211SJ is helping parents get connected to early interventions to support their child's developmental growth through the Help Me Grow Call Center, a First 5 Program. Also in 2020, 211SJ provided warm-line transfers to callers seeking financial relief and assistance from partner agencies, and connected callers to housing and utilities payment assistance programs made available as residents needed financial help during this economic crisis. Our partners helped amplify 211's vision-that 211SJ is here for everyone.

Outreach to underserved communities was made possible through a very generous one-time \$100,000 donation from the United Way of San Joaquin this year. This funding allowed 211SJ to partner with Univision to introduce both United Way and 211SJ to the Hispanic community with 2-minute television segments featured on the channel's morning program. This engagement helped 211SJ connect to 12,693 callers in 2020 who identified as Hispanic/Latino, a 4-time increase compared to 2019, to local resources. With this funding, 211SJ was also able to promote services to many target groups with strategic placement of billboard ads throughout the County. 211SJ receives 50% of its funding from private foundations, and with increased private donations in 2020, 211SJ was able to improve its outreach efforts, ultimately helping more in our community know how to access help.

211SJ's leadership will remain focused on enhancing access to services while seeking more permanent funding sources in order to strengthen the lives of *all* San Joaquin County residents. 211SJ will work to analyze and report data to its partners, helping identify unmet community needs. Through collaboration with non-profits, local and state government agencies, foundations and other funders, and businesses, 211 will continue to respond to residents needing assistance navigating community support. 211SJ is committed to making our system stronger and better. We thank our partners and funders for the opportunities, support and encouragement of our work and look forward to a robust partnership in the years to come.

Family Resource & Referral Center (a 501 c 3, non-profit organization) is the 211 service provider for San Joaquin County.