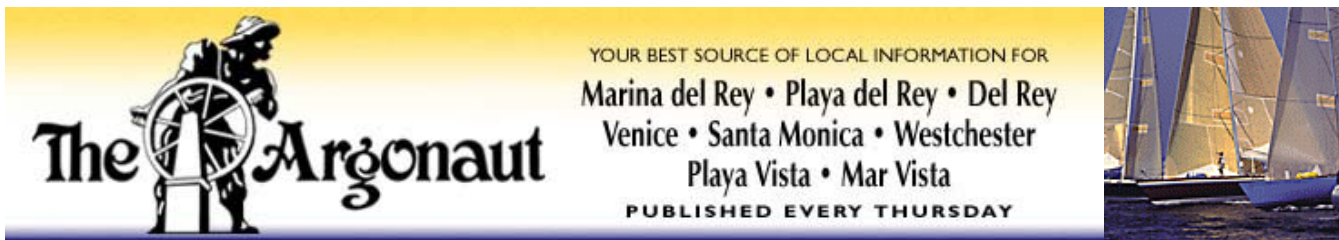




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Children 'check out' toys at Upward Bound

Dozens of children were given the opportunity to select and play with over 100 toys as part of a city toy loan program held at the Upward Bound House's Family Place in Santa Monica on July 14th.

Much like a library, the loan program not only gives youngsters the opportunity to enjoy a toy, it teaches them responsibility and accountability, according to Upward Bound House.

"The focus of our program is on children," said David Snow, executive director of Upward Bound House.

"This terrific partnership will bring joy to countless kids. We are honored to partner with the county on this innovative program."

The mission of Santa Monica-based Upward Bound House is to eliminate homelessness among families with children in Los Angeles by providing housing, supportive services and advocacy. Since 1997, more than 1,000 individuals, including over 600 children, have graduated from Upward Bound House and are no longer homeless.

Children who participated in the Toy Loan Program at Upward Bound House were able to "check out" toys from "Toyrarians" at the center. After a week, youngsters receive a "good mark" if he or she returns their toy on time and undamaged.

After earning 20 "good marks," children are rewarded with a brand new toy. Individuals, toy manufacturers and other companies donate new and refurbished toys for the free program.

The program is a collaborative effort by Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Department of Public Social Services.

Information regarding Upward Bound House, www.upwardboundhouse.org/, or

Tracy Chin at (310) 458-7779 ext. 215.