

Mayor's Fund for Education COVID-19 Response Efforts



The Need

In Long Beach, there are just under 32,500 children ages 0-5 years, and approximately 36% of these children are low to very-low income and therefore highly susceptible to an economic downturn.

With the economic impacts brought on by the effects of COVID-19, many child care/education partners and families found it difficult to find and/or afford supplies crucial to young children's healthy development. These supplies include diapers, wipes, diaper cream, formula, and other hygiene products.

Without access to these critical supplies, families were having to go without, use materials long after the time when they would normally be changed, and, in some devastating cases, reuse already soiled materials.

Additionally, limited access to supplies impacts a child care/education provider's ability to operate normally and provide service to families. As many of the families relying on their service are "front-line" employees, it became crucial that support be provided to these businesses/organizations in order for our local community to effectively respond to the demands brought on by COVID-19.

Response Effort - Supplies

Beginning in March 2020, when supplies were becoming available within Los Angeles County it became clear that Long Beach was at risk of not receiving its allocation. Although not normally a supply/distribution entity, the Mayor's Fund for Education and the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services responded quickly to fulfill this need. Warehouse space was quickly secured within a Long Beach Unified School District facility and a distribution plan was created for local child care/education providers, and for families via LBUSD schools, City of Long Beach parks, and other community partners

The Mayor's Fund for Education began providing logistical oversight for the acquisition (mostly through donations but also through some purchases), storage, and distribution of critically needed supplies. To-date, over 750 child care/education providers have come to access Mayor's Fund for Education supply distributions and we have served an estimated 13,000 children

As of the beginning of October 2020, the Mayor's Fund and partners will have acquired and distributed thousands of items as outlined in the adjacent graphic:



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In the coming months, the Mayor's Fund will be partnering with The Nonprofit Partnership for the acquisition and distribution of additional supplies being made available via CARES Act funding. With support from the CARES Act funding, it is estimated that the Mayor's Fund will be able to acquire and distribute over 822,000 diapers, nearly 23,000 packs of wipes, 10,000 tubes of diaper cream, and over 10,500 containers of formula.

Response Effort – Distance Learning

Additionally, the Mayor's Fund leveraged the potential of its existing digital ReadyRosieLB Parent Engagement Program to respond to the distance learning demands resulting from COVID-19. ReadyRosie proved itself to be an incredibly valuable resource, as it provides a structure for distance learning to meet an immediate and unexpected need.

Mayor's Fund staff quickly collaborated with ReadyRosie Corporate to enable free community-wide access to the full Infant to 3rd grade content as a means of supporting in-home learning efforts for early elementary students and preschoolers.

In only a month and a half, ReadyRosieLB experienced a burst of program growth typically only seen at the start of a new academic year – with over 1,200 new users, over 17,000 activities modeled, over 55,000 learning outcomes achieved. As early education providers quickly pivoted to a distance learning format, many came to rely on ReadyRosieLB as a mechanism for supporting continued early learning at home. Dr. Claudia Sosa-Valderrama, Director of LBUSD's Head Start Program, showed her appreciation, stating: "We have been using ReadyRosie and it has been a lifesaver! It immediately helped us stay connected to our families during this hectic time."

A promotional graphic for ReadyRosie Long Beach. It features a dark blue background with white wavy lines on the left. At the top center is the Mayor's Fund for Education logo, followed by the text "Presents" and the ReadyRosie Long Beach logo, which includes a cartoon girl character. Below the logos, the text reads "Access free in-home learning activities" and "Applicable for Infant - 3rd grade". A white box in the center contains the text "VISIT: READYROSIE.COM/REGISTER" and "USE CODE: LearnLB".