



**For Immediate Release**

**May 31, 2011**

**211 launches in Brantford  
Dial 2-1-1: When you don't know where to turn**

**Brantford, ON** – 211 has been the first call for over a half a million Ontarians to find help to date and it is expanding across Ontario. On June 15, 211 services will be launched in Brantford to serve residents in Brantford and the County of Brant. 211 helps people find the right community and social services.

211 services are free and confidential and are available by phone, through the three-digit phone number 2-1-1, and on the web at [www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca). Both the phone and website connect people to organizations in the community (social, government and health sectors) that can help them with a variety of challenges: including finding employment services, utility and rent assistance, settlement services, recreation programs, and government programs, to name a few.

“211 can help people, especially those who have never had to ask for help before, to feel empowered. It can save people from feeling hopeless after calling the wrong agencies by connecting them instead to the best resources our community has to offer,” said Brad Park, Executive Director, Brant United Way. “211 information and referral specialists try to go the extra mile to find out what a caller really needs and refer them to the best agencies for their needs.”

The launch will take place on Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM, as part of the Brant United Way's Annual General Meeting. It will take place at the Brantford Public Library, 173 Colborne St., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Auditorium. Guest speakers at the local launch will include: Dave Levac, MPP Brant and Mayor Chris Friel.

“I commend the United Way for their great work in setting up the new 211 service in our community. It is a much needed service for our residents to easily put them in touch with the agencies they need to access for help, with whatever life challenge they are facing.” said Dave Levac, MPP Brant. “This is why the Ontario government has committed more than \$13 million over four years to expand the 211 hotline province-wide by 2012 with the help of community partners such as the United Way. It’s about connecting Ontarians with their community and making us all stronger.”

“Brant United Way believes in and supports 211 because it removes many barriers to getting help in our community.” said Park “Removing these barriers helps us become united.”

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**For more information contact:**

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**211** is a three digit telephone helpline and website that provides referral to services and agencies. 211 can provide help to callers in over 150 languages. The information and referral specialists provide free, confidential, anonymous help to callers, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Visit [www.211ontario.ca](http://www.211ontario.ca) to search this database yourself.

**Brant United Way** is a volunteer-led organization with a vision to improve the lives of people in the Brant community. Together, we are making Brantford and Brant County stronger by strategically investing annual donations where they will have the most impact in four priority areas: children and youth; crisis counselling and support; independence and well-being; and poverty and housing. Our partnership of 18 Member Agencies deliver quality services and programs for thousands in our community. Approximately 45,000 citizens or 1 in 3 will be helped by our Member Agencies.