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## **211 SLO Hotline Celebrates National 211 Day** *SLO Agencies Are Recognizing How Critical 211 Has Been To So Many*

**SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA - February 6, 2009** - February 11, 2009 is National 211 Day, and while many are marching in Washington to bring congressional attention to the Calling For 2-1-1 Act, several agencies are also celebrating locally and recognizing how critical 211 service has been to so many, especially during the recent financial decline.

In 2008, 211 SLO Hotline handled 19,355 requests for help. Calls for food and financial assistance increased over 100% and requests for legal assistance, rental assistance and senior services were far more frequent. The stress mounted and was reflected in calls related to substance abuse, physical abuse and domestic violence. One thousand people called about medical or mental health issues, and almost 500 more were referred for counseling. One thousand callers simply needed a caring listener to offer support, some of which were suicidal.

“When we planned for 211 we anticipated increased access to social services and improved response during a disaster,” Executive Director of 211 SLO Hotline, Linda McGregor said, “but we didn’t expect the disaster to be financial and sustained.” In this economic climate, financial disasters can arise quickly. Fortunately, individuals and families who suddenly find themselves in financial peril can call 211 SLO Hotline to get the help they need.

For more information about the *Calling For 2-1-1 Act*, visit [www.slohotline.org](http://www.slohotline.org).

### **About 211 SLO Hotline**

Hotline is San Luis Obispo County's only comprehensive information, referral, support and crisis intervention service available free of charge, 24 hours every day. Our confidential telephone services allow callers to remain anonymous while receiving assistance in crisis situations, as well as answering non-emergency questions about local health and social service resources.

Hotline also serves as the after-hours contact for two women's shelters, the homeless shelter, and many private therapists. It is a valuable resource for government and social service agencies.

For further information, please visit [www.slohotline.org](http://www.slohotline.org) or contact Linda McGregor at [linda@slohotline.org](mailto:linda@slohotline.org) or (805) 540-3813.

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