



Bringing People and Services Together

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Contact Us
www.airs.org

AIRS training now available online

Online I&R training is now accessible to AIRS members 24 hours a day.

In early 2006, a survey of AIRS members identified the provision of online training as the main need. This made it a priority for the AIRS Board and it is now a reality.

AIRS Online Training allows staff to take courses at their own pace - and at the times most convenient to agency workload. You do not need to complete a course in a single session. You can return to it whenever time is available.

A course is finished when the final test is passed with a result of 80% or better. Depending on the course, an AIRS Certificate of Completion or a CEU may be awarded.

The initial AIRS courses are:

- ◆ Introduction to I&R
- ◆ Resource Specialist Overview
- ◆ The I&R Process
- ◆ Handling Difficult Callers
- ◆ Introduction to Indexing and Taxonomy

A survey will be distributed in a few weeks to allow members to indicate their ideas for the content

of future courses. AIRS intends to add six new options during 2007.

The courses are very affordably priced in the \$20 to \$30 range, and there is a 10% discount on all online courses for AIRS members at the Enhanced and Premium Levels.

Other courses, developed by our partner Essential Learning (a leader in providing online training within the health and human services sectors), cover a wider range of general organizational and specialized issues, including courses for both frontline and managerial staff such as Elder Abuse, Alzheimer's Disease, Managing Employee Performance and Supervision 101. All of these courses have been assessed by the AIRS Training Committee.

The AIRS courses, particularly the I&R Process and the Indexing and Taxonomy course, are an excellent preparation for certification examinations. The completion certificate for online courses can also be used for re-certification purposes (i.e. a three-hour course can provide 3 of the 10 training hours required).

To view the AIRS training page, go to <http://www.cequick.com/airs/>

Officers of the Corporation

Caty Jirik, President

Kathy O'Connor, President-Elect

Georgia Sales, Secretary

Jamie Moore, Treasurer

The Alliance of Information & Referral Systems, Inc., was incorporated in 1973 to improve access to human services for all people through the mechanism of information and referral. It is a member organization serving I&R interests.

The AIRS Newsletter is provided as a benefit to all AIRS members. For information about membership contact us at (703) 218-AIRS (2477).

AIRS accepts paid advertising for inclusion in its publications for products and/or services which are related to the purposes of AIRS and its members. The products and services advertised in AIRS publications do not necessarily imply endorsement by AIRS or its membership.

For more information about placing an ad or article in the AIRS Newsletter, contact:

Hannah Newton,
AIRS Newsletter Editor
PO Box 33095
Portland, OR
airsnewslettereditor@airs.org

Get your message out via the AIRS newsletter

AIRS membership stretches over 1,000 organizations and more than 10,000 professionals dedicated to bringing people and services together.

Our membership reflects the diversity of I&R itself ... including United Ways, Area Agencies on Aging, 2-1-1 services, disaster and emergency preparedness organizations, military family support centers, child care referral agencies, volunteer centers, crisis intervention programs, libraries and government offices at city, county and state levels.

The 11 annual editions of the AIRS Newsletter are electronically distributed directly to established contacts at every member organization where they are distributed throughout the organization.

If you have a training program to market, innovative program to promote or software to launch - then consider advertising in the AIRS Newsletter.

A recent survey revealed that over 80% of our members are either "Extremely Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the content and value of the AIRS Newsletter.

April is the only month without an edition of the Newsletter. The deadline for content is the 16th of each month. To place an ad in the newsletter, email airsnewslettereditor@airs.org.

Rates	One edition	Five Editions	10 editions (Feb to Dec)
Full Page 7.5"w x 10"h	\$500	\$2,500 (with 15% discount = \$2,125)	\$5,500 (with 20% discount = \$4,400)
Half Page: 7.5"w x 5"h or 3.3"w x 10"h	\$275	\$1,375 (with 15% discount = \$1,169)	\$3,025 (with 20% discount = \$2,420)

The 2007 Accreditation Application, which includes the new Accreditation Criteria is now available for download on the Web site at www.airs.org. In addition, a new Assessment Tool, which incorporates the new criteria, is also available.

AIRS presents the 2007 edition of ABCs of I&R

The latest 400-page edition of “The ABCs of I&R” is now available for I&R trainers and those seeking I&R training.

This is a revision to last year’s fourth edition featuring two new sections on I&R in a Disaster and additional test questions at the end of each section.

The core section on the I&R Process (from greeting to closure) has also been completely reorganized.

The ABCs can serve as a guide for new staff entering the world of I&R and also as a reference tool and refresher for more experienced staff -- especially anyone preparing to obtain their Certification. The publication can be used by either an instructor leading a training session or by an individual working within a self-directed environment.

Instructional sections include discussion issues, role-playing options, scenarios, guidelines on language to use in certain situations, and questions on the objectives.

The questions are all written in the same style and format as Certification examinations.

Here is a list of the sections:

- ◆ The Nature of Information & Referral
- ◆ From Greeting to Closure - The I&R Process
- ◆ Empowerment and Advocacy Follow-up
- ◆ Crisis Intervention
- ◆ Confidentiality
- ◆ Values, Self-Awareness and Self-Determination
- ◆ Responding Effectively to “Challenging” Inquirers
- ◆ Using the Resource Database for I&R Referrals
- ◆ Disaster and the I&R Specialist
- ◆ Special Populations - Serving Diverse Communities
- ◆ Special Populations - Serving People with Addictions
- ◆ Special Populations - Serving Older Adults
- ◆ Special Populations - Serving Young People
- ◆ Special Populations - Serving People with Mental Illness

- ◆ Special Populations - Serving Military Personnel and their Families
- ◆ Boundaries - Stress Management and the Limits of I&R
- ◆ Resource Database - Overview
- ◆ Resource Database - Inclusion and Exclusion Policy
- ◆ Resource Database - Data Structure
- ◆ Resource Database - Classification Systems and Taxonomy Indexing
- ◆ Resource Database - Database Maintenance
- ◆ Resource Database - Disaster and the Resource Specialist

“The ABCs of I&R” is free to AIRS Enhanced and Premium members. The price for everyone else is \$450. Please contact moayadzahralddin@airs.org for more information on downloading a copy for your organization.

Canadian members should contact InformCanada at www.inform-canada.ca in order to purchase a Canadian edition (in Canadian dollars).

Deadline approaching for 2007 AIRS conference scholarships

Applications for the two Friends of AIRS scholarships are due Feb. 1.

The 2007 Conference Scholarships include registration fee, airfare and three nights hotel stay in Jacksonville, Florida.

One scholarship is available for CIRS/CIRS-A and

one for CRS. For more details or to get an application contact the Friends of AIRS Chair: Sharon Doner, Director Jewish Information and Referral Service of Greater Washington, by calling (301) 230-7288 or by e-mailing Sharon.doner@shalomDC.org. Scholarship applications are also available on the AIRS Web site at www.airs.org.

2-1-1s in the news across the country

Arkansas

“Partnerships, community efforts lead health news in 2006.” In April 2006, the United Way of Independence County and the United Way of America announced they would partner with agencies and organizations across the state, including Health Resources of Arkansas, Lyon College and the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, among others, to bring a “211” service to Arkansans.

http://www.guardonline.com/?module=displaystory&story_id=37935&format=html

“Northwest Arkansas 211 service planned: Call Centers to Give Advice on Services Statewide.” Arkansas hopes to launch 2-1-1 in July.

<http://www.nwaonline.net/articles/2007/01/11/news/011207bz211.txt>

California

“Newborn Girl Surrendered To Fire Station In Brentwood.” For more information on the Safe Surrender program, people can call 211.

<http://www.nbc4.tv/news/10794668/detail.html>

“Rep. Eshoo Introduces 2-1-1 Legislation.” Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, has introduced a bill to create a nationwide “2-1-1” telephone system providing information on child-care providers, drug

and alcohol treatment, elder care and other vital services and volunteer opportunities. “People facing crises and difficult problems often don’t know where to begin to find the help they need in their communities,” Eshoo said. “Expanding our country’s 2-1-1 system will bridge that gap by providing one phone number people can call to find child care providers, drug and alcohol treatment, elder care and other vital services supported by federal, state and local governments, the private sector and non-profit organizations.”

<http://www.californiachronicle.com/articles/viewArticle.asp?articleID=18703>

“Help Hotline get a new number.” Hotline of San Luis Obispo County which has provided free and confidential information, referrals, support, and crisis intervention to locals for more than 35 years is planning to convert from its current telephone number (549-8989) to 211 in the summer of 2007.

<http://www.newtimeslo.com/index.php?p=showarticle&id=2207>

Connecticut

“Starting Off Right: Early Childhood Action Plan Presented to Education Board.” The plan calls for identifying and consistently promoting high-quality, well-established information sources, such as 211 Infoline, Born Learning, and Norwalk Public Schools Kindergarten Transition

Information.”

http://www.norwalkcitizen-news.com/topstories/ci_5038787

Florida

“As ambassadors for 211 service, ‘best friends’ reach out to peers.” Two local teenagers have volunteered as teen ambassadors. They are also taking 50 hours of training so that they can work at the 211 organization’s 24-hour call center. Students are also enthusiastic about the 211 instant messaging service, which offers “a more anonymous way” for teens to seek help.

http://www.palmbeachpost.com/greenacres/content/neighborhood/greenacres/epaper/2007/01/10/npg_teen_pro_0110.html

Georgia

“Atlanta Gas Light Reminds Consumers of Energy Assistance Availability.” “Families and individuals looking for assistance with their heating costs also can dial 2-1-1, a service of United Way, for referral to an assistance program.”

<http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/01-17-2007/0004507845&EDATE=>

Indiana

“211 info line sees 47 percent hike in calls.” “The region’s largest social service agency has experienced a surge in calls since expanding its 211 telephone help line to Lake and Porter counties.”

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<http://www.post-trib.com/news/191918,211folo.article>

“Dolly Parton Library Marks First Year.” Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, a United Way of Central Indiana (UWCI) program that provides Central Indiana children with a book each month until their fifth birthday, will celebrate a birthday of its own. Parents can call 2-1-1 or visit their local library to register.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/newsitem.asp?ID=21388>

Iowa

“2-1-1: Get connected, get answers.” United Way of Johnson County and United Way of East Central Iowa, along with four other United Ways (Cedar Valley United Way, United Way of Mahaska County, United Way of Wapello County and Waverly-Shell Rock United Way) collaborated to bring the 2-1-1 services to 834,000 residents living in 24 eastern and southeastern Iowa counties. Since launching on Feb. 11, 2004, the call center has received more than 135,000 calls.

<http://www.press-citizen.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20061230/NEWS01/612300303/1079>

Kansas

“Preschool Resources.” People may call 2-1-1 or go to www.unitedwayplains.org for parenting resources.

<http://www.kansas.com/mld/eagle/living/people/family/16401459.htm>

Kentucky

“City offers free tax help to local families.” “For a complete listing of locations, times, dates and additional information about free tax-preparation services call MetroCall 311, 211 or visit

www.LouisvilleKy.gov.”

<http://www.whas11.com/news/local/stories/011907whasmjdLocalCityOffersFreeTaxHelp.565464e4.html>

Louisiana

“United Way victimized by computer thieves.” Article also includes overview of the use of 2-1-1 during Katrina.

<http://www.neworleanscitybusiness.com/viewStory.cfm?recID=17881>

Maryland

“Mikulski Calls for 2-1-1 Community Help Line.” Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), a member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, joined a bipartisan group of her Senate colleagues today to introduce the Calling for 2-1-1 Act (S. 211): “This resource will help keep our communities connected and informed so that they can be safer, stronger and smarter.”

<http://smd.com/news/headlines/2007/5137.shtml>

Michigan

“Nonprofit aims to keep the power on: \$4.8 million will go to energy bills.” For more information on energy assistance program, residents of Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Kent, Jackson, Macomb,

Muskegon, Oakland, Ottawa and Wayne counties and across the Upper Peninsula can call 2-1-1. <http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070106/BUSINESS06/701060376/1019>

Minnesota

“5th Year of Free Dental Care for Needy Children.” People interested in scheduling an appointment for their child may do so by calling United Way 211.

<http://www.happynews.com/news/132007/free-dental-care-children-need-provided-5th-consecutive-year.htm>

Missouri

“Stranded travelers find shelter: The Red Cross sets up an emergency facility at Pembroke Hill School for 28 bus passengers.” Red Cross opened an emergency shelter at Pembroke Hill School for 28 stranded bus passengers. A passenger had called the United Way’s 211 information line, which referred him to the Red Cross.

<http://www.kansascity.com/mld/kansascity/news/local/16461805.htm>

Nebraska

“Heat Aid Funds Running Low Just As Temperatures Drop: MUD Has Fewer Funds To Help Customers This Year.”

Metropolitan Utilities District offers counseling for customers who have shut-off notices but don’t qualify for aid. Consumers can call 211 for more information.

<http://www.ketv.com/newsarchive/10764779/detail.html>

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"211 Hotline Available for Storm Victims." "There's just one number to remember for storm victims seeking help." 211 can also point people to other hotlines with help, including the cattlemen's hay hotline and the Rural Response Hotline.

<http://www.nebraska.tv/news/local/5149092.html>

"3-Digit Dialing Is More Than Just 911: 211 Service Offers

Community Information." "Public Service Commissioner Anne Boyle said she wants the state to put more money into services that include 211. She said 211 could make life easier for 911 operators." <http://www.ketv.com/news/10670126/detail.html>

Pennsylvania

"What's the 211? For region, it's Help Line." "We've been the unofficial 211 for 34 years," said Gary Smith, senior caseworker for Help Line. "We're the 911 of social services."

http://www.standardsspeaker.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4110&Itemid=2

South Dakota

"Northern Hills prepares for 211 line." Overview of expansion of 2-1-1.

<http://www.rapidcityjournal.com/articles/2006/12/31/news/local/news03.txt>

Tennessee

"Dentures provided so seniors can eat." Knoxville-Knox County

CAC Office on Aging's Senior Citizens Information & Referral Service has been getting an increase in the number of calls from people who needed dentures. Calls have also been increasing to 2-1-1 as well as the American Cancer Society.

http://www.knoxnews.com/kns/health_and_fitness/article/0,1406,KNS_310_5276887,00.html

Texas

"Red Cross Opens Shelter." People may also call 211 for assistance during the storm and information on other shelters and services that are available.

<http://www.kfoxtv.com/news/10793284/detail.html>

"Texas Rep.'s Disaster-Related Bills Include Insurance Changes."

"HB 583 Supplemental 2-1-1 Funding - Requires that any surplus money from the Universal Service Fund go to finance the Texas Information and Referral Network (or 2-1-1). 2-1-1 is a helpful and vital service, but was scaled back during the budget crisis in 2003."

<http://www.insurancejournal.com/news/southcentral/2007/01/15/75859.htm>

"United Ways unveils legislative agenda." Statewide association of local United Ways is working to maintain and improve Texas 2-1-1, a 24-hour hotline that provides information about services offered by nonprofit organizations and government agencies.

<http://austin.bizjournals.com/austin/stories/2007/01/08/daily20.html>

Vermont

"Hi, 211? It's Ed, howya' been?" Columnist writes that he is "growing fond, too, of 211, which refers me to human services available locally."

<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070102/COLUM-NISTS05/701020302/1007>

Washington

"How many without homes? Volunteers will count county's homeless Jan. 25." Later this year, North Sound 211, the county's social service hotline, will establish one centralized waiting list for people to get into area shelters. http://www.heraldnet.com/stories/07/01/16/100loc_b1homeless001.cfm

"Community resources to get connected via 2-1-1." One phone call will access 10 shelter providers in Snohomish County through a program to be administered through the Volunteers of America Western Washington by the summer of 2007. The program will expand services offered by the 2-1-1 information and referral line.

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/snohomishcountynews/2003527510_newsidge17n.html

Canada

"Cochrane 211 is set to officially dial in." Cochrane and surrounding

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area will launch 2-1-1 on January 24. The number will connect those living in the area west of Calgary to various community, social, government and health services information.

<http://www.cochranetimes.com/News/281197.html>

<http://calsun.canoe.ca/News/Alberta/2007/01/18/3399921-sun.html>

“Volunteer bureau’s work continues.” It is hoped that some of the information provided by the now closed volunteer bureau could be disseminated through the proposed 211 telephone hotline.

http://www.cambridgetimes.ca/cam/news/news_698194.html

“A mighty steep connection charge.” “(The province of) Ontario understands the need for the data and the infrastructure,” said Community Connection executive director Pam Hillier said, adding the 211 agencies will not only free up municipal staff from taking calls for information, but they will provide reports on requests, trends and gaps.

<http://www.simcoe.com/article/30054>

AIRS hires public policy consultants

Richard Stahl

Chair, AIRS Public Policy Committee

AIRS has contracted with Matz, Blancato & Associates, Inc. of Washington DC to provide public policy services in relation to Information and Referral.

Led by company President Robert Blancato (a previous speaker at AIRS Conferences) Matz, Blancato is a full-service firm integrating public relations, government affairs and advocacy services.

In addition to AIRS, their current clients include the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, the National Governor’s Association and the Association of Nutrition Services Agencies.

The overall objective is to provide a dedicated voice and distinct overall national presence for AIRS and I&R in Washington.

This includes:

- ◆ Representation and Visibility
- ◆ Monitoring and Advocacy
- ◆ Strategy and Messaging
- ◆ Relationship-Building

In real terms, activities will include:

- ◆ Working on the development of an AIRS legislative and regulatory agenda and assisting in its dissemination and implementation
- ◆ Monitoring relevant legislation and executive branch activity that relates to AIRS/I&R and passing on appropriate information and recommendations for action (such as the identification of dedicated funding streams for I&R, professional certification and opportunities for sectoral leadership)
- ◆ Providing analysis on the impact of November election on composition of Congress including changes in Committees and

Subcommittees relevant to AIRS

- ◆ Developing materials to help shape a clear and compelling message about I&R in America
- ◆ Assisting AIRS in responding to proposals that impact I&R
- ◆ Developing relationships with key legislative and regulatory officials (in addition to a Member-to-Member program to link AIRS members to their respective Members of Congress)

Much of the immediate work of the AIRS Public Policy and Matz, Blancato will be to collaborate with United Way of America on supporting the newly-introduced Calling for 2-1-1 Act.

Over the course of 2007, opportunities will be pursued along the broader spectrum of the I&R movement. As this process evolves, the AIRS Public Policy Committee will look for ways of involving all members in helping to set stances and priorities.

Reserve your spot for the 2007 AIRS conference in Florida

Sharon Galler

AIRS Conference Coordinator

AIRS has negotiated special discounted hotel room rates of \$119 single/double at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Jacksonville, Florida, located right on the scenic St. Johns river for the May 6-9 conference in Jacksonville.

It is important that you stay at the headquarters hotel, so we can continue to insure the quality of our future programs and low hotel room rates. Call (800) 233-1234 and mention "AIRS" to make your reservations at this special rate. The deadline for this AIRS discounted rate is April 09.

Registration will open in February and our registration brochure will also be mailed and on our website then. For budgeting purposes, here are our 2007 registration fees

Register by March 28 and save!

AIRS Members:

Basic Level \$425
Standard Level \$404
Enhanced Level \$383
Premium Level \$361
FLAIRS Member \$361
Aging Network Member \$425
Non-Member \$550
Single Day \$240
FLAIRS member Single Day \$140
Non-Member Single Day \$340



Sunshine, Sandals and Surf I&R's BREATH OF FRESH AIRS

Registration after March 28:

AIRS Members:

Basic Level \$525
Standard Level \$504
Enhanced Level \$483
Premium Level \$461
FLAIRS Member \$461
Aging Network Member \$525
Non-Member \$675
Single Day \$280
FLAIRS member Single Day \$180
Non-Member Single Day \$380

This year we have over 70 workshops and speakers on informative educational tracks including Aging, Basic I&R, Disaster Response and Planning,

Management, Department of Defense, Resource Taxonomy, Technology and 2-1-1. For even more education, we are offering pre-conference intensives for the opportunity to explore several popular subjects in greater detail. We will also have The National Aging and Disability I&R/A Symposium including an all-day pre-conference retreat for staff of State Units on Aging (SUAs) and Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). A full schedule will be available on our Web site www.airs.org by March, so please visit our Web site for the latest breaking conference news.

AIRS certifies new specialists

Since the last newsletter, the following people have been awarded the Certified Information and Referral Specialist, Certified Information and Referral Specialist in Aging, or the Certified Resource Specialist designation in acknowledgement of their demonstrated competencies in the field of Information and Referral.

CERTIFIED INFORMATION & REFERRAL SPECIALISTS

Bolster, Livija - Atlanta Alliance on Developmental Disabilities, Atlanta GA
Chevrette, Michael - Metropolitan Center for Independent Living, St. Paul MN
Gutierrez, Sandra - Infoline of San Diego 2-1-1, La Mesa CA
Her, Nancy - United Way 2-1-1, Saint Paul MN
Horn, Hilary - Metropolitan Center for Independent Living, St Paul MN
Huerta, Maria - 211 San Diego, Chula Vista CA
Persons, Christine - Metropolitan Center for Independent Living, St.

Paul MN
Vang, Chee - Greater Twin Cities United Way 2-1-1, St. Paul MN
CERTIFIED INFORMATION & REFERRAL SPECIALISTS-Aging
Clarke, Donna - Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging, Slayton MN
Delgado, Guillermo - Riverside County Office on Aging, Palm Desert CA
Hrdina, Don - Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging, Rochester MN
Roberts, Jerry - Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging, Rochester MN
Schurhammer, John - Southeastern MN Area Agency on Aging,

Rochester MN
Shields, Denise - Vantage Point, AAA, Hartsville SC
Stewart, Julie - Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging, Slayton MN
Wojchik, Chad - Southeastern MN Area Agency on Aging, Rochester MN

CERTIFIED RESOURCE SPECIALISTS

Hatcher, Mary - Greater Twin Cities United Way, St. Paul MN
Power-Davis, Karen - Lt. Gov's Office on Aging, West Columbia SC
Williams, Megan - United Way of Central Minnesota, St. Cloud MN

User friendly: PCs and productivity

Dick Manikowski

Detroit Public Library-

TIP Database & Subscriptions

When it comes to personal and organizational productivity, PCs are the proverbial two-edged sword. It's unarguable that they make some tasks much easier:

- ◆ Word processors make writing a much easier chore than it had been in the days of typewriters. Not only is it possible to go back and correct typos and to undertake wholesale revisions without having to rekey entire pages of text, the software can even catch many typos and grammatical errors and help with formatting issues.
- ◆ When properly set up, spreadsheets allow for error-free calculation of user input statistical data.
- ◆ Databases make it possible to reliably manipu-

late incredible amounts of data in a standardized format.

- ◆ E-mail has revolutionized the way we communicate with each other.
- ◆ The Internet has made it possible to research topics without leaving your desk. At the same time, PCs and the Internet have complicated matters in some unexpected ways:
 - ◆ It's easy to get lulled into a false sense of security by spell checking modules. The sentence *Remember to reed this column over carefully before sending it on to Hannah for the Newsletter* wouldn't be flagged because the program would recognize "reed" as a legitimate word but wouldn't be sophisticated enough to look at the context and recommend changing "reed" to "read."
 - ◆ E-mail can become so captivating that people

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use it even when other mechanisms are more appropriate. I periodically have to give myself a mental dope slap when I catch myself e-mailing a colleague who's sitting two desks away from me.

- ◆ While the Internet is a great research tool, we need to remind ourselves that there's not the same degree of quality control that one can expect from more traditional information resources like libraries.

- ◆ The ultimate threat, however, comes from the distraction factor. There's a whole world accessible from your keyboard, mouse, and monitor, and it's possible to step into that world for a legitimate reason (I need to check my e-mail to see if Harry sent me that revised budget) and spend hours wandering from one link to another.

It's up to employers to set and enforce acceptable policies and for employees to abide by them or deal with the consequences. But what happens when you're at home working on a personal project on your own clock? Luckily, there are resources to help users deal with the PC productivity paradox. And where are those resources? Online, of course.

Lifehacker: A PC Productivity Blog

Lifehacker (www.lifehacker.com) is a great blog. The site's philosophy is succinctly stated on its home page: PCs make us more productive. Yeah, right. Lifehacker recommends the software downloads and Web sites that actually save time. Don't live to geek. Geek to live.

While the editor's view of productivity may differ somewhat from my own (a disproportionate number of entries deal with iPod care and accessories and management of tune libraries), it's a great site which covers the Windows, Macs, and Linux environments.

Here are some of the posts on the blog from the past two days:

- ◆ Find smart podcasts with Open Culture
- ◆ Master list of online resources for autodidacts
- ◆ Weekend Project: Make a papercraft monster library
- ◆ Kids and the home office: How to make it work
 - ◆ Four processing tips to make your photos pop
 - ◆ Run Windows apps on your Linux desktop
 - ◆ Download of the Day: XiphQT (Windows/Mac)
 - ◆ Widen Firefox's image properties dialog
 - ◆ Move iTunes to another PC and keep library data intact
 - ◆ Geek to Live: Encrypt your instant messages with Gaim
- ◆ Remove excessive exclamation points with GreaseMonkey!!!!
- ◆ Windows Vista Tip: Built-In Quick Launch keyboard shortcuts
- ◆ Awesome paint preview tool
- ◆ How to create the perfect password



Most of the posts are irrelevant to my interests (I don't run Linux, don't have a Mac, don't use iTunes or Firefox or do instant messaging, don't have kids, and haven't upgraded to Vista), but the last two caught my eye.

- ◆ The "Awesome paint preview" tool entry describes and links to an entry from another blog, which links to the Personal Color Viewer at the Benjamin Moore Paints' Web site allows a visitor to browse the company's 3,300 colors of paint by trying samples of them on a variety of exterior, bathroom, family room, bedroom, and kitchen layouts. One can also try out special finishing techniques (color wash,

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rag on, rag off, sponge on, sponge off, etc.) and to create a personal profile and save preferences.

♦ The “How to create the perfect password” entry links to an entry from the NeoMeme blog (penned by Wisconsin college student Ilya Lichtenstein) which suggests a simple method for creating alphabetical passwords which can't be easily broken by automated attack methods which systematically try words from dictionaries. While truly random passwords are virtually impossible to crack, they're also damnably difficult to remember. The password “bwraetaedr” would stymie most attacks, but how would you remember it?

By remembering how you had input it -- by typing bread and then cursoring back to after the b, typing in w, advancing to after the r, typing in a, and continuing this until you had merged water with bread. If you can remember bread and water (or word pairs of your own choice -- food and drink, coffee and cream, fish and chips, etc.), you'll be able to type in the password of your devising when you need to -- even if you can't remember the exact sequence of letters.

That's the beauty of Lifehacker --random gems scattered among stuff which doesn't interest you (but which are obviously somebody else's gems). Beauty is in the eye of the browser. All of the entries are tagged, so it's easy to find previous Lifehacker posts. The How to create the perfect password post is tagged as Passwords (as are 40 other posts), Privacy, and Security.

Stuff I've Picked Up from Lifehacker

I've been reading Lifehacker for about six months now and have found a wealth of useful information. For example, I've begun implementing some of the principles of David Allen's “Getting Things Done” methodology of time management via the great “Remember the Milk” Web-based to-do list.

One thing I've added to my RTM to-do list is a design for organizing/hiding power cables and those damned transformer bricks that power supplies for many devices have by putting them (and the surge protector into which they're plugged) into a covered box and threading the cables through holes in it. (It's not as ugly as it sounds-go to Lifehacker and plug in “cord charger organizer” into the site's search box, and you'll find the entry as “Build a cord-and-charger organizer.”)

If you want to check these out, the Lifehacker post for the latter concept is entitled “Getting Things Done with Remember the Milk,” and it links to a blog called Republic of Geektronica. And the cable organizing idea comes from the Two Loose Teeth blog. (Gotta love those names.)

Lifehacker editor Gina Trapani (who was featured in an informative Wall Street Journal profile on Jan. 5) recently compiled some of the best entries into her first book: “Lifehacker: 88 Tech Tricks to Turbocharge Your Day” (New York: Wiley, 2006; 336p), which came out just before Christmas. I've bought a copy but haven't had a chance to dive into it yet.

Wondering who links to your Web site?

Use the advanced search feature of GOOGLE. Under Page-Specific Search – put in your main Web site address.

Google shows you a representative picture of which Web sites link to yours. Increasing the number of sites that link to yours could push your rankings up in various search engines. You can also see sites linking into to your site by using the Traffic Rankings button at

www.alexacom.com

Solve Standard VI: Disaster Preparedness

This is the first in a series of crossword puzzles designed to help those new to the field of I&R become familiar with the AIRS Standards, and for those already experts in the Standards, this test will be a useful and fun reminder. E-mail me your answers to

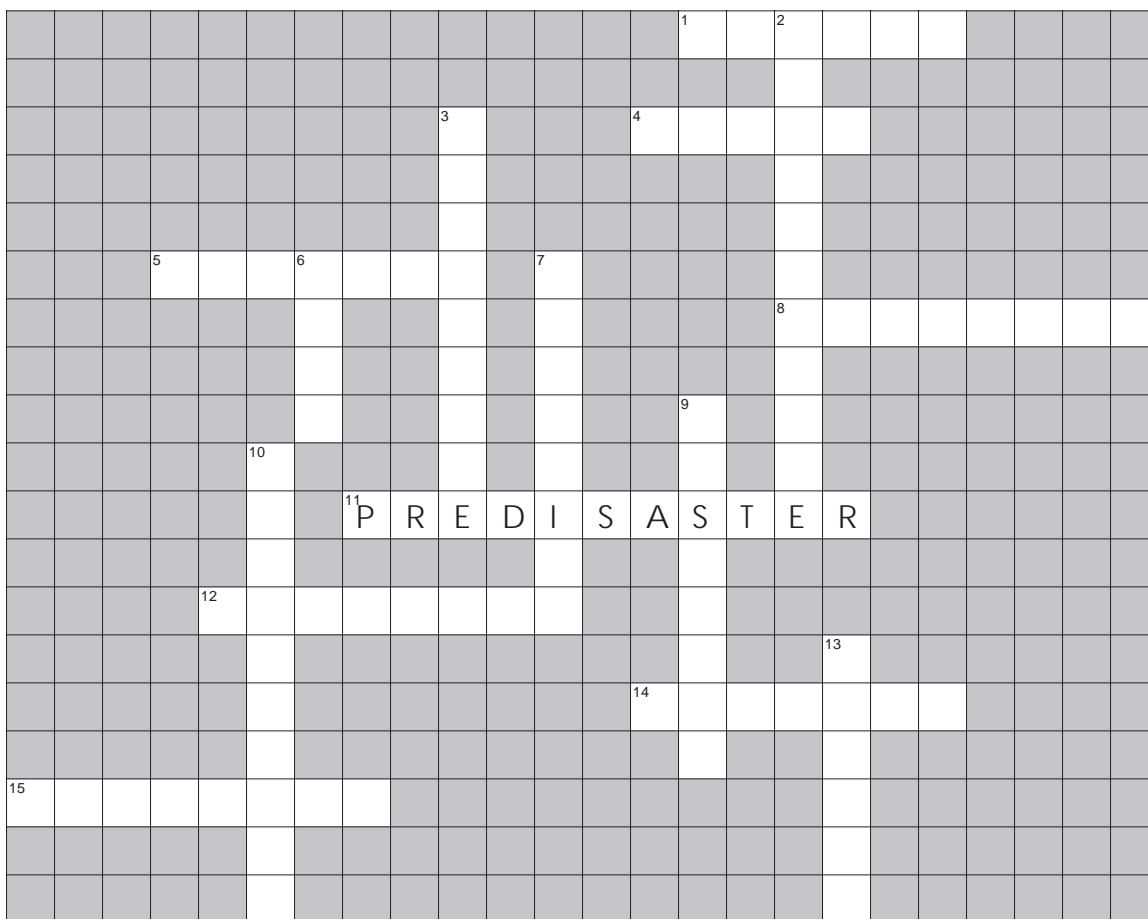
the following questions at newslettereditor@airs.org and those who answered all the questions correctly will have their names printed in the February edition of the newsletter. One clue is already solved for you. -- Hannah Newton

Down

2. What kind of means must the I&R service provide to allow staff to access disaster resources?
3. The I&R service shall take whatever steps are necessary to establish a relationship with which service provider?
6. The I&R service shall enter into formal agreements with disaster relief agencies such as ...?
7. The I&R service shall provide what for staff that addresses the specific types of disasters common to the area?
9. A large-scale emergency that disrupts the normal functioning of a community.
10. The I&R service shall have a written plan for providing disaster stress ... for all staff.
13. What shall the the I&R service have to allow staff to practice emergency procedures?

Across

1. Back-up systems for tele-phones.
4. The evacuation procedure shall designate ...?
5. The I&R service shall have procedures for maintaining what during and after an emergency?
8. How often shall the I&R service
- actively participate in a community disaster exercise?
11. The I&R service shall provide training for resource specialists that addresses what types of resources that need to be included in the database?
12. When appropriate, the I&R shall participate in shared client ... efforts.
14. The I&R service shall be prepared to produce what to the community regarding referrals?
15. An I&R must have a plan to continue to provide services if its what is damaged or destroyed?



Created with EclipseCrossword — www.eclipsecrossword.com

2-1-1 Disaster Response Team created

**Larry Olness and Karen Hyatt
Co-Chairs, AIRS Disaster
Committee**

In April 2006, the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) and United Way of America (UWA) agreed to jointly develop, recruit for, train and manage a 2-1-1 Disaster Response Team consisting of trained professionals who could establish or supplement a call center during times of disaster and provide training to the field during non-disaster times.

News of the creation of the team was announced at the 2006 AIRS Conference and UWA's Leadership Conference and recruitment began to establish an interim Response Team while training was developed and funding was secured.

Thanks to action of the AIRS Board, who approved funding as part of the 2007 general budget and UWA receiving funding from UPS, the AIRS Disaster Committee is seeking qualified individuals interested in participating as members of the 2-1-1 Disaster Response Team.

2-1-1 Disaster Response Team
Positions:

Volunteer Management Professional

The importance of a volunteer management position in times of disaster is to coordinate the volunteers on a local, regional or national level. The volunteer manager

would also recruit for a virtual call center supporting the 2-1-1 system. This position is imperative to responding to surge demand for specific specialties within the 2-1-1 system.

Mental Health Professional

The importance of a Mental Health Professional in times of disaster is to support staff working in the 2-1-1 system during times of disaster. This position will monitor the stress of the incoming demands on the staff and provide debriefing after the event. This position will help blend the tasks of traditional information and referral and crisis counselors in times of disaster.

Telecommunications Professional

The importance of a Telecommunications Professional during times of disaster is to assist with technical aspects needed in time of disaster with issues which may include routing, equipment and capacity. The telecommunications specialist may interact with the telecommunications industry.

Disaster Resource/Data Professional

The importance of a Resource/Data Professional in times of disaster is to identify, collect, verify and disseminate fluid information.

Disaster Call Center Information & Referral Professional

The importance of experienced

Disaster Call Center Information & Referral Professionals in times of disaster is to utilize the practical skills previously learned to supplement existing organizational staff.

Public Relations/Communications Professional

The importance of a Public Relations/Communications Professional in times of disaster is to deal with the different requests for information in a timely, accurate and appropriate manner.

Emergency Operations Center Professional

The importance of an Emergency Operations Center Professional in times of disaster is to represent the Call Center at the Emergency Operations Center.

Logistics Professional

The importance of a Logistics Professional in times of disaster is to insure that necessary resources are in place to support the Call Center operations.

Disaster Call Center Management Professional

The importance of an experienced Disaster Call Center Management Professional in times of disaster is to utilize the practical skills previously learned to supplement existing organizational staff.

Training Professional

The importance of a Resource/Data Professional in times of disaster is to provide

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training to insure competency with equipment and procedures related to working in a Call Center.

Crisis Call Center Professional

The importance of a Crisis Call Center Professional in times of disaster is that a significant percentage of callers are experiencing some degree of crisis. This is beyond the traditional scope of service in most callers in non-disaster situations. The professional would train and assist with

triage measures as well as caller intervention as appropriate.

Trainings will be made available through both UWA and AIRS national, regional and state conferences and through partner organization training conferences, i.e. Points of Light Foundation (POLF), AIRS online training portal and UWA hosted webinars.

To be considered for the Disaster team, applications need to be returned to one

of the following by **March 1**. The Disaster Committee will notify those selected by March 15 and a training session will take place in April. For questions contact Karen at krhyatt@earthlink.net; or Larry at lolness@hfuw.org or (407) 849-2360.

See page 17 for an application.

Mental health program for the 2005 hurricane survivors

The Access to Care program is a mental health and substance abuse program for people who were impacted by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma, and their family members. Survivors are able to receive financial assistance for mental health counseling, medication and substance abuse treatment during their recovery. The program can be used to pay for services with licensed providers and clinics anywhere in the country and is retroactive to August 30, 2005.

This program is an initiative of The American Red Cross Hurricane Recovery Program and is administered by Link2Health Solutions, a private non-profit subsidiary of The Mental Health

Association of NYC.

Anyone who resided in a FEMA designated pre-disaster hurricane zip code prior to landfall and suffered significant impact is eligible. Anyone who lost a close family member as a result of the hurricanes,

regardless of their place of residence at the time of the hurricanes, is also eligible for assistance.

Mental health professionals, case managers and interested clients can get more information about eligibility, covered services and how to enroll, by visiting the program's Web site: www.a2care.org or by calling: (866) 794-HOPE, a 24/7 toll-free, multilingual line staffed with trained mental health professionals.



Promoting 2-1-1

Check out these State Government homepages that have links to 2-1-1 Web sites right on their home pages:

Arizona:

<http://az.gov/webapp/portal>

Connecticut:

<http://www.ct.gov>

Florida:

<http://www.myflorida.com>

Texas:

<http://www.texasonline.com>

Certification test dates

Testing sites must first be approved by a state/regional/provincial I&R association. AIRS must receive notification at least 90 days in advance. The Certified Information & Referral Specialist (CIRS), Certified Resource Specialist (CRS) and Certified Information & Referral Specialist-Aging (CIRS-A) exams will be offered at each test site.

Applications to take an exam are due in the AIRS office 30 days prior to a test. (Applications are available for download on the AIRS Web site.)

The contacts listed for each site can provide information such as directions to the test site, whether training or a study session will be available before the exam, and if there are additional charges from the hosting organization. For an up-to-date list of tests visit the AIRS Web site at www.airs.org.

For additional questions, or to schedule a test, contact the AIRS Headquarters at (703) 218-AIRS (2477) ext. 201 or certification@airs.org.

MARCH 6 - CLEARWATER, FL

9-11 a.m.
2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares, Inc.
50 S Belcher Road, Suite 116
Micki Thompson
(727) 210-4240
micki@211tampabay.org

should be submitted by Feb. 14 and mailed to 910 N. 11th St, St. Louis, MO 63101, ATTN: Kay Archer.

75703.

MARCH 30 - COLUMBIA, SC

9 -11 a.m.
United Way of the Midlands
1800 Main Street
Barbara Link (803) 734-9919
linkbf@aging.sc.gov
ABCs of I&R 2-day course, March 28-29, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at United Way of the Midlands, 1800 Main Street, Columbia, SC.

MARCH 13 - ST. LOUIS, MO

1-3 p.m.
United Way of Greater St. Louis
910 N 11th Street
Marge Valleroy
(636) 207-0847 ex. 110
mvalleroy@mid-eastaaa.org
A \$25 fee will be charged for administrative costs, lunch, downtown parking and morning conference: Disaster Preparedness and I&R, I&A. Check made payable to United Way of Greater St. Louis

MARCH 14 - JOLIET, IL

10 a.m.- Noon
251 N. Center St
Marge Zajicek
(815) 723-9713
mzajicek@agingspecialists.org

MARCH 15 - HOUSTON, TX

1-3 p.m.
50 Waugh Drive
Sandra Ray (713) 685-2469
sray@uwtgc.org
There is a \$20 administrative fee due prior to the test, payable to TAIRS c/o La Juan Hollis, United Way of Tyler/Smith County, 4000 Southpark Drive, Tyler, TX.

APRIL 17 - MADISON, WI

1- 3 p.m.
Concourse Hotel
1 West Dayton Street
Maurine Strickland
(608) 266-4448
strikma@dhfs.state.wi.us

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2-1-1 bill introduced in Congress

Patrick McIntyre

Director, Public Policy, United Way of America

The Calling for 211 Act of 2007 (HR 211 and S 211) has been introduced in both chambers of Congress.

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo (D-CA-14) introduced The Calling for 211 Act of 2007 (HR 211) with 52 of

her House colleagues as original cosponsors in early January. A few days later, the bill was introduced in the Senate with 27 original cosponsors. Track the progress of the bills at thomas.loc.gov.

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APRIL 19 - ATLANTA, GA

10 a.m. - Noon

Atlanta Regional Commission

Area Agency on Aging

40 Courtland Street NE

Joy Lankford (404) 463-3233

jlankford@atlantaregional.com

There is an administrative fee of \$25 per person that must be paid by March 15. Make checks

payable to Atlanta Regional

Commission and mailed to:

Atlanta Regional Commission,

AAA - 40 Courtland Street NE -

Atlanta, GA 30303 -ATTN: Joy

Lankford

Training on the ABCs of I&R will

be presented on April 17 from 9

a.m. - 4 p.m. at Atlanta Regional

Commission.

APRIL 20 - TORONTO, ONT

1-3 p.m.

Findhelp Information Services

543 Richmond Street West, Suite

125

Cristina Umana (416) 392-4558

info@informcanada.ca

Certification Preparation

Workshop, April 13, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Findhelp Information Services,

543 Richmond Street West, Suite

125, Toronto. Fee of \$149.00 +

GST.

APRIL 20, TEMPLE, TX

2 - 4 p.m.

Central Texas Workforce Center

102 East Central Avenue, Ste 300

Wanda Williams (254) 939-3771

wandaw@workforcelink.com

An administrative fee of \$20

payable by check or cash to

CTWDB is due March 16 with

local registration form.

APRIL 20 - PORTLAND, OR

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

211info

621 SW Alder Street, Suite 810

Liz Bartell (503) 650-5705

lizb@co.clackamas.or.us

Certification Preparation class

March 2, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.,

621 SW Alder Street, Suite 810.

APRIL 27 - ROCHESTER, NY

9 - 11 a.m.

211 LIFE LINE

1 Mount Hope Avenue

Shye Louis (585) 758-1119

slouis@abvi-goodwill.com

MAY 4 - WINDSOR, ONTARIO

10 a.m. - Noon

Information Windsor

300 Giles Blvd. E, Unit A-2

Cristina Umana (416) 392-4558

info@informcanada.ca

Preparatory workshop April 27,

9:30 a.m. -3:30 p.m. at above

address. Cost for workshop is

\$149.

Call for Conference Presenters

It's time to share your solutions, experience, knowledge, novel approaches, new ideas and burning issues with your peers. If you are interested in becoming a conference presenter, now is the time to put together a proposal. Remember you can present on your own or form a panel with other colleagues to better illustrate a theme.

Complete the application form at <http://www.airs.org/documents/callforpresenters2007-web.doc>.

Presenters whose proposals are received by Jan. 31 and selected for presentation will be entered into a lottery, and 50 will be selected to receive a complimentary room night at the conference hotel.

