



Initiatives in Action: Adult Self Sufficiency Initiative



Calling For Help

He and his family were facing the chilling possibility of having their power cut off just as winter's cold set in. Then he called United Way's 211 for help.

"It's okay to ask for help," says Robert Paiz of Denver. "Don't be embarrassed. Everyone needs a hand up sometimes and 211 is a good place to look for help."

Robert, the father of four, is speaking from experience. He recently called Mile High United Way's 211 looking for help with paying his utility bill.

"They were set to shut off our power the day I called 211," he says, "but, thanks to the referrals I received we got the help we needed right away."

Without that help, Robert and his family may well have joined the ranks of countless Colorado families who, as a result of their inability to pay for their energy costs, find themselves dangerously close to becoming homeless. In fact, a University of Colorado Health Sciences Center study says the inability to pay for home energy ranks as the second leading cause of homelessness in Colorado.

Thankfully, Paiz has been able to maintain his home. But, as a result of the downturn in the economy and like so many others in our community, he is unemployed and feverishly searching for work. When cash started to run low, he didn't know what he would do. That's when he heard about United Way's 211 and decided to give it a try.

"I was apprehensive at first, but the Referral Specialist was very welcoming and patient," says Paiz. "She listened to me and was very helpful."

United Way's 211 is a free service for the community. It boasts the most robust list of community agencies and

services available and is a vital part of Mile High United Way's [Adult Self Sufficiency Initiative](#) which supports programs and services that provide individuals and families the opportunity to move toward economic self-sufficiency. With one phone call (just dial 2-1-1) or [on line search](#), those who need help are referred to agencies offering



Robert Paiz called United Way's 211 and got the help he and his family needed.

Calling For Help - cont.

services to meet their needs. People can also give back to the community through 211.

Check out [211 call statistics](#) and learn more about the most pressing needs in our community.

Paiz says he knows, first hand, the value that Mile High United Way brings to the community. In fact, at his previous job he supported United Way through payroll deduction in his workplace campaign. He says that once he and his family are back on their feet, he is determined to give back, again.

Until then, he says he is grateful for the help he is receiving through Mile High United Way and United Way's 211. And, for those finding themselves facing similar challenges, Paiz offers this bit of advice.

"You have to maintain a positive attitude," he says. "A sense of hopelessness is not helpful. Wait for the rainbow. It's cloudy today, but it might be sunny tomorrow."

For more information about our Adult Self Sufficiency Initiative, please visit our website at www.unitedwaydenver.org.

We can do more together.



Mile High United Way