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Topstory

Group serenades at fair

After Disneyland, South Bay Kids had their second Southern California performance at fairgrounds.

By Paul Oginni

The South Bay Kids looked a little young to be on stage Thursday at the Main Mall of the Orange County Fair. But their ages were easy to forget once they started playing their set, which featured hit songs from the '60s and '70s.

The [Northern California-based group](#) is currently on a state-wide tour. This was their second performance in Southern California. According to music director Joe Santoro, the group's hard work has paid off.

"We did great," he said. "Especially since we had to put this show together in only three weeks."

The band performed a variety of classic tunes. Perhaps the best-known song they played was "Respect," as performed by Aretha Franklin.

"They were really great," said Mike Danielson of Arcadia. "I teach music, and we do something similar at my school. The performance was really nice. I liked the choreography, and they had great arrangements. My favorite song was 'Respect.'"

According to South Bay singer Doreen Imperial, mastering the choreography was part of the challenge.

"The hardest song was probably 'Get Ready,'" she said, "because the girls all have to spread their arms and bend down."

A number of parents were on hand to cheer on their kids.

"They did a fabulous job," said parent Celia Johnson. "They are very talented kids."

Wednesday, the band kicked off its Southern California tour with a performance at Disneyland. According to band parent Cecilia Imperial, the Disneyland performance rattled the nerves of some.

"The Disneyland performance was fun but some [kids] were nervous," she said. "Being there was a big deal, especially for the young ones."

Band keyboardist Anhtai Huynh agreed.

"The Disneyland performance was loud," he said. "Apparently the stage was set up for a big-band feel."

Huynh performed with a different band from the same organization. The South Bay Kids program is a nonprofit organization that is composed of several bands.

Founded in 1988, the organization has given children performers an opportunity to be on stage starting at a young age. Many of the band members that performed Thursday were veterans in the organization.

Although they spend most of their time in Northern California, the summer affords the group a chance to travel together, Santoro said.

"It's a chance for a lot of them to make bonds," he said. "They have fun."

For more photos, click [here](#).

They Said It

"I have liked the rides, especially the 'Year 2000' ride. Before I leave, I want to go on another one called the Tango."

— Griffin Cribbs, 11

"My favorite food has been the corn dogs. Before I go, I want to see the pig races."

— Grady Conner, 11

[[CLOSE WINDOW](#)]