

CONTACT: Ashley Voss
312.949.5635
avoss@kidshopeunited.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hewitt Associates and Kids Hope United team up to provide “pay it forward” garden project for children and youth

LAKE VILLA, Ill. (July 2, 2007)—On a recent summer day, employees from Hewitt Associates, a global human resources services company, arrived at the Kids Hope United Busy Bee Day Care Center in Waukegan, shovels in hand and ready to garden.

In anticipation of the summer season, Kids Hope United, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children and strengthening families, developed a “pay it forward” garden project for children enrolled in the Busy Bee Day Care Center, one of six child development centers managed by the agency, and youth receiving Unified Delinquency Intervention Services (UDIS), an intervention program aimed at keeping youth out of further involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Through the use of eight vegetable gardens, the staff of Kids Hope United are offering the children and youth a unique team-building experience, while also teaching them the importance of giving back. All vegetables grown in the gardens will be donated to local food pantries, supporting the “pay it forward” model of community support.

To kick off the project, the team from Hewitt helped Kids Hope United staff prepare eight raised beds for the vegetable gardens near the Busy Bee Center, using landscape timbers, top soil and mulch.

Several other local businesses got involved as well. Burriss Equipment Company allowed the team to borrow earth-moving equipment, including a bobcat and rototiller, and Menards provided free shipping for the delivery of materials to build the gardens.

Upon completion of the gardens, children and youth of the day care center and UDIS planted tomato and pepper plants, a variety of vegetable seeds and a perimeter of marigold flowers to keep rabbits and critters out of their new garden. Many plants have already begun to sprout, and the kids are having fun witnessing the process of new life and growth.

“The team from Hewitt was wonderful, offering excitement and ideas that made this project even more special for our kids,” said Mark McHugh, executive director of Kids Hope United. “We look forward to harvesting the vegetables and donating them to local food pantries. We want our kids to understand that Hewitt and other businesses in our community helped us out, and thanks to them, we have a chance to help others.”



For more information on Kids Hope United and how you can support efforts to protect children and strengthen families, visit us at www.kidshopeunited.org.

Photo: Hewitt staff

Caption: A group of staff from Hewitt Associates, a global human resources services company, recently teamed up with Kids Hope United to provide a “Pay it Forward” garden project for children and youth.

###

About Kids Hope United

Kids Hope United is a private human service organization dedicated to protecting children and strengthening families. Kids Hope United offers a diverse array of prevention, intervention and community-based programs. Kids Hope United also specializes in child welfare system management, reform, consultation and training. With principal offices in Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri and Florida, Kids Hope United serves more than 15,000 children and their families across the country each year. For more information, visit www.kidshopeunited.org.

