

POSSIBILITIES IN MOTION



Belonging

This is such a quiet word that conjures up a myriad of emotions and memories in a very loud voice. We all long to belong.

There are times when some of our VeloYouth kids have never felt they belonged. How they strive to meet this very basic need can be complicated. It can be as dramatic as joining a gang or enduring an abusive situation, or as uncomplicated as sitting with friends at lunch and just hanging out. It can also be as surprising, often life-changing, as a 6-week session with SDVY.

When we meet a new group of kids, we always consider the big questions of where do these VeloYouth kids belong? When do they belong? Why do they belong, or not belong? The answers, when they surface, help to guide us in our journey to reach these boys and girls in a positive way and let them know our door is open and the ride is safe. SDVY gives them an opportunity to belong.

Trust is a vital component in finding success and in belonging. When the boys and girls realize they are part of a team and that others care about them, they begin fitting into the VeloYouth family. They are expected to show up, contribute to the team and do their best. In return, they are nurtured, encouraged and exposed to valuable life's lessons, on and off the bikes. They belong.

How does VeloYouth help make all our athletes gain that feeling of belonging? It starts with challenging them in ways they can succeed... and that creates trust.

VeloYouth is not a class where kids just show up. It is a class that takes them out of their comfort zones and shows them that they can do so much more than they imagined. They are guided with strength, understanding, patience and kindness. A high bar is set, and our kids reach, stretch and grow to get there.

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At one of our recent sessions, Juanita feared going into the class, but took the first big step by signing up. Day 1 kicks off with multiple challenges. The first is dressing in a cycling kit. This is a great way for them to understand that what feels strange and outside their comfort zone goes away when everyone does the same thing. The next challenge is riding a bike with no brakes on a track that has banking. This was another significant act of trust for Juanita and a time for the coach to gain insight into her confidence level. How far could she be pushed? Would a firm or soft approach work best? This is a meaningful step in the program, creating the belief that each one of the kids is important, and each one of them belongs at SDVY. As they grow in trust and self-confidence, their sense of belonging increases.

Juanita had unique personal challenges to overcome. She underwent almost 30 surgeries when she was younger; she has lung problems, and she uses an inhaler for asthma. Physically, this made the idea of a "cycling class" a stretch. In addition, she considered herself an introvert and isolated herself both at school and VeloYouth. Slowly she began to explore her new biking journey and looked forward to the classes. To the surprise and joy of her Mom and Coach Matt, she rode 20 laps during the Pay It Forward Bike-o-thon. All of these small shifts moved her into a place of confidence and a feeling of camaraderie and belonging.

During the last week of classes, Juanita was overheard asking one of her teammates if they wanted to ride with her during some free ride time. This young lady, who had previously felt most comfortable isolating, truly became one of the team. It is moments like this that underscore the difference VeloYouth makes. The kids get to ride bikes and learn about S.T.A.R.S., but the long-lasting effects of confidence and a feeling of belonging to a team that sees you as your best version of yourself is what VeloYouth will always be about. It is a place for all kids to feel they Belong.

Congratulations, Chula Vista Middle School!

This spring CVMS had its biggest SDVY class ever with 15 new participants and 6 returning mentors!



A Message from Our President

Matt Hoffmann, President

Dear Friends, Teammates, and Donors,

Our positive thoughts go out to all of you as we cope during this health crisis. San Diego VeloYouth has always been a program designed to create a better quality of life for everyone involved. That mission does not change in these times of ups and downs. With your help and support, we continually grow. We are a small, hard-working Board of Directors and, while we keep up and even drive growth, it is always a juggling act of adding new schools, new programs, and new people.

VeloYouth is taking this time, with schools closed and programs postponed, to shift focus and give greater attention to the ideas we don't always have time to fully develop. We are enhancing our programs with our partners with the goal of seeing our kids more and being of greater service.

VeloYouth offers stability for everyone, especially our kids. We will be there with open arms as soon as schools re-open. We will remind all the kids that in good and not as good times VeloYouth is a team they can count on. As always, VeloYouth will be reminding kids of the greatness and strength inside all of us. We are in this together, and together we will weather the storm with hope.



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:

"I learned that I need to keep my word."

- *Cristina, Monarch School*

Your BEST Investment...

A Tax Deduction for You; A Fresh State of Mind for a Child...

We are excited to announce that VeloYouth has partnered with Dunham & Associates to offer new ways to donate and invest in VeloYouth kids. You can now donate appreciated assets, such as stocks, bonds, real estate, art and collectible cars. You can also work with VeloYouth to establish Charitable Remainder Trusts and Pooled Income Funds. These options may offer very significant tax savings to our donors and a chance to make a REAL difference in a child's life forever.

VeloYouth now accepts donations of used vehicles. Turn your old car into a tax benefits by gifting it to VeloYouth. Please visit our website for a link to more information and instructions for our car donation program.

Thank you for your continued support.

"I learned to communicate with respect."

– Even, 7th Grade
Monarch School

About Our Organization

We are a California 501(c)(3) founded in 2006. We operate with a predominantly volunteer staff and Board of Directors, funded by in-kind donations, grants and private gifts. All donations benefit the youth we serve. Visit our website for information: www.VeloYouth.org The public is welcome to watch **SDVY** students in action at the San Diego Velodrome in Balboa Park's Morley Field. Our class schedules and directions are on our website.

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. All gifts are welcomed, appreciated and tax deductible.

- Volunteers - cycling experience is not required.
- In-kind donations: Helmets, Cycling shorts, Jerseys, Bicycles, and Office Supplies.
- Donations: SDVY is working towards our 2020 goal of raising \$110,000 to operate our programs.

Positively Impacting Our World, One Life at a Time.

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

