

Press Release

Barça stars reveal childhood memories of where they first played football

- **New Beko film series reveals the places Suárez, Messi, Piqué, Turan, Rakitić and Ter Stegen used to play as kids**
- **Fans can win the chance to go to an FC Barcelona match at Camp Nou**

28 June 2017 – Playful Places is part of Beko's *Official partner of play* campaign with FCB

Some of the world's best footballers have shared personal memories of their childhood and told stories of the first place they remember playing football in a new series of films from Beko, Premium Partner of FC Barcelona.

Luis Suárez, Lionel Messi, Gerard Piqué, Arda Turan, Ivan Rakitić and Marc-André ter Stegen star in Playful Places, a series which tells the stories of where they first started playing on the path to global fame with Barça. The series is part of Beko's *Official partner of play* campaign to show the importance of play and the joy it can bring to people's lives, young and old.

Uruguayan striker **Suárez** remembers the pitches at Urreta FC, his first club, were not in a good condition, but he still has 'beautiful memories' and 'loved those times' trying to emulate his idols.

FCB's all-time leading scorer **Messi** began playing as a young boy at Grandoli FC in Argentina on pitches of dirt and rocks. His advice to the next generation is to 'enjoy what football is, learn how to win, learn how to lose, but above all enjoy'.

Defender **Piqué** first played at La Masia, the Barça academy, which he calls his 'second home'. His first pitch is now actually a car park, but he recalls the best part of those early days was playing with his friends and learning that football is about respect.

Goalkeeper **Ter Stegen** labels his first club, Borussia Mönchengladbach, a 'really special place' and advises younger players to 'have fun, enjoy playing football and fighting for the win'.

Rakitić first started playing at FC Möhlin-Riburg in Switzerland, which he describes as a 'very important place'. One memory stands out more than others – scoring 18 goals in a 25-0 win!

Turkish international **Turan**'s first pitch is a 'very special place to him' and admits it's 'right in the middle of my heart', especially as it is now named after him – the Arda Turan Spor Tesisleri. The midfielder feels 'privileged to be a role model' for the younger generation.

George Mead, Global Brand Manager at Beko, said: "Whether you are an FC Barcelona super star or just the average person in the street, we all started playing somewhere and have many memories of those early days – whether it was in a car park, on the street, on a pitch with no grass or on a perfect surface at a football academy. Play is important in everyday life, but, as our recent *World Play Shortage Report* highlighted, there is a lack of play among children and adults. Remembering the fun we all had in our Playful Place will hopefully inspire more people to play more."

The *World Play Shortage Report* by Beko highlights how important it is to encourage people to play more. The survey of 22 countries found that, in an average week, children have three hours less leisure time (21 hours) these days compared to their parents' generation (24 hours) – the equivalent of two full 90-minute football matches. Furthermore, a staggering 70% of adults do not rank playing sport as one of their favourite leisure time activities.



The *Official partner of play* campaign is built on FC Barcelona's skilful, attacking football played with freedom and enjoyment both on and off the pitch, a style of play that epitomises the true spirit of football. As a brand, Beko supports people in their busy lives by providing faster, more efficient home appliances, giving them more time and freedom to 'play' every day with the spirit of FC Barcelona.

The film series can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrKc2nHss5g>

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About Beko

Beko is the international home appliance brand of Arçelik Group and a Global Premium Partner of FC Barcelona. It offers product lines that include major appliances, air conditioners and small appliances. Beko is No.1 in the European free-standing white goods market and the second largest home appliance brand in Europe in the white goods sector, and has been the fastest growing brand in the overall European market in the last seven years.

With its leading position, Beko is one of the most important players in the UK's home appliances market, and also holds top position in the French freestanding and Polish total white goods market. Additionally, Beko has become the fastest growing white goods brand in the German market, the biggest white goods market in Europe, in the last five years with nearly three-fold market growth.

For Beko, the smart generation is the greatest source of inspiration in pioneering future solutions. Beko is inspired by people's ever-changing needs and lifestyles and strives to help make consumers' lives easier with smart home appliance solutions. Beko offers a range of smart solutions to cater to the needs of different people, cultures and ways of life in more than 100 countries worldwide by providing fast, flexible and energy saving home appliances with smart technologies and stylish design.

Beko and FC Barcelona

Beko is an Official Premium Partner of FC Barcelona. Beko signed a four-year sponsorship deal at the start of the 2014/15 football season that runs through until the end of 2017/18 season. It is a worldwide partnership that sees the Beko logo placed on the sleeve of the team's kit.

Beko's sponsorship of FC Barcelona will be activated through a new campaign launched in 2016 that highlights the shared values of 'play' between the club and the brand. The *'Official partner of play'* campaign will see world famous players including Lionel Messi, Luis Suárez, Neymar Jr., Andrés Iniesta and Gerard Piqué appear in person and as playful animations.

Further information at:

www.beko.com

For further information, please contact your local Beko team.

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