

**December 7, 2004**

**OVER 400 SECTION 8 KIDS RECEIVE DONATED HOLIDAY TOYS**

**WHEN:** Saturday, December 18, 2004, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**NOTE:** The toy recipients have already been identified. Therefore, while this event is open to the media on the day of the giveaway, please do not run advance items advertising it since toys will not be available to the general public.

**EVENT:** The Los Angeles County Community Development Commission (CDC) – which serves as the County Housing Authority – will distribute donated Christmas toys to 461 children (up to nine years of age) whose families either receive Section 8 or public housing assistance and also participate in the Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. A friendly and festive Santa Claus will greet the children, hand out gifts, and be photographed with families. The event is being held in collaboration with the City of Santa Fe Springs and the Marine Corps Reserve "Toys for Tots" program office in Pico Rivera . This first-time effort aims to bring some joy into the lives of these lower-income families, most of which cannot provide gifts and a traditional holiday dinner to their loved ones.

The FSS program is voluntary and assists participants in obtaining employment and becoming free of government assistance within five years. The program helps connect participants with the resources they need to further their education, develop job skills, and secure child care and other services. For example, the program provides scholarships and reimbursements for tuition, books, and supplies. In addition, participants who obtain jobs with increasing income are allowed to make smaller monthly percentage contributions to their subsidized rent so that the increased income can be deposited monthly in "escrow savings accounts." In graduating from the FSS program, participants have then used the accumulated funds in the escrow savings accounts to purchase their first homes.

**WHERE:** Whittier Adult School, 9401 S. Painter Ave., Whittier, CA 90605