

Where STRATEGY meets the street!

Gina was a crack and methamphetamine user. In the grip of these drugs, she was not taking her prescribed medication that helped to balance her manic highs and depressive lows. She was also homeless, malnourished and, because of no access to regular medical care, in failing health.

In the old days, less than a year ago, Gina would have found her way to IMPACT's Central Intake Unit and received a very specific service. (CIU is our County-supported program that connects indigent people to substance abuse treatment.) The Intake Specialist would have screened her for eligibility, Gina would have selected a local

treatment program for which she qualified, and CIU would have managed the referral process and voucher application. Very likely, even with successful treatment, after 60 or 90 days she would have found herself back on the street with no permanent housing, health care or employment.

But without these other resources, how successful do you think she would have been in her recovery?

IMPACT has realized for some time that it takes more than treatment for the poorest in our midst to succeed. Sure, a solid treatment plan is important but, for individuals with few or no resources, we have beckoned for a job plan, a housing plan and other necessary support to give recovery a chance to take hold. In our experience, sometimes people need a little less treatment and a little more housing to ensure a successful recovery.

Fortunately, after years of making these recommendations, our vision has become a reality. Thanks to a grant from the federal government, Milwaukee County has implemented the "Wiser Choice Project" in which IMPACT plays a key role. Now, when an individual comes to our Central Intake Unit, the client is given a much more comprehensive assessment which not only examines their treatment

needs, but also their housing, mental health, job situation, and other critical life circumstances.

The individual is not only referred to a treatment program, but also to a Recovery Support Coordinator who insures that the client is connected to all the other necessary resources. This support coordinator stays connected to the individual through treatment and beyond.

This is a much more sophisticated and compelling method of returning people to productive lives. It involves a host of community agencies that realize that, by receiving all the necessary services, clients have a much greater chance of being successful.

Regaining stability has been key to Gina's battle with addiction. I think she should have the last word here and it's taken from a card we recently received from her. It's simply stated. "Thank you for saving my life."



Michael G. Davis
Executive Director, IMPACT



1126 South 70th Street, Suite 116,
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SYMMETRY
BALANCED WORKPLACE SERVICES

2-1-1 @ IMPACT

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A continued snapshot of 2-1-1 @ IMPACT from January 2005 through October 31, 2005:

TOP 10 Caller Issues	
CALLS	ISSUE
19,156	Food-pantry
12,794	Agency phone # or directions
11,642	Emergency shelter
4,404	Utility bill payment assistance
3,322	Low-cost home rental
1,904	Temporary financial assistance
1,896	Tax preparation service
1,664	Rent assistance
1,527	Furniture-general
1,512	Formula/baby food

TOP 10 Referral Agencies	
# REFERRALS	AGENCIES
5,607	St. Vincent de Paul Society (furniture, household items)
3,144	Salvation Army (emergency shelter for single men/women)
3,109	Community Advocates (system advocacy)
2,923	Cathedral Center (emergency shelter for single women)
1,845	United Methodist Children's Service (emergency food)
1,636	Metropolitan Associates (subsidized rental housing)
1,503	Dr. Howard L. Fuller Food Program (emergency food)
1,261	Milwaukee Rescue Mission (emergency shelter for single men)
1,234	IMPACT, Inc. (substance abuse assessment)
1,200	Towne Realty (subsidized rental housing)

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Winter 2005 Making an



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Michael G. Davis
Executive Director

Making Milwaukee Home

Following Hurricane Katrina, hundreds of displaced residents of the gulf coast region made their way to Wisconsin. As the 24-hour central access point for information and referral to a variety of family, health and social services in Milwaukee County, 2-1-1 @ IMPACT has become an important resource for the evacuees who sought refuge at the Tommy Thompson Center and elsewhere

"I got my replacement I.D. and I'm happy to be moving today to an apartment. Thank you for all your help at the Tommy Thompson Center." — Will

in our community. United Way of Greater Milwaukee, a major funder of the hotline, asked 2-1-1 @ IMPACT to set up operations at the Tommy Thompson Center and serve as a key contact to ensure their needs were met.

Our trained community resource specialists provided referrals to over 350 people helping them regain stability and sustain their families during their transition to

more permanent housing. Nearly all of the people needed assistance to obtain copies of

"When you're overwhelmed and feel all alone and don't know where to turn, it's nice to know that people care. We are strangers to you but you've opened your hearts and held out your hands to us. I thank God for 2-1-1." — Nancy M.

personal identification, financial records or legal documents such as driver's licenses, birth certificates, social security cards and bank statements. Many requested guidance to replace or transfer their health insurance, social security or disability benefits. They also sought referrals for clothing, shoes, health and dental care, eye glasses, rental or low cost housing, job training, and education.

As many goods and services were provided to evacuees while they were residents of the Tommy Thompson Center, those who plan to remain in the area and have been

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www.impactinc.org

2-1-1 @ IMPACT

2-1-1 @ IMPACT continues to connect people in our community to resources that help feed families, assist with utility bill payment, provide shelter and many other essential needs. From January through October 31 of this year, 89,364 people have contacted the service; and women represent 79.6 percent of that total. Our data indicates that by the end of this year, 2-1-1 will respond to over 110,000 calls from the greater Milwaukee area. Here is a snapshot from January 2005 through October 31, 2005:

TOP 10 Caller ZIP Codes			
# OF CALLS	ZIP CODE	# OF CALLS	ZIP CODE
8,292	53206	5,104	53218
6,781	53209	4,710	53216
6,164	53208	4,407	53204
5,918	53212	3,998	53215
5,184	53210	2,499	53225

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Katie Kohal (seated, center) is pictured with other members of the Youth Leaders with IMPACT Advisory Board and KC Missall, IMPACT Prevention Consultant.

My name is Katie. I go to Wauwatosa West High School and I'm a Peer With IMPACT!

As a youth leader, I know it is essential to raise awareness of alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse among the youth community around me. Many students, including me, have taken a pledge to be alcohol, tobacco and drug free as a result of Peers With IMPACT. In making this pledge, we are an influence to those who haven't always made the right decisions or haven't yet been confronted with difficult choices. By providing information and mentioning the risks of using drugs, we try to help students realize that making wrong decisions may be very dangerous, even deadly.

The Peers With IMPACT program has allowed my Peer friends and me to be positive role models for other youth. It's fun to see how our presentations affect other students. It opens a variety of discussions with invigorating questions, and builds awareness that there are many students who have chosen a healthy, positive lifestyle that doesn't include alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.

I believe that the Peers With IMPACT program is a benefit to the community. It has been a good reminder to me and gives me a special purpose. Peer pressure is a why many students choose to get involved with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. For many young people, staying out of trouble is easier because they are involved in sports. For others it isn't always as easy. If only one person is saved from the dangers of abuse and makes an attempt to tell others, many more lives can be saved and trouble avoided. Get involved in your community, and be a positive role model to others.

Positive Peer Pressure

The BEST of the Brightest

Peers With IMPACT partners with a variety of public and private schools within the Milwaukee School District, as well as in suburban school districts throughout Milwaukee County. These schools include the Milwaukee School of Entrepreneurship, Veritas High School, Rufus King High School, Wauwatosa West High School, Greendale High School, Wisconsin Lutheran High School and the Milwaukee High School of the Arts. The goal for 2005 is to graduate 250 students from the Peer training program.

For a second year, the Youth Leaders with IMPACT Advisory Board is serving as a mechanism for IMPACT to receive on-going feedback on program curriculum and implementation strategies to ensure that Peers with IMPACT remains relevant to young people. The Youth Leaders are able to share success stories and important issues, thus giving them a voice regarding ATOD



"Thanks for all of the assistance we have received. You have gone above and beyond the call of duty. We appreciate everything!"

— Kim P.

Making Milwaukee Home (Continued from page 1)

placed in housing will likely experience other needs until they can fully regain stability. These issues range from basic needs such as food and clothing, to financial and legal assistance, to health care services, to educational and vocational resources. 2-1-1 @ IMPACT will continue to provide information, assistance, access and referral to the resources they need.

In addition, IMPACT's Assessment and Referral department has received a grant from the United Way of Milwaukee to be the designated provider of alcohol and other drug abuse services for evacuees stationed in the community who have been displaced from their treatment programs and support networks, or strained by the events and facing possible relapse.

Mary Fuller is one of the Community Resource Specialists who was assigned to provide on-site services at the Tommy Thompson Center and maintains contact with evacuees now living in the community. In her own words...

This whole experience has made me proud to be a part of a system that has proven to be responsive to people in need. If this was a test, I feel 2-1-1 @ IMPACT would get top marks among the social service organizations involved in the effort.

But it has been a challenge. A lot of these people are just lost. Without our assistance, I don't think they would make it. Many can't read or write. There are several evacuees who came here with pre-existing mental health, alcohol and other drug abuse issues. It takes a lot of patience and understanding. I have to talk to them in a special way to gain their trust before I can even begin to help them.

Think of it. Many of them have never been away from home before. They don't know Milwaukee's geography or how to navigate on the bus by themselves to find stores, schools or jobs. As community resource specialists, our role was really important to them whether it was corresponding with Baton Rouge Motor Vehicles Department to secure replacement identification, or charting bus lines so they don't get lost on their way to a job interview.

They are tremendously grateful for the help

"I am truly thankful and blessed with the services I received from 2-1-1. My family was in need of food and my newborn was in need of formula. You got me connected to the Hunger Task Force where the service there was great. You also helped me get an immediate WIC appointment for the same day."

— Denise C.

"I am not good at looking for stuff on the computer or in the phone book so you nice people helped me so much in the time I was here. I am just thankful for the help. God bless."

— Marilyn M.

"I want to thank you all for all the wonderful things you all have done for me. Thanking God for 2-1-1 and all your staff. One person in particular, Mary, is motivating and very professional. Thanks Mary and your staff."

— W. James

"Thank you for the help with getting replacement records. Your help was gladly appreciated."

— Derwin T.

CULTIVATING BRIGHTER FUTURES

by Filippa C. Weber

Like me, you've probably read the articles that cite recent reports from the U.S. Census Bureau and Brookings Institute indicating that Milwaukee is the nation's seventh poorest city, with nearly thirty percent of all our neighbors living in areas of extreme poverty — forty percent of which are children.* Perhaps these findings weren't surprising to you, or confirmed beliefs that you held about our community. Whatever your reaction, the statistics point to the need for resources that address poverty and the issues surrounding it. To know that New Orleans ranked thirteenth and that poverty was a factor in the city's inability to respond to a natural disaster, communities across the country must acknowledge the painful lessons learned. I don't believe there's been any other time in recent memory when Milwaukee was in greater need of organizations that are relevant and responsive — in other words — organizations like IMPACT.



Filippa C. Weber
President, IMPACT
Board of Directors

Witnessing the coverage of Hurricane Katrina evacuees fleeing their homes and finding shelter in our neighborhoods, I could not help but be moved. As a community, Milwaukee stepped up to help people who had lost everything. As an organization, IMPACT, walked with them through difficult days and worked with them to piece together a new beginning. As you'll see in an article on a previous page, we mobilized 2-1-1 @ IMPACT to be an on-site presence to facilitate help for the myriad needs of evacuated individuals and families housed at the Tommy G. Thompson Center.

Whether it's responding to gulf coast evacuees or the thousands of Milwaukee residents who contact us every year, helping people regain stability and sustain their families requires addressing the many factors that contribute to their dilemma. As you read on through our newsletter, you'll see how IMPACT's Central Intake Unit — now Milwaukee County's lead agency — has expanded the scope of its substance abuse screening process in an effort to connect people with employment, food, shelter, healthcare and other valuable resources. Another article focuses on Peers With IMPACT and the benefits of promoting healthy and productive lifestyles. Because we're involving young people in building our alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse prevention curriculum through the Youth Leadership Council, a timely, relevant message is reaching our community's kids and helping to cultivate bright futures.

As IMPACT's volunteer Board President, I've had the opportunity to witness how programs and people here at IMPACT continue to "change lives for good" by maintaining a high level of relevance and responsiveness to the issues that are affecting our community and the larger world in which we live.

As a concerned citizen, I urge you to join me in supporting IMPACT so that we can continue to strengthen families, foster healthy children and create a better community for everyone.

*August 30, 2005; Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

*October 13, 2005; Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

"I was in the Hurricane Katrina incident. I am a survivor and was fortunate to be rescued by Milwaukee citizens. My self-esteem was low. I had lost everything. Mary (a 2-1-1 Community Resource Specialist) referred me to a resource that gave me clothes for job hunting. It changed my perspective on starting over. I feel like a new person!"

— Pamela D.

