

# Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN-LA) Offers Free Non-Competitive Sport Programs for Children with Any Type of Disability

*KEEN LA Will Host a Bowling Bonanza Fundraiser at LA Live's Lucky Strike on May 21 to Continue to Help Children with Disabilities Have an Active Life*

LOS ANGELES, CA, USA, May 15, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Children with disabilities are 38% more likely to be obese than their counterparts. Among

some special needs groups, as many as 86% of teens are overweight or obese. This health risk can lead to a greater number of obesity-related secondary conditions and can impose significant personal and economic hardship on the child and family. Among youth with physical disabilities, 39% report never exercising at all.

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With the community's support, KEEN-LA can continue to develop each child's self-esteem and confidence, as well as recreational skills and talents. No child with a disability is turned away.”

*KEEN-LA Executive Director  
Rebecca Polivy*

Many children with disabilities need modifications to participate in fitness activities, but do not have access to adaptive equipment or to inclusive recreational classes.

Kids Enjoy Exercise Now Los Angeles ([KEEN LA](#)), a non-profit, works hard to meet the exercise needs of children and young adults with disabilities. KEEN-LA is celebrating 10 years of free fun, fitness, and friendship for children who otherwise may be left behind. To continue the much-needed work of KEEN-LA, the organization is hosting the 1st Annual KEEN- LA Bowling Bonanza on Sunday, May 21, 2017 from 2 - 4:30 pm at Lucky Strike, LA Live in downtown Los Angeles.

Invited guests include NBA Basketball Coach and Player Legend [Henry Bibby](#) now focuses on teaching basketball fundamentals to underserved and homeless children while promoting self-esteem, togetherness, teamwork and sportsmanship; SAG-AFTRA member and Disabilities Advocate [Steven J. Tingus](#) who was born with a rare form of muscular dystrophy works to promote the employment of individuals with disabilities into all facets of the entertainment industry; and Former All-Pro NFL Football Player [Keith Mitchell](#) who was forced into early retirement after a paralyzing spinal injury. Mitchell used the power of meditation and Yoga to heal him and fully recover. As a Celebrity Yogi, Motivational Mindfulness Coach, Holistic Health & Wellness Advocate, Community Activist and Humanitarian, Mitchell helps others transform their lives and empowers people to uncover and embrace their fullest potential.

Everyone is encouraged to join the KEEN community for an afternoon of bowling, family fun and to support Team KEEN - a team of bowlers made up of 10 KEEN athletes paired 1:1 with supporters and charged with knocking down 200 pins total. "In typical KEEN style, the athletes will encourage



each other both in training leading up to the event and day of, contributing to improved socialization and athletic abilities as well as solidifying friendships," said Ravi Gadam, president of KEEN-LA.

Freddy, a 15-year-old boy with autism had difficulty participating in physical activities. Too intimidated to interact with the other kids, he chose to spend recess alone. As he became increasingly withdrawn, Zulma, Freddy's mother, knew that bullying was most prevalent during recess time. She heard about KEEN and brought Freddy to the sessions.

"KEEN sessions created an atmosphere for him to learn how to play, throw a ball, and be part of a team," Zulma recalled. "It was a routine he enjoyed because he was part of a group. At KEEN, Freddy became a leader as opposed to an outsider."

Any child or young adult regardless of their disabilities is welcomed to participate in KEEN-LA's open, unstructured environment. For some of the children and young adults who are unable to participate in other programs, KEEN may be their only recreational activity. KEEN is committed to maintaining its basic ideals: providing free recreational opportunities to children and young adults with disabilities by pairing them with trained volunteers. KEEN seeks to develop each child's self-esteem and confidence, as well as recreational skills and talents.

KEEN's sessions include general gym-based activities, such as basketball, scooters, tunnels and parachutes to music-and-dance or arts-and-crafts, as well as swimming, bowling, and tennis. "Together with their volunteer "coach," we let them discover together just what they can and want to do," said KEEN LA Executive Director Rebecca Polivy. "Join us in supporting, witnessing and celebrating together with Team KEEN and the KEEN LA community!"

The events includes something for everyone to enjoy from arts & crafts, and other kid-friendly activities, a silent auction. Admission ticket includes bowling, shoes, food, billiards & magic shows!

Proceeds from Bowling Bonanza will support KEEN's sports and recreation programs and help us



Bowling is one of the many activities that the KEEN Kids love to do.



SAG Member and Disability Rights Activist Steven Tingus pictured with Actor Terrence Howard, advocates for children and adults to be inclusive for employment opportunities in the entertainment industry.

continue to provide them at no-cost to our athletes and their families.

For sponsorship opportunities, contact [info@keenlosangeles.org](mailto:info@keenlosangeles.org) or call 213-267-1777. Tickets for KEEN-LA's Bowling Bonanza available at [www.keenlosangeles.org/bowling-bonanza-2017](http://www.keenlosangeles.org/bowling-bonanza-2017)

#### About KEEN:

Elliott and Estee Portnoy saw a need to provide a way for children with disabilities to have fun in a safe, noncompetitive environment. Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) links children with disabilities to other children like them in an innovative, recreational program.

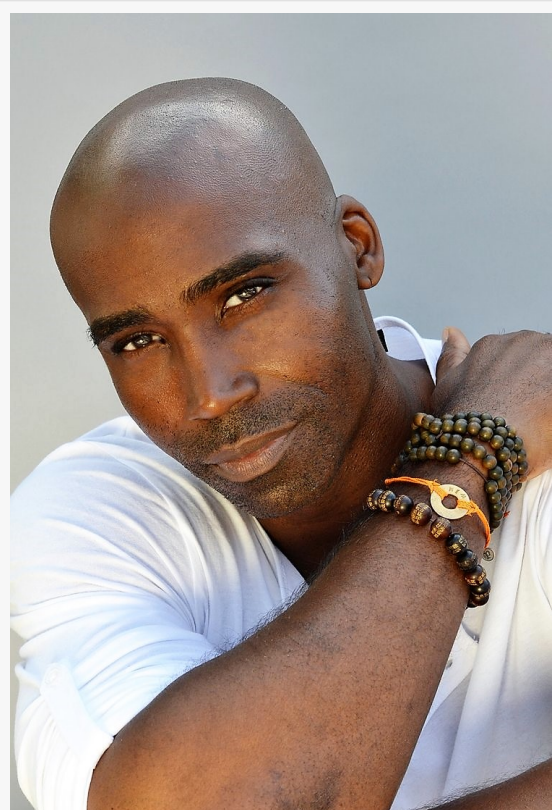
KEEN is modeled on an innovative program established in Oxford, England by Elliott Portnoy, who brought KEEN to the Washington, DC area in 1992. With help from a handful of parents and volunteers, KEEN started as a single program in the Greater DC area.

In 2005 KEEN began its expansion into select cities across the United States, opening its doors to new athletes and volunteers in Chicago, Los Angeles, St. Louis, San Francisco, New York and Phoenix. As KEEN grows, it is committed to maintaining its basic ideals: to foster confidence, self-esteem and community inclusion for youth with disabilities by providing free, non-competitive one-to-one programs of exercise, fitness and fun ; strengthening communities through education of volunteers; and providing families with respite and a supportive network. Now in its 10th year, KEEN Los Angeles serves hundreds of LA youth with disabilities and their families, and trains thousands of Angelenos on how to work with the aforementioned youth, through a myriad of fitness and recreation programs.

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NBA Basketball Coach Henry Bibby, a three-time NCAA champion at UCLA and the inventor of Dribblepro, founded the Henry Bibby Star Athletes (HBSA) to raise awareness, and reduce health disparity and school dropout rates of homeless children through sports activities.



Former All-Pro NFL Football Player Keith Mitchell was forced into early retirement after a paralyzing spinal injury. He used the power of meditation and Yoga to heal him and now helps others.

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