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PARKS JOB CORPS CENTER--Nearly 400 underprivileged--but happy--children were given a gigantic Christmas party by Corpsmen.

For many of the youngsters--and Corpsmen, too--it was their first real Christmas party.

Hosts for the day were the 800 Job Corps enrollees, most of whom come from the same background of poverty as their younger guests.

It was a happy exception to the life the children are accustomed to most of the year. It was officially known as "Heart of Parks" Day.

Arriving by chartered buses from a half dozen cities from throughout the bay area, including the Hunters' Point area, the 400 youths were guests at various parties given in their honor by Corpsmen in nine separate dormitories at the center. The children, ranging in age from seven to 11, played games, talked with Corpsmen and generally got acquainted.

After the initial encounter when shyness and apprehension gave way to warm affection and understanding, the children enjoyed lunch with Corpsmen in the dining hall.

"They had their choice of steak or hot dogs," said Al Parker, Community Affairs Manager, "and hot dogs won out 3-2." In addition, the kids were given ice cream "and drank milk like it was going out of style."

A Center spokesman said the eating habits and appetites of the youngsters reminded him of incoming Corpsmen, many of whom get their first complete meal when they enter a Job Corps Center.