

POSSIBILITIES IN MOTION



Does VeloYouth Reduce Teen Smoking?

Nearly five years ago, San Diego VeloYouth began working with kids from Hoover High School. The program has become so popular that students write essays to apply for acceptance into the program. Based on our previous participant surveys, we know that over 80% of youth who participate adopt and maintain healthier eating and exercise choices. But, we never asked specifically about the impact on smoking and drugs. However, for Ned, a junior at Hoover High, that was precisely why he wanted to join VeloYouth. Following is an excerpt from his application essay.

"The main reason why I want to join VeloYouth is... because I am trying to stop smoking. You may be thinking, "Why would I accept a stoner into my program?" Although I am not perfect, I am making changes in my life so I can become who I want and achieve my dream of becoming a Pararescue Jumper. How exactly am I going to use VeloYouth to make these changes? I just moved to California and don't

have many friends, so I spend a lot of my time by myself over-thinking things. I feel VeloYouth will [connect me with positive people] and help me stop smoking weed... it would help me grow as a person. I hope you consider me a good candidate for this amazing program."

Ned was accepted into the program because he had the desire to be part of a team, to work hard and adhere to the VeloYuth guidelines, and to make a change in his young life. He reached his goals of meeting positive people and has stopped smoking.

Ned is one of the many kids who allow SDVY to carry out its mission of offering healthy alternatives to at-risk youngsters and set them on a path that can change their habits and their lives, one lap at a time.

Congratulations!

In September 17 athletes from Chula Vista Middle School earned bikes AND raised \$1,200 to Pay It Forward for another group of students.

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Thank YOU!

Thanks to all of you who helped make our 10th Anniversary Commemorative Cycling Jersey sales event a success! We look forward to seeing you out on the road with your San Diego VeloYouth jerseys. And a big THANK YOU to Eliel Cycling for their support, design and partnership.



Holiday Shopping?

This season, when you shop on Amazon, log into smile.amazon.com and select **Quality of Life Connections**. Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase to San Diego VeloYouth.

Words of Wisdom

At SDVY, the biggest lessons learned are usually not about the bikes. Our program is about values and respect. It is amazing how quickly the message is heard and absorbed. We see changes in behavior, language, and attitudes because the program reaches out to each youngster's highest and best self. The kids overcome challenges on and off the bike. It is their time to prove themselves, to be of service, and it is their choice.

Some of the feedback we receive speaks volumes about the effect of SDVY:

"When I started VeloYouth, I felt nervous...but I realized that in order to achieve my dreams I need to engage in more fearful activities. At the end of the program, I felt like I could do anything."

- Billy, Monarch School
for the Homeless

Jorge: A Story Of Positivity

We are often inspired more by another's attitude than by their ability. This was the case with Jorge.

Jorge had never ridden a bike, but when he heard about San Diego VeloYouth through Chula Vista Middle School, he decided it was time to learn.

He spent the first few weeks in the program session walking his bike around the warm-up circle, pushing the bike from the saddle, feeling and learning how the bike steers. The next step was riding a small bike without pedals – pushing the bike with his feet on the ground and then lifting up for that few seconds of balance. While these are common techniques in learning to ride, what was uncommon was that throughout this time, Jorge was cheering and encouraging his teammates, sharing his progress and spreading positivity all around him.

Our program encourages S.T.A.R.s - Self respect, Teamwork, Achievement and Responsibility. We work hard to show each student how to use S.T.A.R.s to create a path toward success. This is a hard concept to understand and even harder to put into practice. Jorge, however, naturally demonstrated all of these values to the rest of his classmates. Although his path was different from others, he was proud of what he was accomplishing.



When the day came for Jorge to get pedals on his bike, all the coaches and students gathered around in support of his first time riding a complete bicycle. Being the center of attention made him nervous, but he faced his fears and pushed through them to ride a lap on the track, with everyone yelling and cheering for him. The very next day, during the pay-it-forward bike-a-thon, he rode 36 laps.

Jorge is proof that we can all learn from one another, and that attitude inspires.

Welcome Crawford High!

San Diego VeloYouth welcomes 20 students from Crawford High School to their first program from October 31 - December 13 to experience S.T.A.R.S and earn a bike through Paying It Forward and Giving Back to our community.

About Our Organization

QOLC is a California-based 501(c)(3) founded in 2006. We operate with a volunteer staff and Board of Directors. QOLC is funded by in-kind donations, grants and private gifts. All monetary donations benefit the youth we serve.

San Diego VeloYouth
c/o Quality of Life Connections
3455 Malpazo Court
Bonita, CA 91902



Info@VeloYouth.org
www.VeloYouth.org

Positively Impacting
Our World, One Life
at a Time.

Visit our website for photos and information: www.VeloYouth.org The public is welcome to watch **SDVY** cyclists in action at the San Diego Velodrome in Balboa Park's Morley Field.



"I learned that I am the only person in control of myself and my bike."

– Keila, 8th Grade
Monarch School

Wish List

As a nonprofit organization, **San Diego VeloYouth** is limited by financial constraints. Dedicated people who believe in making a difference are vital to the ongoing success of the program. We welcome your support and have many opportunities for gifts of time, money or equipment.

- Volunteers to support young athletes – cheering and encouraging the kids. Cycling experience is not required.

- In-kind donations: Helmets, Cycling shorts, Jerseys, Bicycles in good condition, and Office Supplies.
- Monetary donations: QOLC is working towards our 2017 goal of raising \$120,000 for the purchase of: Bicycles & Equipment.

All donations are welcomed, appreciated and tax deductible.