

**Contact:**

Cathy Silverman
973.740.0588 t
201.341.4914 m
csilverman@ncjwessex.org

Susan Steinberg
973.740.0588 t
973.715.9141 m
ssteinberg@ncjwessex.org

http://www.ncjwessex.org/back2school_factsheet.html

Media Fact Sheet – B2SS 2011

Imagine the looks on the faces of 500 economically disadvantaged children who get to “shop” for brand new school clothing, school supplies, and personal-care items at a “department store” set up just for them! The National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section, donates all items and sets up the “store” to help prepare children to focus on learning on the first day of school.

What is the Back 2 School Store®? The Back 2 School Store provides an opportunity for economically disadvantaged children in Essex County, N.J., to “shop” for brand-new back-to-school clothes, school supplies, and personal-care items.

How does the Back 2 School Store® work? It’s set up like a department store. Volunteer personal shoppers spend an hour, one-on-one, with each child to help select a complete new outfit (shirt, pants, winter jacket, and sneakers), underwear, socks, hat, gloves, and scarf. Each child also receives a new backpack filled with school supplies and personal-care items.

Where do the clothes and supplies come from? Thanks to financial contributions from local individuals, families, and businesses, NCJW volunteers shop for brand-new clothes and supplies in major retail stores.

How many children get to shop at the Back 2 School Store®? This year, roughly 500 children will be individually escorted through the store to select their back-to-school items. Last year’s B2SS served about 300 children.

How many volunteers work at the Back 2 School Store®? More than 300 volunteers are on site at the B2SS.

Where and when does the Back 2 School Store® take place? More than 4,000 square feet of space is donated by Congregation B’nai Shalom, 300 Pleasant Valley Way in West Orange, N.J. The 2011 B2SS takes place on Sunday, July 31 from 11:00 to 4:00, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10:00.

How are the children selected? The children are identified from more than 20 different local social service agencies.

What are the parents doing while the children are shopping at the Back 2 School Store®? Parents and other caregivers wait in the outer room where they have the opportunity to visit the Gaelen Family Resource Center set up by NCJW. There, they can get information about healthcare, Medicaid, career and educational opportunities, child mentoring programs, domestic violence programs, dental care, fire safety, and other community resources.

What is the National Council of Jewish Women? NCJW is a volunteer organization that has been at the forefront of social change for over a century. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW works to improve the quality of life for women, children, and families and to ensure individual rights and freedoms through programs and projects initiated by its network of 90,000 members and supporters nationwide. With more than 3,000 members, the Essex County Section of NCJW is the largest in the United States.