

## Kids get break from hand-me-downs

### Martha's Village takes nearly 20 parents on clothes shopping spree

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JESSICA SEGURA • THE DESERT SUN • MARCH 28, 2010

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The Target on Jackson Street in Indio opened an hour earlier for a group of shoppers on Saturday morning. Starting their early Easter shopping at 7 a.m. were parents of Martha's Village and Kitchen in Indio. The 10th annual Martha's Village and Kitchen Easter shopping event, which ended at 8 a.m. allowed parents to shop for their children. Each parent was given a budget of \$75 for each child; however those who had children ages 13 and older were able to spend \$85 per child.

“Teenagers are a little bit more expensive to shop for,” said Deirdre Evans, Director of Charitable Giving at Martha's Village and Kitchen. “Many children by that age require adult clothing,” she said, “which costs more.”

Martha's Village and Kitchen is the largest provider of homeless services in the Coachella Valley and Riverside County, officials said.

“It is a better feeling for a child to receive a gift from their parent instead of an agency,” said Cathy Hernandez, administrative assistant at Martha's Village and Kitchen.

Nearly 20 parents showed up to shop for their children. The parents not only had to stick within a budget, but they also could only spend the money on clothing. However, those who had children and or newborns that needed items, such as baby wipes, were able to make such a purchase.

Hernandez said by limiting what the parents can spend the money on, allows them to focus on what their children need versus what they want. “A toy is more of a want item,” she said.

And though the majority of the shoppers were the mothers that reside at Martha's Village and Kitchen, one father didn't let that intimidate him. John Ginex, 47, a resident at Martha's Village and Kitchen, decided to join his wife to shop for their two children. “I am Mr. Mom basically,” he said with a smile as he pushed a Target shopping cart. Ginex was the only father that went shopping that morning. “I am very grateful I was able to do this,” he said.

The idea to do some early Easter shopping was started by Father Joe Carroll, president of Martha's Village and Kitchen, who said he remembers what it was like to get hand-me-downs and how it felt to get brand-new clothes to wear as a child. “It was mine, it was new and that was all I cared about,” he said.

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A checker rings up Karen Figueroa and reaches 1 cent less than Figueroa's budget allotment Saturday morning at the SuperTarget store in Indio. Nearly 20 parents who are residents of Martha's Village and Kitchen in Indio were treated to an Easter shopping trip courtesy of the facility, and Father Joe Carroll who was on hand for the Easter-themed event. Parents were given \$75 per child and \$85 per teenager to use to shop for clothing and shoes. The store opened one hour early for the group to shop privately for more than 40 children between 7 and 8 a.m. Saturday. (Crystal Chatham, The Desert Sun)

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Target employees total and ring up children's clothing purchases on Saturday morning while Martha's Village residents shopped at the SuperTarget store in Indio. (Crystal Chatham, The Desert Sun)

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Angel Cunningham holds up a blue shirt she picked up for her 2-year-old blue eyed son on Saturday while shopping at SuperTarget. Cunningham's total was \$73.42, within \$2 of her shopping allotment of \$75. (Crystal Chatham, The Desert Sun)

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