

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the First Lady

For Immediate Release
May 15, 2012

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
AT A LET'S MOVE! EVENT
WITH MLS CUP CHAMPION L.A. GALAXY

State Dining Room

3:12 P.M. EDT

MRS. OBAMA: Hey, again, guys. I got to hang out with the kids earlier. We got quick pictures, but we are excited to have you guys here at the White House. We're in the State Room. The State Dining Room is where we greet special official guests, and you guys count as our special official guests. We're excited to have you here.

I want to start by thanking all of you kids for joining us here at the White House today. Tell me -- yell out -- tell me the organizations you're representing -- somebody? See, you guys are from all over the place -- some here, some from all over the country, right?

Well, thanks for coming and visiting us. I also want to thank the members of the L.A. Galaxy soccer team for taking the time to come and answer some questions, and share some wisdom and some advice for all of you. So let's give them a big round of applause. (Applause.)

So as soccer players, you know who these guys are, don't you?

CHILDREN: Yes.

MRS. OBAMA: They're pretty cool, right? They are some of the best soccer players in the entire country and the entire world. Amazing, huh? And they're here! They're right there, they're right there.

And I want to congratulate them -- join in with my husband in congratulating them on winning the third MLS Cup. Very cool, very cool.

But one of the things I want you guys to remember -- all the kids here to remember, is that these stars were not born superstar athletes. They weren't superstar soccer players from the beginning. In fact, many of them started out just like many of you -- playing on a team at school, or just kicking a ball around on the playground with their friends. But they stuck with it. And I tell this to my girls all the time. I mean, you get to the point when there are things that you enjoy, they get to the point where they start getting hard -- that's when you know you're getting good, and you have to stick through it even when it starts getting hard.

For some of you, soccer has always been fun, will always be fun, but sometimes, when you start growing, you get to the point where you really have to work hard. Well, they all hit that wall, and they stuck with it. They practice for hours every day doing all their drills and scrimmages, doing everything that their coaches and mentors told them to do. And that's how they got to be national champions. But remember, they didn't do all of this just because they wanted to win their games. Winning is great, right? We all know how to win. Winning is the easiest thing in the world to do. But what is the toughest thing? Is learning how to lose, right?

So they didn't do it just to win. They didn't do it because they wanted to grow up to be famous. They played soccer because they love the sport. And they played because it was challenging and fun, and because it made them feel strong and healthy. And that's what sports like soccer are all about. And they're learning about new skills. They're learning how to compete. They're learning how to lose gracefully, how to win with dignity. All of that stuff is important with sports.

And that's one of the reasons why when the weather is nice -- because it was raining; we were supposed to be outside, but they said there would be thunderstorms. We're usually outside. We've been hosting all kinds of fitness activities and clinics on the South Lawn. Have some of you guys participated in those? Nobody has had -- I thought -- we've had -- (laughter) -- yes, we've had some fun on the South Lawn. We were supposed out there today, but because they projected thunderstorms, we thought we wouldn't have you out there getting

struck by lightning. That wouldn't look good. (Laughter.) So we brought you inside.

But we've been hosting these clinics on the South Lawn, which is our backyard here at the White House, because we want to show kids just like you that there are all kinds of ways to be active, and that being active is also a whole lot of fun. So a lot of what we do while there are soccer drills and things like that going on, we're doing a lot of playing around and laughing, and realizing that that's what being healthy is about. It's not always work; most of the time it's a lot of fun.

And that's also why in connection with the Olympic and Paralympic Games that are coming up -- you guys know about that? You know that we're going to be in London competing with teams all across the world. You know that? And I'm going to be leading the delegation. I'm not playing a sport or anything -- (laughter) -- I am not an Olympian. But I get to lead the delegation that represents the United States.

But as part of the Olympic Games, the U.S. Soccer Federation has made a really important commitment that I got to announce yesterday. They're going to be working to help increase opportunities for kids to get involved in a whole variety of sports, especially soccer. Soccer has really stepped up.

They're going to be hosting more clinics and more after-school programs in cities all across the country so that more kids like you get exposure to opportunities that maybe normally you wouldn't, or it gives you even a little more excitement to get even more committed into your sport.

Because the Federation also knows and these guys up here know that being active and learning new skills doesn't just help you become a better soccer player or a better athlete. It gives you the energy that you need to keep you from getting sick, to do well in school, to be able to focus on your bigger dreams -- because there is life after soccer. There is something more important than sports, and that's becoming a well-rounded person.

And being healthy and eating the right foods, and staying active is a part of that. And that's what everybody here is trying to promote. And that's why I'm so pleased with our U.S.

Olympic Federation and all the teams that have made a commitment to invest in kids like you across the country.

So that's one of the reasons why we're here. But we're also here because this team, these guys, they wanted to talk to you. They're here because they were getting congratulations from the President, but they also said they wanted to talk to kids just like you. And I'm really pleased that you guys are so interested in taking the time not just to play the game but to spend time with young people, talking to them about a whole range of things. So they are here for you.

And I'm going to leave and let them step up. But feel free to ask them any kind of questions. And I've already talked to you all -- you all are not shy. None of them are. Right? So speak up, ask questions. Ask about anything you have on your mind. Don't be nervous. You're at home. And have fun, okay? And keep playing hard, working hard, doing well in school, and eat your vegetables. (Laughter.) All right?

All right, I'm going to get out of here and let these guys take over. Thanks so much. (Applause.)

END

3:19 P.M. EDT
