

# School Counsellor Newsletter



## Our boys can be leaders everyday

Edition Twelve

It is a natural desire as parents to hope our children have leadership qualities, yet sometimes I wonder if we overlook the myriad of opportunities we have every day to role model and teach our children how to be leaders. This often starts with how we define leadership. Every one of us has opportunities to lead every day, whether it be leading the way by showing kindness and respect, speaking up for someone who may not be able to do so themselves, or stepping in when somebody needs support. So whether your son is in Year 7 and may be thinking of leadership positions next year, or is about to go to high school where he will not have as many 'official' leadership options as a Year 9 student, or is figuring out the kind of person and leader he would like to be, there are many ways that you can support them as their parent.

### **Communication, including listening and negotiating**

We can role model to our sons how to speak confidently and respectfully to others, encouraging our sons to do so as well, even if they feel nervous. You might want to teach your son how to shake hands when they meet people, or one or two sentences they can use to start a conversation with another person.

Listening to people is a vital communication skill so talking to your son about acknowledging what is important to their friends and looking at them when

they are talking, as well as not interrupting and not taking over their friend's conversations, is important. Reminding ourselves of this is also useful at times!

Negotiation skills are also essential when communicating so if you do not already, consider giving your son the opportunity to be part of decision making. This will not only help his conversation skills but it will also help him to see and appreciate different viewpoints.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

As you know, Medbury is excited to be introducing the Aristotle programme, which focuses on Emotional Intelligence. This will help your son to understand his own feelings, boost resilience, develop empathy for others and build strong relationships, which, in turn, will help his problem-solving and leadership skills. Ask your son about the Aristotle lessons his teacher has delivered and follow up with any activities. A simple way to start at home is to discuss emotions as much as possible; name them, describe them and share how you are able to cope with challenging emotions as these are a part of life. This can lead on to conversations about acknowledging people's different perspectives and reminding ourselves to use a kind inner voice.

### **Integrity**

A key leadership quality, and Medbury value, is integrity. An easy way to explain integrity to your son is that it is "doing the right thing even when nobody is

looking." The easiest way to model it to your son is to be honest and display the morals you value; it is not always easy but it should always be the goal! You could use cartoon characters and real life heroes to illustrate and discuss being honest and moral. You could also ask your son about the book they are currently reading, or a video they are watching, and what values they admire in the lead characters.

Sportsmanship is another great way to learn to respect others, which is key to integrity. It will also give your sons the chance to face the reality of opponents who may not play with integrity. Having open communications about playing by the rules and doing the right thing even if it means losing will create powerful teaching opportunities in regard to leading by example.



## Jenelle Hooson

**Jenelle is a Registered Provisional Member with NZAC (New Zealand Association of Counsellors).**

If you wish to discuss the services the school counsellor can provide please see your son's homeroom teacher or Amos Pilgrim  
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