Freshmen Offer Service Before School | CPD

A student makes a duct tape ball. The tape adds weight and texture to stimulate a young child's senses. By Connie Pehrson Signs that the 2009 Fall Semester at USU is starting are found everywhere; in the newly painted parking spaces, the spruced up flower beds, the nearly full parking lots, and in the wide-eyed freshmen lugging their belongings into the dorms. During freshman week at USU, new freshmen participated in the student orientation, advising, and registration (SOAR) session before registering for classes. Students received advice about registering for classes and learned information about student services and campus life. Each of the SOAR classes was required to do two service projects, which brought some of the students to the CPD’s Up to 3 Early Intervention program. Up to 3 works with infants or toddlers who have developmental delays. The program also works with their families. One of the goals of this program is to provide the families with the tools to enhance their child's growth and development. Twenty-nine SOAR students helped the Up to 3 staff create materials that the therapists and parents could use with the children to help improve their developmental skills in different areas. Some of the students helped the occupational therapists adapt children's books with tactile and sensory items to use with children who have visual or sensory impairments. They added pom-pom balls, feathers, bright stickers, colored dots, and reflective materials to the pictures to enhance sensory and visual stimulation. Students also added edges or felt tabs between pages to make the page turning easier for tiny hands. These books will be used by the Up to 3 staff with individual children or be checked out by parents to use at home. Other SOAR students helped to hand-tie fleece quilts to be used in play and therapy activities at the Center, or in the homes during home visits. Additionally, some students made balls out of duct tape to be used for weight and tactile experiences with children who need more sensory stimulation. It's a tossup who will benefit more from one afternoon's work; the children in the Up to 3 program or the SOAR students who started out their college years giving service to others.