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# Beltran hosts baseball clinic for kids

## All-Star's charity work is part of his commitment to Harlem RBI

By Anthony DiComo / MLB.com

NEW YORK -- When the Mets have needed help lately, they've looked to Carlos Beltran.

Turns out, they're not alone.

Beltran hosted a baseball clinic for a group of East Harlem children at Shea Stadium on Thursday afternoon in conjunction with his main charity, **Harlem RBI**. And the help Beltran gave those youngsters extended far beyond the confines of a baseball field.



"Just being able to spend time with them, it's a great feeling for me," Beltran said. "That's what it's all about, being able to give back."

Beltran answered as many of the children's questions as he could during the hour-long session -- queries ranging from his family to his childhood to his path to the Major Leagues -- and he then instructed them on hitting and fielding inside the Mets' bullpen.

And the children certainly found the right tutor. Beltran has been perhaps the hottest hitter in the Majors over the past two weeks, amassing seven hits, including three home runs, in his past three games, and he's hitting at a .366 clip since his return from the disabled list on Aug. 10.

Fans appreciate the support, to be sure. After all, while Beltran is mashing, the Mets are winning. Yet any fan would be hard-pressed to appreciate it as much as **Harlem RBI**, to which Beltran is donating \$500 per RBI this season -- a gift that the Mets Foundation is matching dollar for dollar.

Beltran's racked up 83 of those so far this season, good for a combined donation of \$83,000. And over a quarter of that total has flooded in over the past two weeks, creeping Beltran closer to the 116-RBI pace that allowed him to personally donate \$58,000 to the charity last season.

There's no doubt that all that cash will be put to good use. **Harlem RBI** is a youth development program in East Harlem, which is designed to provide underprivileged children with sports, education and enrichment activities. Beltran's been dishing out donations for his RBIs for two years now, and he often makes appearances at charity fund-raisers and special events.

"It's good when it comes from the heart," Beltran said. "I really enjoy doing that, because it's a great thing, because you see the faces of those kids saying good things to you -- 'I admire you,' 'You're my favorite player' and things like that. It makes you feel good."

So imagine how the kids feel. After living a childhood in Puerto Rico without experiencing anything quite like Thursday's clinic, Beltran has an idea. And that's precisely what makes his pride swell.

"When I was 10 or 11 [years old], I didn't have the opportunity of having somebody come to me and talk to me -- somebody that I admire," Beltran said. "For me being able to do that for them, it's a great feeling for me and I know that they really appreciate it."

**Anthony DiComo** is an associate reporter for MLB.com. This story was not subject to the approval of Major League Baseball or its clubs.