N.S-W

YOUNG MINDS AT FAST SPEEDS

Sprint donates wireless broadband equipment and service to 27 Child Development Centers in Oakland, Calif.

"Thank you, Sprint, for helping us access the world!" Those were the collective words of appreciation from youngsters in Oakland, Calif., for providing them with Sprint high-speed wireless Internet access and a new tool for learning and exploring.

Sprint's Broadband Wireless Group recently partnered with the Oakland Unified School District to donate installation, equipment and one year of Sprint Broadband Direct℠ wireless high-speed Internet service to 27 Child Development Centers.

"Enhancing the education of more than 2,000 kindergarten through third-grade students across the district is something Sprint employees can be proud of," says Kim Robinson, general manager-Sprint Broadband Direct in Oakland and San Francisco. "Many of these students don't have computers at home, so we're providing them with their first exposure to the Internet." Sprint is committed to supporting the communities it serves, and this is an area where we recognized a need, Robinson says.

The Oakland Child Development Centers provide before- and after-school programs for students whose families meet minimum financial requirements and need child-care assistance. The concept is unusual, particularly in an urban school district that doesn't always have the best resources available to them. For a few hours in the morning and afternoon, students participate in an educational curriculum that supplements what they learn in their regular classrooms and reinforces reading, math and science skills.

"We provide educational enrichment opportunities for children," says Isaac Johnson, site administrator at the Laurel Child Development Center. "This is a great opportunity to bridge our curriculum with that of the elementary school, supplementing what the children learn."

Sprint's Kim Robinson shows Devonay Ford, 7, (seated) and Ramonne Pious, 8, the fun of working on the Internet.

Computers build skills

Using computers helps younger children build their hand-eye coordination, and, as they learn to read, it helps build their reading and language skills.

"Sprint has made it possible for our teachers to better educate students about the vast resources of the Internet – and to use existing computer equipment more effectively in the classroom," says Dolores Ward, the school district's director of early childhood education. "This opportunity to use the Internet puts them on a level playing field with other children across the country."

In November, an event at the Laurel center held to announce the donation was covered by major television stations and newspapers in the San Francisco Bay area. A few of the children gave a live demonstration of the broadband wireless product at the event. "Watching the children at the computer was inspiring and exciting," says Rene Wukich, general manager-Sprint Broadband Direct in San Jose. "Not only were they exploring new information about topics they enjoy, but they were interacting with each other as they discovered the information and shared their new knowledge."

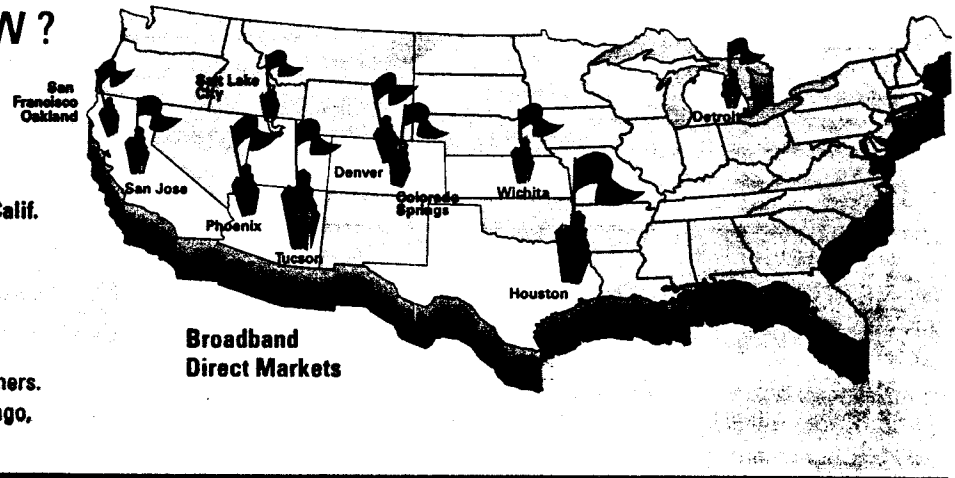
At the end of the event, the children presented Sprint representatives with a thank-you card and proudly read poems aloud expressing their appreciation. One child read: "Thank you Sprint for the Internet. You build minds to help us learn. You make us happy. Thank you for building our minds and school."

by Stephanie Taliaferro
stephanie.taliaferro@mail.sprint.com

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Sprint Broadband Direct wireless Internet service was successfully launched in 10 markets in 2000. They are:

- **Colorado Springs, Colo.**
- **Denver**
- **Detroit**
- **Houston**
- **Phoenix**
- **Salt Lake City**
- **San Francisco/Oakland, Calif.**
- **San Jose, Calif.**
- **Tucson, Ariz.**
- **Wichita, Kan.**



Broadband Direct Markets

The Detroit operations will focus only on business customers. The service is scheduled for rollout in early 2001 in Chicago, Fresno, Calif., Oklahoma City and Melbourne, Fla.