

## 211 SNAPSHOT: LYS



Lys spent four years as a 211 Contact Specialist. Her specialty? Our crisis lines. She feels her 211 experiences “shifted who I am at my core and how I show up in this world. Crisis work teaches you about humanity in its rawest form. It shows you the places where people break and the places where people rise. It shows you despair, resilience, hope and the truth that small acts of support can reroute the entire trajectory of a life.”

Available 24/7/365, 211’s Crisis Contact Specialists assist people at the most vulnerable moments of their lives. Lys felt honored to be there for them: “There is something sacred about being invited into someone’s darkness, into the exact moment where they are not sure whether they can stay another day.”

One particular call stays with her. “I will never forget the night a mother and her young teen daughter arrived from a warm southern state on one of the coldest days of winter, with nothing but the clothes on their backs during a cold weather activation,” she recalls. “They were freezing, hungry, exhausted and carrying the weight of survival on their shoulders. And I remember thinking, ‘How can a country with so much allow a child to stand in the cold without food or shelter?’ The ache I felt in that moment was something beyond empathy. It was spiritual. It was the kind of ache that reminds you that humanity is not meant to turn away from suffering.”

211 training and real-time resources provided Lys with everything she needed to identify a place for the family to spend the night – and connect with a social worker who supplied warm coats, food, boots and other essentials to help Mom and her daughter begin their new lives in Connecticut.

“That call taught me that every basic need met is a small miracle in someone’s life,” she says. “It reminded me that where systems fail, people still rise for one another. That moment deepened my understanding of our 211 team and reminded me how vital this work truly is.”

And there were countless other miracles – especially when Lys was on the line with folks whose addictions had stripped them down to their last thread of hope: “Parents driving their adult children in circles at sunrise because no facility would take them. People going silent mid-conversation, their lives hanging in the balance. The man whose brother told me the next morning that he survived only because help reached him in the exact minute it did. The child on the bridge. The mother losing a child. The person being denied care when they were begging for help. The callers who were moments away from harming themselves or others.”

“In a world that often feels chaotic and fractured, 211 is one of the places where I feel deeply aligned, deeply useful and deeply human,” Lys states. “It creates moments where someone’s entire world shifts because they were heard, supported and believed for the first time.”

**The number of CT residents needing help is on the rise, but the state has refused to increase funding for 211 services for more than 14 years.**  
**Let's invest in 211 in 2026!**