

Local youth, cops play ball at San Manuel Stadium in San Bernardino



Keona

Winkler, 11, of Loma Linda makes the out at first during the Cops and Kids game Saturday at San Manuel Stadium in San Bernardino. Members of the Redlands Police Department and the Inland Empire 66ers treated youth from the Redlands Community Center and Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Redlands-Riverside to a day at the ballpark called Cops and Kids. Photos by Frank Perez

By [Kristina Hernandez](#), Redlands Daily Facts

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Matthew Ruff, 11, of Redlands and Ricky Flores, 12, have a discussion at second base on Saturday during the Cops and Kids game at San Manuel Stadium in San Bernardino. Photos by Frank Perez

SAN BERNARDINO >> “Play ball!”

Dozens of local youth were treated to an afternoon of fun at the ballpark Saturday thanks to the Redlands Police Department.

The department, along with several community partnerships, hosted a Cops & Kids event, which invited youth from the Redlands Community Center and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Redlands-Riverside out to San Manuel Stadium in San Bernardino to play a game of softball and meet potential Major League ballplayers.

“We’re actually honored that the Redlands Police Department selected the Boys & Girls Clubs to participate,” said Mark Davis, Inland Empire 66ers vice president, on Friday afternoon. “It’s a great opportunity that will allow our kids to experience what baseball is all about, get on the field and talk to players, and spend some time with family members.”

Attendees invited to participate in Saturday’s event were the guests of honor at a cookout and have a friendly softball game with members of the RPD before the 66ers were to take on the Adelanto-based High Desert Mavericks later that evening. The group was also expected to be recognized during the game.

Saturday's event, planned as part of the Redlands Police Department's community outreach efforts, featured a discussion with RPD staff and 66ers players on what it takes to work hard, be a good student and citizen. They also received a 66ers cap and jersey courtesy of Toyota of Redlands.

"This is the first time these organizations have partnered to do this type of event and it is very exciting," Officer Chris Mead said in the release. "Our goal is to reach out to these young students and help them to realize that the decisions they make today can affect the rest of their lives in either a positive or negative way.

"This event also gives these young students an opportunity to see the positive side to law enforcement and our compassion to be a part of the community we are serving."