

# CROYA is The Best Place to Make New Friends

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If you know anyone who is involved in CROYA, I am sure that you have heard them rave about the funky Wednesday night high school meetings, and the “life-changing” retreats in the fall and spring. If you do not know anything about CROYA or anyone involved, you may have only heard the familiar “cult” stigma that has been built up around it.

Although it may be intimidating to attend your first CROYA meeting, as someone who is incredibly involved I can honestly say that it is 100% worth it. Even if you end up leaving CROYA not totally excited about what you just experienced, it is always good to try something new!



CROYA Pink Party 2023 October Service Meeting for Breast Cancer

I would be lying if I said that I was never intimidated at CROYA or nervous to attend a Wednesday night meeting. As a freshman especially, I was incredibly nervous and scared of the upperclassmen and being with a group of people that I was not familiar with. However, I quickly became in awe of the upperclassmen and how much fun they were having with running the meetings. I saw their passion for CROYA and that passion quickly spread over me.



Part of the stigma that has built up around CROYA has been that it is “too late to go” or “I won’t like it because I don’t know anyone there” but both of these common misconceptions have been proven wrong time and time again. I have gotten to know many seniors this year who have recently gotten involved in CROYA by attending the fall retreat, and many of them have said that they wished they had gotten involved in CROYA sooner. Those who braved the intimidation by going into the CROYA building alone have been able to walk out of that building with a friend. As soon as you walk through the doors, a friendly face is welcoming you and genuinely excited about your presence.



2023 Fall Retreat Small Group

The CROYA retreat has left me and everyone else who has attended with a new outlook on life and people that you would never have imagined being close with. I talk to many people from my fall 2023 retreat group every day, and I look forward to hanging out with them and seeing them every Wednesday. I never would have imagined that I would have a close relationship with each of the people in the retreat groups that I have been a part of, but I am so grateful that CROYA granted me the opportunity to do so.

I have never experienced a place like this, and this is why I think that CROYA is ultimately the best place to make new friends. As many people have friends from their middle school or sports that they have played their whole life, it can be difficult to make new connections in high school. I can confidently say that my closest friends now that I have not grown up with are from CROYA. Even if CROYA has not brought people some of their closest friends like it has for me, the CROYA retreat is an opportunity to make guaranteed new friendships.

CROYA not only offers a unique opportunity to make new friends and connect with peers that you may have never met, but it also offers many community service events where new friendships are inevitable. The CROYA work trip is right around the corner with the dates this summer being from June 10th-14th. This will be the second annual work trip in Macomb, Illinois partnering with Habitat for Humanity. I attended last year’s CROYA work trip which was their first work trip after Covid. This work trip consisted of eight high school students who were all eager to volunteer and learn what the week was all about. New friendships are bound to be formed on this work trip and close relationships are heightened! It is an amazing experience and a great way to combine fun and work while learning new things about yourself and how to be a better person. This work trip is offered for anyone who has attended CROYA in high school and I encourage you to look into it and look into all that CROYA offers!



Work Trip 2023

Although the last regular Wednesday night high school CROYA meeting of the year was last Wednesday, CROYA offers many opportunities this summer to volunteer as well as hangout and have fun! Even if you don’t get around to attending CROYA this summer, the Wednesday night meetings will start up again as soon as school begins in the fall! A new school year can be all about new beginnings and trying new things, which offers the perfect opportunity to attend at least one CROYA meeting! I don’t think that you will regret it!