

## United Way aids day care facilities

ENGLEWOOD – A team from UPS Information Services rolled up their sleeves and grabbed paint and brushes, supplied by Home Depot, to prepare for the opening of a new classroom for toddlers at the Westside Infant Day Care Center here. Their charitable good works were in response to a challenge to action initiated by Bergen County's United Way.

Licensing regulations in the State of New Jersey require that children older than 2 ½ be cared for in a classroom environment that is separate from infants. A number of the teen moms whose children attend the center were at risk of having to drop out of high school because of the lack of care for their toddlers. Westside Infant Day Care Center was established for teen mothers and their babies and is the only program in Bergen

County that offers quality child-care as well as parenting and life skills classes for moms.

"Children are constantly learning, right from birth," said Cheryl Moses, Director of Development for Bergen County's United Way. Ms. Moses was on hand to present a \$22,000 check to the program. "Their early years are the foundation for growth and development, and what they learn during those years depends on the experiences they have each and every day."

The new classroom was painted a bright yellow to create a warm and stimulating environment for learning. Several members of the UPS team also added their special touch, painting a rainbow over the archway framing the reading corner. Home Depot donated the paint and painting supplies.

"Caring for our children is both a family and community responsibility," said Tom Toronto, President of Bergen County's United Way. "With partners like UPS, Home Depot and IBM, who equipped the new classroom with Young Explorer computer stations, we are raising awareness of the importance of early childhood development and increasing access to essential services like Westside Infant Day Care to improve young children's lives."

With just a call to 2-1-1 or a click onto [nj211.org](http://nj211.org), help is available 24 hours a day, every day. The United Way's 2-1-1 helpline makes the critical connection to social services and community programs.

