

# return to play FUND



## SUPPORTING BLACK AND BROWN YOUTH IN THE U.S. AT THE INTERSECTION OF RACE, SPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Everyone has been affected by the coronavirus pandemic, but not everyone has been affected equally. Communities that were historically marginalized before, have become even more vulnerable. And those communities are largely Black and Brown.

### THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SPORT

Sport is a powerful means to promote youth mental and physical wellbeing, address racial inequities and help young people work through trauma.

**The Return To Play Fund (RTPF) - founded by ESPN and Beyond Sport - is on a mission to use sport to center health, wellbeing and systemic solutions to the heart of community recovery across the United States.**

## HOW IT WILL WORK

RTPF will support nonprofit community sport organizations that are not only dedicated to getting young people of color moving again, but also in providing them with guidance and opportunities to grow, succeed and be confident in their abilities.

The Fund will provide support across three key areas:

### 1. OPERATIONS & STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

RTPF will provide grants to help organizations fully resume their operations. It will also establish an Expert Advisory Panel, encompassing necessary specializations within and outside of sport, to ensure that best practices in trauma-informed approaches, public health and education are integrated into the Fund.

### 2. ADVOCACY

Building on the results of a 2021 mapping survey conducted by Beyond Sport and the Play Equity Fund (PEF), the RTPF will financially support PEF's work to scale impactful

programs, including school-based sports, coaching education, infrastructure development and juvenile justice initiatives. PEF invests in research and increases data collections, evaluations, assessments and information sharing to advance solutions that work to close the play equity gap.

### 3. INFRASTRUCTURE

Historically, communities of color and low-income communities are much less likely to have access to safe facilities for recreation. The RTPF will therefore fund a group of organizations that are building and refurbishing sustainable play spaces in Black and Brown communities.

## THE FACTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES:

- ▶ **Only 42% of African American & 47% of Hispanic parents** anticipate their child resuming sports activities at the same or higher level from before COVID. [Project Play, 2021]
- ▶ **52% of parents** reported that their children's mental health and physical fitness decreased during the pandemic. [Aspen Institute, 2020]
- ▶ **44% of families** said their community-based program has closed, merged or returned with limited capacity. [Project Play, 2021]
- ▶ **80% of young people**, many poor, do not meet federal guidelines for daily physical activity. [ODPHP, 2020]
- ▶ **3 out of 10 kids** are no longer interested in playing sports since COVID-19. [Project Play, 2021]
- ▶ On average, in 2019, **Black households had only 14.5% the wealth of white households**, with an absolute dollar gap of \$838,220. The gap widened during the latter part of 2020 due to the pandemic and economic recession. [Journal of Economics, Race and Policy, 2021]
- ▶ **Lower income kids are 6x more likely to quit youth sports than their more well-off peers.** [Aspen Institute, 2020]

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Over the past year, it has become clearer that community-based solutions are often more powerful than national responses. Through the fund, leading experts will help ensure that Black and Brown youth are not further disadvantaged during and coming out of the national rebuilding process. Become a Funding Partner of the Return to Play Fund to support and inspire Black and Brown youth who have been challenged the most during the pandemic. ▶ Contact: Fred Turner, fred.turner@beyondsport.org

FOUNDING PARTNERS: **ESPN**

