



## The Principal's Letter

Lord, we give thanks for the confidence and trust that is at the heart of the MacKillop experience. May it always be so. Amen.

Dear families, students and friends,

### WHAT MAKES A SCHOOL A HAPPY AND SAFE PLACE?

For a Catholic school like MacKillop, trust, the giving and receiving of dignity, and the qualities of respect and mutual obligation are key values in building a learning community that is robust, safe, and life-giving. The sharing of ideas, the giving and receiving of argument, critical research, and collaborative problem solving demand these qualities.

As boys and girls move through their adolescence to adulthood, these values are tested, challenged, and refined. Much of the data that the College generates around learning and wellbeing indicates an abundance of these qualities in our school.

But this is not the case for everybody.

MacKillop will continue to explore ways to engage our students in the building up of dignity, respect, and trust, and I am very grateful to the parents and caregivers of our students who support the College in this regard. Were parents and caregivers to engage our students in dialogue about what trust looks like and the challenges around tolerance and understanding, this would be a good thing.

The College will survey year groups and parents early next term as we endeavour to seek feedback to better inform policy and practice at MacKillop. Intelligent and sensitive conversations would be timely prior to these surveys being undertaken.

### SENIOR EXAMS

Senior Exams commenced this morning at the Isabella Campus. These exams provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate what they understand, know, and can do and the challenge of examination conditions provides them with skills for the future. Whilst examinations are only one instrument of assessment, the evaluation and feedback they provide are critical in the growth of our students. We wish each and every student the best of luck with their end of semester exams.

### ACTING UP! PERFORMANCE

Congratulations to the performing arts department, to teacher Bella van Doorn, and to the Year 12 students involved in ACTING UP!, which was held at the Canberra Theatre Centre this week. It was an opportunity for these students to showcase their talents and creativity in front of a large audience.

There is a lot to celebrate about performing arts at MacKillop, and we look forward the College Musical and Variety Night, which will both take place during Term 3.

Yours in St Mary MacKillop,

MICHAEL LEE, COLLEGE PRINCIPAL



## College News



### Welcome to our exchange students!

St Mary MacKillop College welcomes our four visiting exchange students from Institution St Joseph's: Lola, Lucas, Clarisse, and Mathilde. The students were greeted by their host families at Canberra Airport and will stay with us for two months. A big thank you to the Scott, Bowles, Staniforth and Boyd families for their generosity and making our guests feel at home in Canberra.

*Peter Johnson, International Programs Officer*



### ACTING UP! Festival

This year, our Year 12 Drama students performed as part of the 'ACTING UP!' festival. They presented an original work 'What Would Your Answer Be?' The piece explored the questions: If you were to die today, would you feel satisfied with all you have achieved? Does evil exist? And what happens after you die?

The ensemble performance was precise, creative and impressive. Following their success they were invited to present their piece at the Gala performance on Tuesday 6 June. This Gala showcased the best acts from across the festival. They joined drama students from across the ACT as they presented their original performance at the Playhouse, Canberra Theatre Centre. Congratulations to all members of the Year 12 Drama class.

*Bella van Doorn, Performing Arts*

## Upcoming Events

JUNE  
MONDAY

12

- Queen's Birthday Public Holiday

JUNE  
MONDAY

19

- Year 7 Camp (Group 1) departs
- Year 12 AST Trial

JUNE  
TUESDAY

20

- Year 12 AST Trial

JUNE  
WEDNESDAY

21

- Year 7 Camp (Group 2) departs
- Year 9 Transition Day

JUNE  
MONDAY

26

- Year 11 2018 Parent Info Session

## Admin News

### Fees are now overdue

Fees for Term 2 should now be finalised unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved arrangement. Any outstanding fees should be paid immediately. Please note the College no longer accepts cheques.

If you would like to switch off paper statements and receive Fee Statements via email, please send an email to me at [michelle.predovan@mackillop.act.edu.au](mailto:michelle.predovan@mackillop.act.edu.au) from the email address you would like to receive your statement.

If you require more information regarding Direct Debit arrangements or other approved payment methods or are experiencing difficulty paying the fees please contact the Fees Office.

*Michelle Predovan, Fees Manager*

### NCCD - data collection

All schools across Australia will again be participating in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD). The NCCD will enable National and State governments to better target support and resources in schools. This in turn will help Catholic Schools access the support for all students with additional needs.

The Data Collection will take place in August. No personal or identifying information about any student will be included, however, if you decide you do not wish for information about your son/daughter to be included in the NCCD, you are asked to contact the Principal, Mr Michael Lee, to discuss your concerns. If you are still concerned you should request and complete an opt-out form and return to the principal. This form is available at the following link: <https://www.mackillop.act.edu.au/index.php/nccd>

More information is available at: <http://www.schooldisabilitydatapla.edu.au/>

### Qkr! - Online payment system

Last year, the College introduced a new online payment system for the convenience of parents making payments for school fees, excursions, purchasing tickets, uniforms, sport socks, etc. You no longer need to leave the comfort of your home or send cash into the College to pay for these items.

Simply download *Qkr! By MasterPass* from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store on your mobile device. Alternatively, head to <http://mackillop.act.edu.au/qkr/> to set up a Qkr! account.

When setting up your account and your student profile, make sure you **opt in** to receive notifications. By opting in to receive notifications you will be notified about new payments relevant for your student's year group.

Qkr! is provided by MasterCard so you know your payments are secure. No information will be stored on your mobile device. Registration details and card information are saved securely on the MasterCard network. If you choose to pay using a MasterCard, you will also benefit from MasterCard's Zero Liability policy which protects the cardholder from fraud and unauthorised charges. The College accepts Visa and MasterCard credit/debit cards.

If you require help downloading Qkr!, come into front reception at the Wanniasa Campus with your mobile device and Jayne Limbrick would be happy to help with this process.

Already registered but cannot remember your password? Please call the Qkr! Helpline on 1800 689 562 so they can delete your account, then you can re-register to take advantage of this quick and easy payment app.

All payments to the College can be made quicker with Qkr!  
*Jayne Limbrick, Accounts & Fee Payments*





# Pastoral Care

Mrs Monica Bailey,  
AP Pastoral Care

## Status Awards

Congratulations to the following students who have been presented Status Awards at this week's Wanniasa Campus Assembly:

**Bronze Status:** Maddie Arnold (7W3), Lexie Cornwall (7F3), Patrick Couper (7W1), Emily Cridland (7EW), Alyssa Davidson (7F2), Tayla Davis (7W2), Amelie Dean (7W1), Amy Frost (7W1), Alexander Hitchins (7F2), Stephanie Horsfall (7E2), Eli Hunter (7F3), Alicia Hurst (9E3), Ghassan Issa (7F3), Megan Jeffery (7A3), Carly Lyons (7AF), Joshua Mousley (7A1), Owen Quantrill (7AF), Brooklyn-Louise Skilling (7W1), Ariadne Stergiou (7W1), Lucas Toman (7A1), Ben Wiggan (7F2), Zachary Williams (7E3).

**Silver Status:** Tara McInnes (9E1).



## Isabella Stress Less Week

As senior students ourselves we understand the stress that students go through when faced with exams. We created Stress Less Week in the lead up to senior exams and during Year 10 exam week to try and minimize stress and improve students' overall results.

On Monday a gratitude wall was available in the quad where students were given the opportunity to write on a banner and answer the question "What are you grateful for?" This was to encourage students to focus on what they are grateful for rather than focusing on their exam stress and what they don't have. The gratitude banner was then hung up in the library for all students to see.

Isabella students spent lunchtime on Tuesday listening to live music performances from some of our very talented MacKillop students. Not only did this create a great vibe for everyone but also gave the students an opportunity to relax and take their mind off what was happening in the classroom.

On Wednesday, we handed out free 'stress less' wrist bands to all students that were kindly donated by Mental Health Australia. These wrist bands were distributed to remind students that sustaining a healthy mindset is vital during this stressful time. Throughout the day, various interviews were conducted with students around the campus to ask them about the techniques they use to 'stress less' which received positive results.

Free pancakes and hot Milo was provided to Isabella students on Thursday morning. The day before senior exams start it was important to encourage students to eat breakfast before their exams as this is the most important meal of the day!

*Lauren Frost and Molly Philpot, Year 12*

## Year 9 Pastoral Program

On Wednesday 31 May, Year 9 listened to a presentation by the AFP about the effects of drugs and alcohol on young people's lives. We were presented with several real-life examples that occurred around Canberra of how decisions involving drugs and alcohol have ruined young lives. They reinforced the message of how these things can happen to anyone and how one poor choice can cause a chain reaction. We all thoroughly enjoyed the presentation and came away with a better understanding and new skills to support better decision making in the future.

## Parentingideas

This week's Parentingideas article, "Why it's more important than ever to foster positive relationships in children and young people," highlights the importance of promoting positive relationships based on respect, fairness and tolerance.



## Altitude Day

On Friday 2 June, 19 Year 9 students embarked upon an empowering experience: Altitude Day 2017. The day was run by the yLead team and was designed to inspire young people to become positive leaders within their school and wider community. Students were encouraged to network with other students from around Canberra and were given the opportunity to hear from young leaders who are taking the world by storm. Such leaders included social entrepreneur and Young Australian of the Year 2016 (ACT) Nipuni Wijewickrema; Caitlin Figueiredo, who recently won the Young Leader Category in Westpac/AFR 'Australia's 100 Most Influential Women' and has been named a Global Changemaker for Gender Equality by The White House; and First Lady, Michelle Obama. Matt Kershaw, CEO of yLead also shared his own journey of self discovery and unpacked the six keys to unlocking potential:

1. Live your passions
2. Challenge yourself
3. Recruit mentors
4. Make a plan, take action
5. Champion mindset
6. Never give up

By providing students with the tools required to focus and exercise their leadership capabilities, it is hoped that they will confidently be themselves and do great things!

*Beth Bright*

## Year 10 Pastoral Program

On Wednesday 24 May, Year 10 were privileged to receive a presentation from the Canberra Hospital Trauma Nurses, introducing us to the P.A.R.T.Y program. The P.A.R.T.Y program is an acronym for Prevent Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth, and is an in-hospital injury awareness and prevention program. It is aimed at providing teenagers with information about trauma that will enable them to recognise behaviours that minimise unnecessary risk. It was extremely educational and gave all students a greater understanding of the risks related to alcohol and drugs. In all seriousness the risks are real! Stay safe and take care of each other.

*Eleanor Stewart and Megan Giudes*

## House Charity Fundraising

On 1 and 2 June, Mindygari hosted the first House Charity days for the year. This year, Mindygari were raising money and awareness for the Cancer Council. The Cancer council is an Australian foundation that is aiming to eradicate various forms of cancer. They use the money for research into cures and to also support families who may be suffering from Cancer.

With a cold start to winter everyone was given the opportunity to wear their favourite hoodies to school for a gold coin donation and students could also buy a sausage and drink from the BBQ at Wanniasa and egg and bacon rolls at Isabella. It was fantastic to see so many students get on board and support this as well as attending the Liam Wright (Graduating Class 2016) concert in the Isabella Gym. The charity events were a tremendous success which saw the College raise a substantial grand total of \$1,800. This money will now be donated to the Cancer council to help cancer sufferers and their families. Our thanks go out to everyone who wore a hoodie and supported the campus events. We would also like to thank all the PC teachers who encouraged their PC to get involved, and a very large thank you to Mr Kelly and Mr Johnston who helped plan, organise and run the day so successfully.

*Jackson Tippet and Danita Brittain  
Mindygari Wanniasa House Captains*



# Curriculum News

Mrs Clare Fletcher & Mrs Maria O'Donnell,  
Assistant Principals Curriculum

## Visiting Scientist

On Wednesday 8 June, Dr Jonathon Kocz came to share his incredible knowledge of outer space with some of our Year 7 students as part of their learning about space.

Doctor Jon is a MacKillop graduate (class of '99) who boldly leapt into the field of Astronomy. Following many years of tertiary study, including a PhD at the Australian National University and post-doctoral fellowships at Swinburne and the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics, he now specialises in radio astronomy. Doctor Jon spent two years working at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (USA) and now explores the universe fulltime at CalTech in California. He works on radio telescopes and builds telescope arrays around the world and is currently trying to discover the origin of Fast Radio Bursts - high energy bursts from space that last only milliseconds.

During his visit, he brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to our students. When asked to summarise what they learnt:

- I learnt about radio waves and that we can only see about 4% of the universe. (Christina)
- I learnt that black holes have so much gravity that objects can become spaghetti-fied if they go too close. (Josh C)
- I learnt that there is a telescope being built in Western Australia that will be 1km squared! (Josh H)
- I learnt that different frequencies can be registered by different senses. (Owen)
- I learnt that nothing travels faster than light and that some telescopes are so large that you could play cricket in them. (Jack)
- I learnt that stars all started as hydrogen. (Connor)
- I learnt that people can put a lot of time and work to get where they want to be. (Patrick)
- I learnt that there are two types of telescopes, a radio one that uses radio waves, and one that you look through to see things. (Chloe)

We were tremendously fortunate to have the expertise of such an accomplished scientist joining us here at MacKillop.

*Eugene Lehmensich, Science*

## Parliament of Youth on Sustainability

On 29 May, students from the College participated in and helped facilitate the Parliament of Youth on Sustainability at the Manning Clarke Centre. The College had 3 teams. Sarah Muir and Taran Copeland, Lani Bevan and Miriam Mayenco and Harleen Kaur and Aisling Kinsella. Lani and Miriam's proposal and Harleen and Aisling's proposal were voted by their peers to be presented to the ACT legislative assembly. Aisling and Lani now have the opportunity to present their views to ACT parliamentarians on 13 June.

The following Year 12 students did a fantastic job in helping facilitate the sessions: Shweta Venkataraman, Dominique Tse, Leo Phimpravichith, Zoe Hoare, Charlotte Egan, Katherine Thomas, Lauren Frost and Sam McDonough. Jack Adamson and Paula O'Sullivan did a great job helping with the interactive stations.

*Ummehani Rangwalla, Science*



## Da Vinci Decathlon

Last Thursday, a team of four boys and four girls from Year 8 went to Canberra Grammar School to compete in the Da Vinci Decathlon against lots of other secondary schools in Canberra and the surrounding region. The competition consisted of many questions and problems to solve around 10 different subject areas. One of the areas that the three of us decided to take part in was called, Creative Producers.

For this task, we were called outside and given eight minutes to create a skit that consisted of a historical figure and their imaginary friend. We chose to use Michael Jackson as our historian and Poodles the Panda as his imaginary sidekick. We were then called inside to perform our skit in front of four judges.

At the end of the day when the awards were presented, it came to the Creative Producers area. When they called out the name of our school, we were very surprised and excited to have won 1st place for that subject. We were then told that we had to perform our skit in front of the entire crowd which was a bit overwhelming but a great experience.

*Neelima Gupta, Mathematics*

## INSPIRE Art Competition

St Mary MacKillop College  
Art Competition 2017

# INSPIRE

produce ONE artwork on any theme, using an art medium of your choice.

Best entries will go on show at  
TUGGERANONG ARTS CENTRE

PRIZES awarded to Yr 7/8, Yr 9/10 and Yr 11/12.  
Also an overall winner on each campus.

Entry forms will be available on Canvas in  
Term Three.

This year there will be a special prize for  
MIXED MEDIA

ENTRIES DUE: 18th August

Poster Design by Emily Smith - Year 10





## Sport News

### Engarde News

On Sunday 28 May, Three St Mary MacKillop students represented the ACT in the NSW U15 State Fencing Championships held in Sydney. Oliver Bryson (Year 9) won a Gold medal in Epee and finished top 16 in Foil, Aiden McLachlan (Year 10) won a Bronze medal in Epee and Benjamin Crowley (Year 7) finished top 16 in Sabre. Oliver will also be taking part in the next National High performance training camp at the AIS in July. Well done to these Engarde@MacKillop fencers.



### 7/8 Girls Oztag

On Wednesday 24 May, girls from Years 7 and 8 travelled to O'Connor Playing fields for an Oz Tag competition. The two teams played nine games between them, getting better each game. Thank you to Mrs Leonie Sullivan and students Matilda Shipway and Alexandra Immonen (Year 11), who assisted with coaching. Overall, St Mary MacKillop 1 came 10th on the ladder & St Mary MacKillop 2 finished the day in 6th place. The students were: Rebecca Fallshaw, Mara Brophy, Alli Megalli, Sophie Hines, Ariadne Stergiou, Amelie Dean, Chloe Arnold, Jayde Riggans, Olivia Seary, Alyssa Brookman, Erin Shute, Tara Wyllie, Keira Rogers, Sophie Tindale, Georgia Willey, Lilly Vassallo, Josie Dubbert, Shayla Henderson, Alannah Weatherby, Tyra Petersen, Kasey Smyth, Kowhai Peri, Abi McIntyre.

*Hannah Baillie*

### Year 9/10 Boys Oztag Champions

The Year 9/10 Boys have won another football tournament. On Friday 26 May, 10 students met at O'Connor Oval for a day of Oztag in the sun. Prior to the day, the team had a solid training session and headed into the tournament full of confidence. It was set to be a massive day with the team required to win seven games in a row to take out the tournament.

MacKillop got off to a flying start, brushing aside their first two opponents with ease. The games gradually got tougher but the side grew stronger as formations were gelling and the team was reaching its potential. They took it up a notch for their win against worthy opposition, St Francis, in the semi-final. The final against Calwell was a difficult task and MacKillop were behind at half time for the first time all day. A stunning try on the siren to Dylan Blewitt drew the scores level and sent the game into extra time. With both teams exhausted after a full day's play it was going to take something special to win the tournament. In came Jackson Gallagher with a try after seven minutes of extra time and MacKillop had won.

Congratulations to Chris Caruana, Ryan Daly, Dylan Blewitt, Jordan van Aalst, Jackson Gallagher, Kayleb Waterson, Heath Baran, Liam Dredge, Liam Rogers and Ben Anderson.

*Sam McCombe*

### Student Achievement

Harry Grant (Year 10) has been selected to represent the ACT at the NAB AFL National U16 Championships. These championships will be held over the course of a month at a range of venues across Australia.

Liam Rogers (Year 9) has been selected in the ACT Junior Squash team that will play in a tournament in Parkes this month.

Jenna Fisk, Georgia Bryant, Isaac Leonard (Year 7), Arabelle Eve, Sarah Harvey, Jeremy Blick (Year 9), Minski Quayle, and Zoe Evans (Year 10) took part in the Australian National Gymnastics Championships in Melbourne last month. Zoe was named as the Junior Women's Level 9 National All Around Silver Medallist, while Jenna, Georgia, and Arabelle were part of the Level 7 team that gained Bronze.

### Touch Football Finals

On Thursday June 6, four College Touch Football teams attended the ACT Touch Football Finals Day: The Year 7/8 Boys and Girls, and the Year 9/10 Boys and Girls. All teams put in great performances on the day.

Year 7/8 Boys played Daramalan College, Lanyon High and Lyneham High in the round robin. They drew with Daramalan and Lanyon but lost to Lyneham. They met Lyneham again in the semi-finals and went down 2-0. The boys played well all day and should be congratulated on their effort, placing 3rd in the ACT.

Year 7/8 Girls competed well, playing teams from Daramalan College, Wanniasa High and St Clare's College. They played St Clare's again in the semi-final, losing despite some strong runs and cohesive plays. The girls trained hard and showed some impressive team work and school spirit on the day.

The 9/10 Girls team's opening game against St Clare's College was a hard defensive game with all girls putting in their best effort despite going down. They then had a narrow loss to Melrose High. In the semi-final the girls played Melrose High again and unfortunately were knocked out of the competition. The girls are to be commended on their constant efforts throughout the day.

The 9/10 Boys won their first round game against Daramalan 4-1, lost their second game to Calwell 3-2, and won their last round game quite convincingly and qualified for the finals. In the semi final they came up against Daramalan College and played well securing a comfortable win. They then met Calwell High in the final, who had beaten them earlier in the day. The boys played really well and ended up winning 5-2, crowning them ACT Champions. The 9/10 Boys team has qualified to play in the National School Cup that will be hosted in Brisbane later in the year.

*Braden Longo*

## Community Notices

### Parentline ACT

Parentline ACT is a confidential and free telephone and face-to-face counselling and information service. Phone Parentline if you would you like:

- To talk with someone about those parenting issues.
- Help with some ideas on raising children.
- Support in the important job you are doing.
- To know what is available for parents, teenagers and children.
- To build better relationships in your family.
- Help to understand your child or teenager's behaviour.
- Make an appointment for a counselling session.

Available Monday to Friday (except on public holidays), 9am to 5pm.  
Phone: 6287 3833

### Canberra School of Tennis

The Canberra School of Tennis will hold a number of Holiday Camps this July with experienced coaches, flexible times, and lots of fun! The camps will be held at Weston Creek Tennis Club and The Pines Tennis Club, Chisholm. All camps include professional, certified and accredited coaching, food and drink, all equipment provided, Hotshots deliveries, and lots of prizes! Book now and get more information at [csot.com.au](http://csot.com.au).

### Tennis Canberra programs

Tennis Canberra is bringing its tennis programs to the Erindale Active Leisure Centre for the upcoming season. All new junior players will receive a new racquet for free when they sign up for the next season, and players who sign up for the next season before 19 June will receive free pre-season sessions. Visit [www.tenniscanberra.com.au/book-online/](http://www.tenniscanberra.com.au/book-online/) to register and view the season timetable.

# Year 10 and Senior Exam Timetable

## Year 10 and Senior Exams - Semester 1 2017

Year 10 Exams S1 2017		
Tuesday 6 June	Period 1-2	Year 10 History
Wednesday 7 June	Period 1-2	Year 10 Mathematics
Thursday 8 June	Period 1-2	Year 10 Science

- Students are to attend normal scheduled Year 10 classes for all other periods.
- All other Year 10 assessment will be scheduled in normal class time.

Senior Exams S1 2017		
	Year 11	Year 12
Friday 9 June Morning (9.00am)	English T	Literature Social and Community Work Exercise Science A/T
Friday 9 June Afternoon (1.15pm)	Literature Business A/T Geography A/T	English A/T
Tuesday 13 June Morning (9.00am)	RE A/T	Business A/T Biology
Tuesday 13 June Afternoon (1.15pm)	Mathematical Applications Mathematical Methods	History A/T – Ancient Legal A/T Economics
Wednesday 14 June Morning (9.00am)	Social and Community Work History A/T – Ancient Chemistry	Mathematical Applications Mathematical Methods
Wednesday 14 June Afternoon (1.15pm)	Economics Psychology A/T Senior Science	Psychology A/T General Science A/T Physics
Thursday 15 June Morning (9.00am)	IT A/T Exercise Science A/T RE DM Earth Science	RE A/T - Mr Moyle and Miss Jacobs Classes Only
Thursday 15 June Afternoon (1.15pm)	Biology Physics History A/T – Modern Business Administration	History A/T – Modern Hospitality T IT A/T Business Administration
Friday 16 June Morning (9.00am)	IT DM Hospitality T Specialist Mathematics Legal A/T Music A/T	IT DM Geography A/T Music A/T
Friday 16 June Afternoon (1.15pm)	Sociology A/T	Chemistry Sociology A/T

Please Note: Some courses do not have a final semester exam

- All Year 11 and 12 students will receive a personalised examination timetable indicating session start and finish times and locations.

Enquiries regarding exam schedule should be directed to Janine Hickson, Student Records in the first instance on 62090129.



# Why it's more important than ever to foster positive relationships in children and young people

By Michael Grose

*Three practical ways to promote positive relationships based on respect, fairness and tolerance among young people.*

We live in interesting times. The Donald Trump Presidency has changed the political landscape in many ways, but particularly the way politics is waged and how the major political players treat each other.

Mr. Trump's way of dealing with people could best be described as direct and combative and, at worst, bullying and badgering. Gone are the conventions in international relationships of keeping up civil appearances in public despite what may have happened between parties

in private. As he showed recently following a telephone conversation with Mr. Turnbull, Australia's Prime Minister, Mr. Trump has few qualms about tweeting his disapproval to the world if a private conversation doesn't go according to his plan.

In recent weeks there's been major concern expressed right around the world about how Mr. Trump 'does politics' – particularly his treatment of those with whom he disagrees. This high level of public protest should be applauded by parents and teachers as the tone of public discourse can easily trickle down into schools and families. At a time when peer-to-peer bullying and disrespectful relationships are

ongoing issues in many schools, parents and teachers need to be more mindful than ever of the importance of promoting positive relationships based on respect, fairness and tolerance. Here are three practical ways to foster positive relationships among children and young people.

## 1. Instil integrity in children and young people

Do what's right. Not what's easy.' I heard my wife Sue say this to our children often when social circumstances presented them with a moral dilemma. Times such as when they agreed to visit a friend's house only to get a better offer elsewhere; when they'd hurt a sibling's feelings and they took the easy option of staying out of their way rather than approaching them to make an apology; and when they'd tell a small lie to excuse themselves from a party or school event that they were expected to attend.

'Do what's right' is an integrity statement. It's a declaration of character that's central to children developing respectful relationships with their peers.





## Why it's more important than ever to foster positive relationships in children and young people

Every parent wants to raise kids to be fine young people. But to do this we need to instil in kids more than just skills, attitudes and positive behaviours. We need to provide a compass to help them navigate the myriad of decisions they make every day as children and as teenagers. Integrity sits at the top of that compass.

### 2. Walk the walk

The concern about children and young people being witness to disrespectful, combative behaviours in public figures is that these behaviours soon feel normal. The same principle, of course, applies with adults closer to home. If parents, coaches or teachers harangue, harass or bully others then these behaviours become normalised and in effect, give kids permission to act in the same ways. It's a matter of, *If Mum can do it, then I can too!*

Conversely, when adults treat each other, children and young people fairly; display a willingness to listen and talk things through; and show a propensity to compromise we are teaching the next generation the basics of respectful and positive relationships.

### 3. Talk the talk

Families develop their own proprietary language around the behaviours and attributes that are valued including integrity, respect, fairness, tolerance and other values that underpin strong positive relationships. Take the time to reflect on common statements you already use that reflect relationships

based on respect and fairness. Write them down. Develop them into repeatable phrases such as, 'Everyone deserves a fair go. Let's talk through our disagreements. Ask before you jump to conclusions', to make them memorable. Positive relationships are taught through actions, but reinforced by common language.

At a time when the way many prominent public figures treat others can leave a fair-minded person shaking his or her head in dismay it's worth remembering that through our own fair and tolerant treatment of others we can positively impact how children and teenagers treat others.

### 4. Put integrity top of the pedestal of character traits

Every parent wants their child to have the strength and fortitude to do the right thing and not follow the crowd. This is easier for young children because the pull of the group and the allure of the media doesn't have such a strong hold as it so often does in adolescence. Strong-willed children and those who like to have their own way can also find doing the right thing less of a struggle. But the development of integrity and related traits such as respect, honesty and fairness is an important part of a child's moral compass that will help him/her make smart decisions when you're not around. Generally, integrity is developed in childhood and put to the test in adolescence.

In 2017 put some focus on developing a sense of integrity in your kids – the rock star of character traits.



**Special note:** I'm thrilled to announce that my latest book *Spoonfed Generation: How to raise independent children* is out. It's available at [parentingideas.com.au](http://parentingideas.com.au)

## PRACTICAL WAYS TO PROMOTE RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS AT HOME

- 1 Show your willingness to listen to kids and talk through their relationship problems.
- 2 Expect kids of all ages to use manners. Good manners are respect in action.
- 3 Talk about how good friends act and treat each other. Conversations about friendly behaviours should also involve how their behaviours make others feel.
- 4 Differentiate between a friendship and a clique with young people. A clique is restrictive and can make a young person feel bad, while a friendship group is inclusive and feels good.
- 5 Respectfully and tactfully question displays of intolerance and challenge bullying behaviour. Be mindful that children and young people are learning how to behave civilly so they need guidance and direction, which sometimes involves challenge.

**Visit our website for more ideas and information to help you raise confident and resilient young people.**

