

JOINT PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release – March 19, 2020

The ELM FOUNDATION: Point of Contact: Staff at

<https://www.expectlittlemiraclesHSV.org/community-connections>

United Way of Madison Co. Point of Contact: Cathy Miller Community Impact Dir 256-518-8203.

POWERFUL COLLABORATION:

As our community confronts the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to work together to meet community needs. Madison County has two different ways to access community resources: United Way's 211 database and Huntsville's CharityTracker network. We want our community to understand how they can use these platforms to get and give help during a crisis.

United Way of Madison County's 211-call center is provided in partnership with Crisis Services of North AL. It provides information so individuals can contact health and human service agencies that can help them. CharityTracker software is a case management collaborative of 149 agencies, churches, and community organizations in Madison County that respond to community needs.

MORE ABOUT 211: United Way's 211 is a free resource and referral hotline, a first-line call when someone needs help and doesn't know where to turn. This national database with a local focus connects millions of people every year to the help they need. When someone isn't sure where to turn for help with housing, food, or medical assistance, 211 has the answer and help you find resources available in our community. United Way's goal is that every nonprofit service is listed in this resource. Any individual can access 211 anytime to get information about where to go for help. It's as simple as dialing the three digits 2-1-1, text to 888-421-1266 or visit <https://www.211connectsalabama.org> to chat.

CHARITYTRACKER is a web-based tool that community organizations can use to collaborate and meet needs. The case management software makes it possible for agency and church staff to continue to meet needs virtually. They can work remotely, keep their staff and clients healthy, and still respond to requests for help. If you work with an agency, church, or community organization, you can request a free membership to CharityTracker at www.huntsvilleal.charitytracker.net.

Here's how it works.

A mom with two children learns her work hours have been cut. Now she needs help finding food for her family. She calls 211 and is given the name and contact information for up to three organizations in Madison County that provide food assistance. Among those referrals, she calls an agency that is on the Huntsville CharityTracker network. The staff member is working remotely and can open a case for her on the network to provide food assistance.

The case worker learns that the family has additional needs and sends the case file to other agencies that can provide assistance. The case worker also learns that the family needs an unusual piece of medical equipment. She posts a bulletin on CharityTracker asking the other 149 organizations on the Huntsville CharityTracker network to help access the equipment. Staff at the organizations use the network to work together to provide case management. 211 staff are also on CharityTracker so they can jump in with additional information.

A community crisis deserves community response. If we all work together, we will navigate this challenge. 211 and CharityTracker make that collaboration possible.

If you are an individual who needs help, call 211 or visit [211connectsalabama.org](https://www.211connectsalabama.org) to learn more. CharityTracker licenses for agencies, churches, and community partners in Madison County are funded by a grant from the Community Foundation of Great Huntsville's Women's Philanthropy Society. CharityTracker is a project of The ELM Foundation.