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Dear Abby: We are writing in response to the question you printed in January about where to find affordable counseling. Your suggestions were helpful, but we want to share another one:

The easy-to-remember telephone number 211 is one that, where available, connects people to information about critical, free or low-cost health and human services in their community; 211 reaches about 270 million people (90 percent of the U.S. population), covering all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Canada. It is a free, confidential resource.

Similar to dialing 911 for emergencies, calling 211 helps people seeking training, employment, food pantries, shelter, assistance for aging parents, addiction-prevention programs for teenagers, affordable-housing options and support groups. It provides a one-stop service for community referrals.

Abby, won't you share this information with your readers? Everyone knows someone who needs help; 211 is there for them.

– Staff of 211 in California