



Doernbecher Freestyle

A Nike-Doernbecher partnership to raise funds, give hope and honor courage



About Doernbecher Freestyle

Doernbecher Freestyle is a partnership between Doernbecher Children's Hospital and Nike. Each year, a group of special Doernbecher patients who have triumphed over serious illness are selected to design authentic Nike shoes, which are sold at Niketown stores nationwide and online to raise funds for the hospital.

Working with Nike's top creative talent, the patient-designers use their shoes to express powerful personal messages about their lives, their experiences and their hopes for the future. Sometimes serious, sometimes silly, Freestyle shoes give new meaning to the phrase "fashion statement."

All proceeds from shoe sales benefit programs at Doernbecher, the premier pediatric medical center serving Oregon, southwest Washington and the surrounding region. Now in its sixth year, Freestyle has raised more than \$2 million for Doernbecher to date.

Freestyle designers are nominated each year in January by Doernbecher's ChildLife therapists and other staff. In the spring they travel to the Nike campus where they meet their design mentors, brainstorm ideas and begin sketching their designs. The kids have free artistic

license, and the pro designers often pick up a few new tricks from these creative fledglings. The first sample shoes are rushed to Portland in September for an annual unveiling kick-off event. At this exciting fundraiser, bidders spend big bucks to win celebrity-autographed pairs of these highly collectible shoes before they hit the retail market. Nike releases each year's new collection in time for the holiday season at Niketown stores nationwide and at www.nike.com.

The program was conceived by Michael Doherty, Nike's global creative director and a member of the Doernbecher Foundation board of directors (pictured above, far left). The idea was first pitched by Doherty's teenage son: Why not ask Nike to create a custom shoe honoring Doernbecher's brave young patients? It wasn't long before the idea evolved into the program we know today — an empowering opportunity for courageous kids to express themselves in a totally unique way, while at the same time experiencing the thrill of helping other kids like them.

The project is also gratifying to Nike employees. An estimated 8,000 employees representing each department touch the project in some way — and many of them feel it is the most worthwhile thing they work on all year. As one designer put it, "It's the most real thing we do."

www.doernbecherfoundation.org
For more information or to make a gift,
contact 503 294-7101 or 800 800-9583



Doernbecher Children's
Hospital Foundation
at Oregon Health & Science University

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