FINDHELP | 211 SECTOR SNAPSHOT:

City of Toronto | January – December 2025

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of top and emerging client needs.

TOP 3 CLIENT WEB SEARCHES[1]

211Central.ca

- Food Security
- Housing / Shelter
- Mental Health

Findhelp | 211

Findhelp | 211 connects people to services through 24/7 multilingual navigation, crisis response, specialty helplines, online searches, and a comprehensive database of human and social services. Working with our partners, we strive to deliver equitable access for vulnerable people in our communities.

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Our commitment to service excellence is unparalleled. As the partner of choice for government and community service organizations, our team strives to exceed service standards.[2]

100%
Of Clients Would Absolutely Call 211 Back

98%
Of Clients Felt 211 Service Navigators Were Attentive & Friendly

TOP 5 CLIENT SERVICE NEEDS [3,4]

- **22%** Mental Health
- **17%** Housing / Shelter
- **10%** Legal / Public Safety
- **9%** Individual / Family
- **8%** Health

TRENDS & UNMET CLIENT SERVICE NEEDS [5]

Over the past year, these have consistently been top issues as identified by our Service Navigators:

1. MENTAL HEALTH

- **Escalating demand for crisis response:** High-frequency TCCS use, repeated wellness-check requests, and growing referrals from shelters, housing staff, security, and service agencies show sustained pressure on crisis systems.
- **Rising mental-health concerns across all ages:** Significant increases in anxiety, depression, behavioural issues in youth, caregiver burnout, and seniors' loneliness drove many calls for support and follow-up resources.
- **System strain and service gaps:** Callers reported long wait times, limited follow-up after hospital discharge, and insufficient text/chat crisis options, prompting frustration and repeated crisis use.

2. HOUSING / SHELTER

- **Persistent housing instability and shelter shortages:** Steady calls from unhoused individuals, seniors, families, and newcomers reflected ongoing struggles to secure affordable housing, emergency shelter, or relocation options amid capacity limits and extreme weather.
- **Financial strain driving crisis:** Requests for rent arrears support, deposits, mortgage help, heating assistance, and low-income benefits highlighted deepening economic pressure.
- **Mental-health impacts of inadequate housing:** Callers reported worsening anxiety and distress tied to homelessness, eviction risk, and lack of shelter access.

3. TOP UNMET NEEDS: Mental Health, Housing / Shelter, Individual / Family

GET INVOLVED

- Update Your Agency's 211 Profile
- Request a 211 Overview / Training: training@findhelp.ca
- Order 211 Promotional Materials: 211outreach@findhelp.ca
- View our Data Insights: 211 National Expansion Portal, 211 Ontario Needs Dashboard, 211 Data Snapshots (GTA)

CONTACT US: communications@findhelp.ca

TORONTO COMMUNITY CLUSTER NEEDS [6,7,8]

NORTH WEST: Black Creek, York, Weston, Pelham, North York

1) Mental Health
2) Housing / Shelter
3) Individual / Family
4) Health
5) Legal / Public Safety

NORTH EAST: East York, Don Valley, North Scarborough

1) Mental Health
2) Housing / Shelter
3) Individual / Family
4) Legal / Public Safety
5) Health

SOUTH WEST: North Etobicoke, South Etobicoke, Downtown West

1) Housing / Shelter
2) Mental Health
3) Health
4) Individual / Family
5) Legal / Public Safety

SOUTH EAST: Downtown East, South Scarborough

1) Mental Health
2) Housing / Shelter
3) Health
4) Legal / Public Safety
5) Individual / Family

211 CLIENT STORY

A mother was referred to 211 by the Assaulted Women's Helpline for mental health support. She was interested in the Toronto Community Crisis Service (TCCS) but wasn't ready to connect with them. She felt overwhelmed after already speaking with two community service organizations that day. She shared that domestic violence, childcare challenges, and financial strain were impacting her and her children's mental health through experiencing anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, or PTSD. She could make ends meet but couldn't afford anything extra and wasn't comfortable leaving her youngest child in private daycare to work more shifts.

The Service Navigator explored support options, and the mother expressed interest in family counselling and case management. She was referred to *Strides Toronto* for family and children's counselling, *CMHA* for case management, and encouraged to share *Kids Help Phone*'s number with her children. When discussing finances, the mother mentioned wanting to start a business but didn't know how. She was referred to the *Toronto Small Business Enterprise Centre* and informed about an overlooked childcare benefit. To ensure support, the Service Navigator offered a follow-up call, which the mother accepted. Grateful, she said, "I felt like I was running on a hamster wheel before I called 211. You helped me see there are other options."

1 Top 3 Client Web Searches across the Greater Toronto Area via 211Central.ca
2 Service Outcome percentages help us understand how the service we provide is received, how clients are feeling after they contact 211 and whether more support is needed to address any unmet client service needs.
3 Client Service Needs are tracked using taxonomy (a categorization system that is standard for 211 Service Providers across North America) and are rolled up to categories.
4 Top 5 Client Service Needs across the City of Toronto. Community Cluster Needs are included on second page.
5 Trends & Unmet Client Service Needs is comprised using multiple data sets including client service needs, unmet client service needs and trends reported by 211 Service Navigators – who answer 211 calls, text, chat, and emails. This data does not identify individuals.
6 Number of needs are not evenly distributed across neighbourhoods.
7 'Individual / Family' represents Case Management, Care Planning & Advocacy needs.
8 Learn about the Canadian AIRS Needs Categories – Data Dictionary.

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