

Local woman 'cover girl;'

Helen Brown, who owns and operates the Sunbeam Child Care Center, is a cover girl.

That's correct. Helen was featured on the cover of Exchange magazine. That's been the magazine for early childhood leaders since 1978.

"They contacted me to tell me I had been selected," she said. "The magazine had contacted the state of West Virginia and my name was proposed by the child care bureau to be on the cover and have an article written about me.

"I was chosen because I was a director of a center and an advocate," she said.

The article focused on Helen as a director and the progress that child care centers have made in West Virginia overall in recent years.

Helen serves as president of the West Virginia Child Care Centers United.

She says there are more than 350 in the state "and if you include



Head Start sites, there are over 450."

Helen says that she can claim having former children who are now parents themselves whose children come to Sunbeam. She mentioned Joe Brown, who was brought to her facility the day it opened, as

being one of her former children who now has a child (Madison) at the center.

"I started a pre-school in my home when I started," she says. "Over the years, as the need for child care increased, we opened full time and we added on to our home."

She now has 24 staff members, 15 of whom are full time and take care of children from between 75 and 80 families.