



Dozens of bikes gifted to local foster kids

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By Hope Miller



Local groups came together Saturday in Santa Maria to gift dozens of bicycles to area foster kids.

The local chapter of the Santa Maria Elks Lodge #1538 teamed up with social services program Our County. Our Kids., Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition (BiCi Centro) and foster youth nonprofit Together We Rise to build and donate about 80 bikes to kids across Santa Barbara County.

The bikes, funded through a grant, were adjusted to each child. Tailwinds Bicycle Club of Santa Maria also provided the kids with helmets, and BiCi Centro offered a clinic for the youth to learn the basics of safe bike riding. Santa Maria police were also on hand for the giveaway, held at the Santa Maria Elks Lodge.

For many of the kids, it's their first bicycle, and the bikes can help give the youth a sense of normalcy in their lives, according to the Santa Barbara County Department of Social Services.

"I think every child needs a bike, and these children need to know how special they are and how glad we are that they can have this day with their family and share in this event," said Karen Hanneman, child welfare supervisor with the Department of Social Services.

<http://www.ksby.com/story/36978612/dozens-of-bikes-gifted-to-local-foster-kids>