



LA84 FOUNDATION AND PLAY EQUITY FUND TO PROVIDE PLAY EQUIPMENT AND VIDEO SERIES FEATURING PRO AND OLYMPIC ATHLETES FOR LAUSD STUDENTS
Play Equipment to be distributed to students at LAUSD Grab & Go Food Centers

LOS ANGELES (April 20, 2020) – The LA84 Foundation – in partnership with the Play Equity Fund, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and world-class athletes – launched the #StayActiveStayStrong program to encourage healthy activities for kids while they are at home due to COVID-19 restrictions. Not all children and families have access to play equipment, or the support to stay active at home. In addition to the physical benefits, exercising can help alleviate the stress that comes with home confinement.

The LA84 Foundation – in collaboration with WSS, Nike, Kole Imports and Dick’s Sporting Goods – is providing families and students with free balls, jump ropes and other gear children can use to play at home for this ongoing effort. The first donation of play equipment was included when families picked up meals from the LAUSD Grab & Go Food Centers at Garfield High School and San Fernando Senior High School on Monday. LAUSD distributed its 10 millionth meal across its 63 meal centers since the COVID-19 school closures were instituted in mid-March. The play equipment distributions will continue until the end of the school year at LAUSD Grab & Go distribution centers in the highest need areas.

In addition to this equipment, the LA84 Foundation is also launching instructional videos featuring Olympic and pro athletes to guide and encourage all students and families. The #StayActiveStayStrong videos will be shared on the LA84 Foundation and Play Equity Fund social platforms, on PlayEquityFund.org, as well as local PBS affiliates in conjunction with LAUSD broadcasts. These videos will help kids connect with the fun of sports, promote playing at home and the value of healthy living.

“We are so grateful to help bring a little happiness to so many families and have the support of partners like LAUSD, Nike, WSS, Kole Imports and Dick’s Sporting Goods,” said **Renata Simril**, President & CEO of the LA84 Foundation and the Play Equity Fund. “We each recognized access to space and equipment for many families is limited, but healthy activity for kids during this time of social distancing and COVID-19 is critical. Exercise is essential to our physical and mental health. This collaborative effort provides the tools for kids to be healthier, play at home and reduce anxiety, and help strengthen those in our communities who need it most.”

“This crisis is a stark reminder of the safety net public schools provide to the students and families they serve,” Los Angeles Unified Superintendent **Austin Beutner** said. “Providing kids with sports equipment will help them be active and enjoy themselves even in these most trying of times. I’m grateful for the tireless efforts of my colleagues, the many volunteers and generous donors like the LA84 Foundation and the Play Equity Fund for their support in these relief efforts.”

The video series kicks off with **Kiké Hernandez** of the Los Angeles Dodgers. A utility infielder with the Dodgers for the last five years, Hernandez takes viewers on a journey in both English and Spanish through activities in his backyard, details at-home hitting and fielding drills, and discusses ways kids can be creative with exercising. In the next installment, the Los Angeles Chargers' **Austin Ekeler** shares fun ways for kids to improve their agility at home, as well as a challenge for their eye-hand coordination. Ekeler, who joined the Chargers in 2017, ranked first in the NFL among running backs with eight receiving touchdowns last season.

The series will continue over the next several weeks with Olympians, pro athletes and other sports figures giving insight as a resource to help kids #StayActiveStayStrong as part of the Play Equity Movement to ensure all kids have equal access to sport and structured play.

-LA84-

ABOUT THE LA84 FOUNDATION

The LA84 Foundation is a nationally recognized leader in support of youth sport programs and public education about the role of sports in positive youth development. The foundation, with 35 years of on-the-ground experience, has supported thousands of Southern California youth sports organizations through grantmaking and funding facilities and fields of play, while also training coaches, commissioning research, convening conferences and acting as a national thought leader on important issues in the youth sports industry. LA84 levels the playing field to ensure all youth have access and opportunity despite economics, gender or ability, while elevating the field of youth sports as an integral pathway to lifelong well-being. To learn more and join our Play Equity campaign, visit www.la84.org and @LA84Foundation on Twitter and Instagram.

ABOUT THE PLAY EQUITY FUND

A 501(c)3 public charity, the Play Equity Fund was established in 2014 to support and expand the work and impact of the private 501(c)3 LA84 Foundation. The Play Equity Fund focuses specifically on bringing the transformational power of sport and structured play to all children, regardless of their zip code and socio-economic status. To learn more about the Play Equity Fund, visit www.PlayEquityFund.org