



## IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

# Dropout Prevention that Works

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a research-based, internationally-recognized **dropout prevention** program that has kept 98 percent of its tutors in school. In the program, secondary students who are considered at-risk of dropping out of school are placed as tutors of elementary students, enabling them to make a difference in the younger students' lives.

Given this role of personal and academic responsibility, the Valued Youth tutors bolster their self-discipline and self-esteem. Schools shift to the philosophy and practices of valuing students considered at-risk. The program supports them with positive recognition and instruction.

### Dropout Prevention and More

The goal of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is to reduce dropout rates. Participating schools have also seen:

- Enhanced basic academic skills and life skills;
- Strengthened perceptions of self and school;
- Reduced disciplinary action referrals and absenteeism; and
- Strengthened school-home-community partnerships.

### Research-Based Design

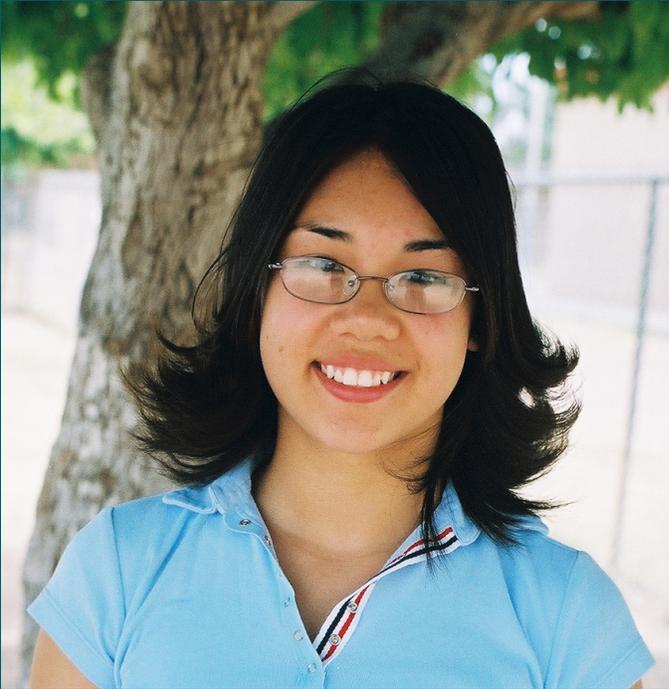
The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is a research-based program, as required by the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The program was extensively researched in 1989 using a longitudinal, quasi-experimental design with data collected for the treatment and comparison group students before tutoring began, during implementation, and at the end of the first and second program years. A full description of the research base is online at [www.idra.org](http://www.idra.org).

“The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has made me a better student because interaction with children has helped me be more caring and understanding. Knowing that my tutees are expecting me to be there, I enjoy going every day... I understand now that we can all improve a student's outlook on school by taking time a few minutes a day to help out.”

– High school tutor



# All children are valuable...



“ I have to work hard to keep my grades up so I can keep tutoring and set a good example for my young students. ”  
– Middle school tutor



## Rigorous Evaluation

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program’s ongoing evaluation provides information throughout the program, allowing for adjustments to ensure a quality program implementation. The program utilizes a pre- and post-test evaluation that includes quantitative and qualitative measures to gauge student progress. Students are evaluated by classroom teachers at the elementary and secondary campuses. Evaluation data are collected on a secure web site.

## Funding Options

School districts use the following funding sources to implement the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program in their schools:

- Federal funds, such as Title I-Part A (Basic Program), Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Title II and Title III;
- State compensatory and migrant funds;
- Other federal and state funding directed at dropout prevention;
- Funds identified through school-business partnerships with Coca-Cola Bottlers, other businesses and local civic groups.

## Role of Participating Schools

In broadest terms, the role of the schools in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program includes:

- Supporting the program at the district level;
- Accepting the program’s philosophy as consistent with the school’s mission;
- Setting goals for the school in terms of keeping at-risk students in school and helping them succeed;
- Resolving to meet these goals through planning and action;
- Committing time, effort and other resources to implementing the program’s critical elements;
- Collecting evaluation information to assess program implementation and program success; and
- Valuing all youth.



The IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program was named a Hispanic Ed Bright Spot by the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics

– September 2015

# None is expendable

## Program Elements

The program has **five instructional strategies**.

### Tutoring Sessions

– Tutors tutor a minimum of four hours a week for one class period a day.

### Classes for Tutors

– Tutors meet with their secondary school teacher coordinator once a week.

### Educational Field Trips

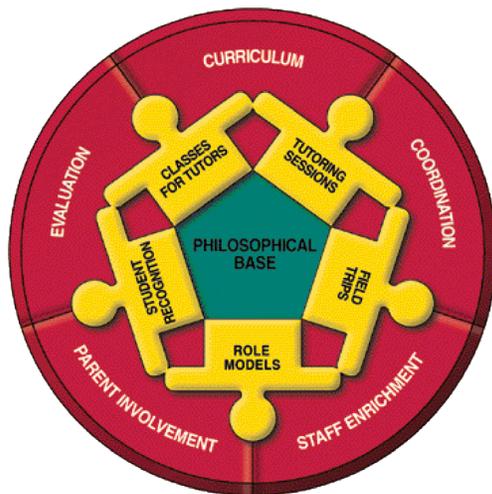
– Tutors go on at least two to three trips to explore career, economic and cultural opportunities.

### Mentors and Role-Models

– Adults who are considered successful in their fields and who represent students' ethnic background are invited to participate.

### Student Recognition

– Students are acknowledged for the efforts and contributions they make as tutors.



It also has **five support strategies**:

### Curriculum

– The objectives of the curricular framework are improving the students' self-concept, tutoring skills, and literary skills.

### Coordination

– Periodic meetings are held to coordinate all activities, facilitate communication among personnel and provide first-hand information for monitoring the program.

### Staff Enrichment

– Training and technical assistance is provided to implementation team administrators and teachers.

### Parent Involvement

– The program demonstrates to families that the school takes their children's education seriously and values the families' contributions.

### Evaluation

– IDRA analyzes data and other information for each school to inform implementation of the program.

The program has been approved by the Texas State Board of Education as an innovative course eligible for elective credit at the high school level.

“I refuse to miss school because I do not want to disappoint my students.”

– Middle school tutor



# IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

## Creating Success

The program has been successful everywhere it has been in keeping Valued Youth students in school, in the classroom and learning. Since its inception in 1984, the program has kept 33,200 students in school, young people who were previously considered at risk of dropping out.

## Role of IDRA

IDRA provides the following to preserve the integrity of the program and ensure that students succeed.

- ✓ **General program orientation for administrators and counselors**
- ✓ **General program orientation for elementary, secondary core teachers, parents and students**
- ✓ **Site observations of tutors working with tutees**
- ✓ **Teacher coordinator participation in annual national program institute**
- ✓ **Implementation team meetings on site**
  - First Implementation Team Meeting – beginning of program
  - Second Implementation Team Meeting – halfway through program
  - Third Implementation Team Meeting – end of program year
- ✓ **Three training and technical assistance sessions for faculty** working with tutors, including core area teachers, teacher coordinator, administrators and counselors

### *What Successful Teachers Can Do to Prepare At-risk Students for College?*

#### **1. Develop teachers' efficacy in working with at-risk students**

- How to articulate students' high expectations

#### **2. College readiness strategies for students deemed at-risk**

- Strengthening and integrating study skills into the curriculum
- Competencies students need in order to excel in school and in college

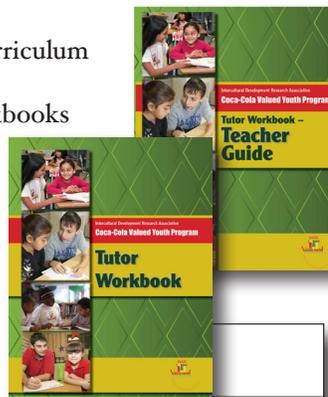
#### **3. Developing students' self-efficacy as a prerequisite to school success**

- Modeling and peer collaboration
- Capitalizing on student assets
- Building effective teaching and learning strategies
- Developing cognitive and non-cognitive skills
- Providing caring support to build confidence, creativity and excitement

#### **4. Other to be determined in consultation with school district.**

#### ✓ **Materials**

- Teacher Curriculum Guide (1)
- Tutor Workbooks (1 per tutor)
- Tutee Kit & Tutor Kit (1 master)



#### ✓ **Program Evaluation Report**

- Online evaluation review and training for collection of data
- Student case studies
- Analysis and interpretation of data
- Report and presentations to school district administrative team and school board

#### ✓ **Online Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Fellows network**

#### ✓ **Additional Activities**

- Assistance with planning and coordinating student leadership days
- Videoconferencing with network schools (nationally and internationally)
- Assistance with planning and participation in recognition events (end of year, tutor of the month, field trips, etc.)



The lives of more than 654,000 children, families and educators have been positively impacted by the program.

Visit our YouTube channel to learn more:  
<http://budurl.com/IDRAYoutube>



**Let the IDRA  
Coca-Cola Valued  
Youth Program  
touch the lives of  
students, parents  
and educators in  
your district.**

To get started,  
contact IDRA  
at 210-444-1710 or  
contact@idra.org.

## Getting Started at Your School

### 1 Identify a secondary school

Choose a middle or high school that is interested in and committed to implementing the program. Secondary and elementary schools within walking distance are good choices. For schools not within walking distance, include cost of transportation.

### 2 Schedule a class during the day titled “Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program”

Note that the Texas State Board of Education has approved the program as an elective course. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is an in-school program and should be scheduled as a regular elective course. The class is held every day. It should be held preferably in the morning. Four days a week, the tutors will go to a nearby elementary to tutor. On the fifth day, the students will meet as a class to prepare for the following week, complete paperwork, have their guest speakers and take their field trips.

### 3 Identify a teacher at the secondary campus

This person must: (1) be a core area teacher, (2) have at least three years teaching experience, (3) volunteer for participation, and (4) accept the valued youth philosophy. This teacher will become the advocate for the students and will coordinate the program on campus.

### 4 Identify an elementary school

Chose an elementary school within walking distance from the secondary campus. Otherwise, the school should be accessible by bus. Speak with the elementary principal about partnering on this project and accepting tutors on his or her campus as well as the most appropriate time for the tutoring period.

### 5 Identify an elementary teacher

This person will act as the elementary teacher representative and coordinate with the secondary teacher coordinator to place tutors in classrooms and trouble shoot at the elementary level.

### 6 Identify 20 to 25 students to participate

These students must fit the criteria for being tutors in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program. Students who are considered to be in at risk situations should be identified by your district or campus. Such situations can be: high absences, disciplinary problems, ESL status, exceptionally shy, struggling with academics, and retained two or more times. There are many other criteria that could be identified by the campus. There should be a mix of students.

### 7 Set up the process for paying tutors

Participating students should receive reliable compensation for their work as tutors.

### 8 Match tutors with their elementary classrooms teachers

Match tutors and teachers after the tutors have taken their pre-tests and completed observations at the elementary campus. Elementary teachers determine which three students his or her tutor will work with throughout the year.

### 9 Review online evaluation tools and procedures

### 10 Distribute tutor materials

**The Coca-Cola  
Valued Youth  
Program was  
featured as an  
“American Graduate Champion” by  
PBS.**



– KLRN-SA October 3, 2015

### 11 Set up your implementation team

Once the middle and elementary school have been selected as Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program sites, each school should begin selecting individuals who will make up the implementation team. All of these individuals should attend the implementation team meetings. Implementation team meetings are held at the **beginning, middle and end of each program year** to establish goals for the program and determine the ongoing status of programmatic activities.

#### Implementation team members are

District members...

- One school district administrator

Middle school team members...

- Secondary principal
- Teacher coordinator
- Evaluation liaison
- Family liaison

Elementary school team members:

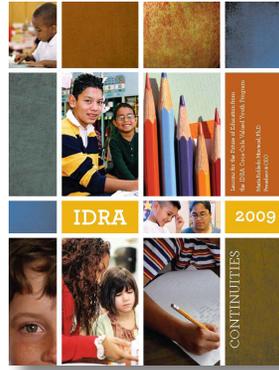
- Elementary principal
- Elementary representative (an elementary teacher who receives tutors and will represent other receiving teachers)

“The only thing that kept my feet firmly planted on the ground was the knowledge that I was here for someone else, and they were depending on me... These children were my light.”

– High school tutor

## What We Have Learned

Anchored in the program's many years of experience, *Continuities: Lessons for the Future of Education from the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program*, captures seven key lessons for improving the quality of education for all students.



- 1. Valuing Youth Works.** If you provide young people with an opportunity to contribute – to themselves, their families, their communities – they will.
- 2. Local Ownership is Key.** To scale up and replicate success requires holding fast to essentials while adapting to local contexts.
- 3. School Leadership Sets the Tone.** To squarely take on attrition, school leaders must inspire innovation, embody engagement, and incorporate actionable knowledge.
- 4. Realizing the Power of One + One + One.** All students must have at least one caring adult in their lives at school and a reason to care.
- 5. Family and Community Engagement is Essential.** The school-family-community triad is at the heart of holding on to students and ensuring their success.
- 6. Success Demands Well-Defined Partnerships.** When roles are clear and each partner contributes from its unique strengths, a multi-sector collaboration can reap dramatic results.
- 7. Structure and Innovation Sustains Impact.** Transformative impact demands sustained structures, resources and a commitment to valuing all youth.

Visit IDRA's website to read the *Continuities* publication, get other information, see videos about the program and read essays by students on how the program impacted their lives.

**Let the IDRA Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program touch the lives of students, parents and educators in your district.**

To get started, contact IDRA at 210-444-1710 or [contact@idra.org](mailto:contact@idra.org).



INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION  
MARIA "CUCA" ROBLEDO MONTECEL, PH.D., PRESIDENT & CEO  
5815 CALLAGHAN ROAD, SUITE 101  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78228  
210.444.1710 • FAX 210.444.1714  
[CONTACT@IDRA.ORG](mailto:CONTACT@IDRA.ORG) • [WWW.IDRA.ORG](http://WWW.IDRA.ORG)



“When school started, I felt a big emptiness inside me. I felt that if I missed a day of class no one would notice. Now that I started in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, I have a better self-esteem. Through the VYP, three kids have made a change in my life... I know that I am making a big difference in their lives.”

– Middle school tutor

