

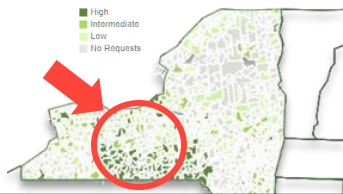


# 211 - A VITAL COMMUNITY PARTNER IN INCREASING FOOD SECURITY AND REDUCING CHILDHOOD OBESITY

THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SERVICES, INC. – 211 HELPLINE – 211 NEW YORK, INC. – UNITED WAY OF NEW YORK STATE

POLLY MCDANIEL, CRS-DC, CRS – NYSPHC FELLOW WITH 211 HELPLINE AT THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SERVICES, INC.  
KELLY DODD – CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, 211 NEW YORK STATE, INC. AND VICE PRESIDENT, UNITED WAY OF NEW YORK STATE

## Community Members Reach out to 211 When in Need



People requesting help with food by ZIP Code in 2022  
Go to 211counts.org for more 211 community needs data

- In 2022, 211 NY Partners documented nearly **320K** contacts from community members expressing almost **400,000** identifiable needs amongst them
- Of those, nearly **60K** were food related needs with most of them coming from rural communities such as is seen in the Finger Lakes Region
- 5 out of 10** people in need of food help asked how to connect with a food pantry
- 4 out of 10** people in need of food help sought help with home delivered meals because they either could not prepare their own food or had barriers accessing food sources
- 1 out of 10** people in need of food help specifically asked for help to feed their children
- Within the first 9 months of 2023, over **40K** food needs have already been documented for community members

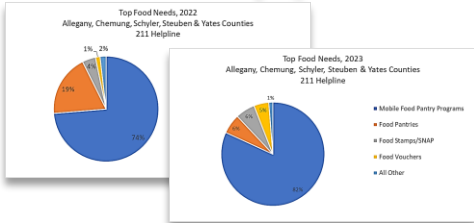
### 211 Helpline Allegany, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben & Yates County

- Food help requests have increased **14%** during the months of Jan-Jul in 2023 over 2022 for the same time
- 90%** of community needs identified for food help fall under **Emergency Food** needs – people or families are experiencing a personal crisis, who have no food, and cannot afford to purchase food
- With the increase in availability of Mobile Food Pantries, referrals to ongoing food pantries have declined, although reports from Food Pantry Coalitions indicate they are **continually running out of food**.
- An increase in Food Stamps/SNAP benefits requests was seen in the first quarter of 2023 due to the announcement of a **reduction/elimination** of COVID Benefits.



## Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

- Obesity and food insecurities are directly related to long term health complications related to prediabetes, diabetes, and heart disease among many other chronic diseases and conditions
- Poor economic conditions and lack of access to public transportation within rural communities are known barriers to food access
- The 2022-2024 Steuben County Community Health Assessment (CHA) reports trends in an increase in obesity among adults and children
- 2018 My Health Story survey completed by Common Ground reported the top barrier to healthy food is that it's too expensive
- Obesity that starts in childhood tends to follow the child into adulthood and is often related to disparities in access to healthy food
- Most CHIPS across NYS include one or more initiatives to reduce food insecurity and lower obesity rates



## Connecting through Partnerships and Communication

### SMART Steuben

- Overseen by Steuben County Public Health and includes Steuben Rural Health Network and other partners from area hospitals, large businesses, and various CBOs
- Need** to identify services to address food insecurity and childhood obesity
- Partners **need** lists of food and childhood obesity services to refer patients from for their Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) initiatives
- Need** ability to report outcomes, including increased awareness of these resources



### Pivotal Public Health Partnership

- Nonprofit affiliation of eight county Public Health Departments in the Finger Lakes
- Created Healthy Eating & Food Security workgroup
- Focus to **reduce** food insecurity and increase healthy eating within their communities
- Desire** to create up-to-date lists of services that address food insecurity and offer nutrition education
- Need** ability to report outcomes, including increased awareness of these resources and identify gaps in community needs



## A Trusted Community Resource

### Help is 3 Numbers Away



- 211 creates **connections** – in an epidemic of loneliness, community members call 211 - 24/7 - and talk to local Community Resource Specialists who offer listening, empathy, and problem solving to help navigate the complicated human services landscape during difficult times
- 211 provides **answers** - comprehensive service directory of government and community resources, when people don't know where to start, they call 211, anytime even during a disaster or community crisis
- 211 **curates** one true source of data – service directory containing updated, accurate, crucial information about over 43K programs and 74K services across NYS
- 211 **gives** one-stop service - community members contact one number for program registrations, initial intake, eligibility determination, and appointment scheduling
- 211 **engages** with professionals – community navigators provide SDOH screening and other closed loop referral initiatives
- 211 **helps** community members - texting campaigns for wellness touches, connection to substance use disorder services, and follow-up
- 211 **collaborates** with partners – sharing service directory data directly with EHRs and other systems and providing white labeled online service directories and specialized lists

## Making Connections and Giving Answers



New sticker for tabling events and attached to bags or boxes at area food pantries directing people in need to the Food Help landing page

- 211 Helpline launched the **Food Help** and **Childhood Obesity Resources** landing pages on July 1, 2023
- Information about available services is populated by the 211 Helpline service directory ensuring data is **always up-to-date**
- 211 Helpline connected with 211 LifeLine, another 211 NY Finger Lakes Region partner, to expand the Food Help landing page to cover **11 counties** across the Finger Lakes
- SMART Steuben, Pivotal Public Health Partnership, Steuben Rural Health Network and their partners provided supporting information for the landing pages
- Partners are **educating** CBOs in their regions about the importance of updating their service data with 211 including making direct connections whenever possible
- Partners are creating a marketing plan with the aim of increasing **211 usage** and awareness by community members and professionals across the region
- To better understand the big picture of food security needs regionally, 211 Helpline created a quarterly report aggregating **community needs** data from 211 contacts, usage of the Food Help and Childhood Obesity landing pages, and 211 website