

EDUCATION

Youth Development Programs Gain Momentum in Schools

NewsUSA

(NU) - Receiving a comprehensive education in today's society requires more than leaving the educational system with knowledge about algebra or an understanding of how to write a compound sentence. Today, more than ever, leaders, educators and communities alike are looking for programs that go beyond academic education, but develop youth into well-rounded citizens.

Long before youth development programs were a growing trend in our school systems, Lions Quest, a global program of Lions Clubs International Foundation, was already helping schools and communities develop youth into strong, healthy members of society. Founded in 1984, Lions Quest is recognized by the United States Department of Education and continues to be a leader among positive youth development programs.

Comprehensive programs that center on positive youth development provide adolescents with the essential skills to help them lead healthier lifestyles, resist drug use and develop a positive self-image. As children today continue to be confronted with pressures at earlier ages, incorporating programs that educate them about these issues is essential.

The Lions Quest program centers its curriculum on social and emotional learning. The foundation of a student's success in school, work and life is closely tied to social and emotional learning. Service-learning is another core focus of Lions Quest, demonstrating to youth the importance of serving others.

Results show that Lions Quest youth have experienced up to a 50



Youth development programs that focus on self-esteem and community service turn kids into active citizens.

percent decrease in bullying, while increasing their connectedness to school 100 percent. In addition, students' use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs was reduced or remained stagnant as a result of the program.

Each year, 3.8 million children throughout the U.S. benefit from Lions Quest in their school or community, demonstrating the long history of the program in developing healthy, strong school-aged children.

As the trend toward comprehensive education grows, Lions Quest continues to pave the way as a premier program. Through such programs, youth are better equipped to resist drugs and alcohol, discover a commitment to serving their community through service and develop into the leaders of tomorrow.

Visit www.lions-quest.org for more information about the Lions Quest program.