

**NEWS AND PHOTO RELEASE**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Spaulding Youth Center staff and students make a difference for  
the victims of hurricane Sandy**

(Northfield, NH) Upon hearing news reports that many victims of hurricane Sandy were still suffering from lack of electricity, heat and other necessities for living, Tonya Splett, a staff member at Spaulding Youth Center discussed the situation with the young students whom she supervises. Ten year old Jackson was very sensitive to the fact that these affected families must be cold because they were without heat and suggested that he could help by making a blanket to be donated. Staff member Ken Peters, who has been doing disaster relief for 24 years, offered to help Splett organize a relief effort. They involved students in making fleece blankets and cheerful cards and collected money and goods from Spaulding staff members over several weeks. Splett commented that the staff used this opportunity to teach students about values, helping others and making an impact on someone else's life with a small gesture.

When all the items were collected and sorted, a van was rented to make the delivery. Peters, Splett, and two other Spaulding staff members Mike Devoe and Greg Noyes spent a weekend in New York City where they dropped off the contributions at a distribution center in Breezy Point on the Rockaway Peninsula. The group helped at the warehouse and toured the area. "The devastation is still very evident," commented Peters, "houses are off foundations, four foot sand drifts are plowed like snow banks to the beach and whole neighborhoods of houses are burned to the ground. Hundreds of volunteers are providing goods and helping restore the area and we felt good that we were able to make our own small contribution."

Spaulding Youth Center leverages professional expertise to help young people with autism or other developmental and/or behavioral challenges learn the academic and life skills needed to be successful in their homes, schools and communities.

For information about Spaulding Youth Center, contact Gail Mayhew, Director of Development at 603-286-7500 ext. 532; [gmayhew@spauldingyouthcenter.org](mailto:gmayhew@spauldingyouthcenter.org) or visit [www.spauldingyouthcenter.org](http://www.spauldingyouthcenter.org).

**Photo Caption:** Ken Peters, Tonya Splett and students at Spaulding Youth Center display the blankets they made to aid the victims of hurricane Sandy.

Photo by Gail Mayhew