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## Agency: Call center helping 211 hot line in service 1 year

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About 1,000 Grant County residents have been helped by calling 211 in the past year since its inception, LifeStream officials say, and they've asked for help on about 1,600 questions.

Out of those questions, just 42 have gone unanswered, said Kenneth Adkins, CEO of LifeStream.

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"That's amazing," Adkins said about the program's success rate.

LifeStream celebrated Monday the one-year anniversary of the 211 program, which it runs for Grant County and six other counties in East Central Indiana.

The purpose of the phone number is to act as a clearinghouse of resources for topics such as where to get help to pay bills, where to go for health emergencies and where to find food pantries.

Center Township Trustee Bryce Coryea said the service has helped his office deal with these kinds of questions.

Whereas his office is open only during the day, people can call 211 anytime and talk to someone who can help them with their questions.

Residents also don't have to waste time by calling around to various places that can't help them, said Phil Oleksy, information and referral manager for 211.

"Sometimes you don't know who to call, so you call everybody," Oleksy said.

Although the most popular questions usually deal with finances, Oleksy said he also has helped people on some more uncommon requests.

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There are requests, though, that the group can't make referrals for, Oleksy said, simply because the county doesn't offer the service.

Coryea said one of the biggest problem areas is help with deposits and getting utilities set up when moving to a new address.

"That's a big unmet need," he said.

But the group is keeping track of the requests it can't make referrals for, so that county leaders can find ways to help the problems.

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