

# St. Joe's Counselor's Corner-February 2016

--Jennifer Moyer-Taylor

**\*\*HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING IN FEBRUARY\*\***

**K-2nd** –Feelings, Problem-solving **3rd**- Upstander Skills

**4<sup>th</sup>**-Girls Groups **5<sup>th</sup>**-Leadership Skills **6<sup>th</sup>**-C.A.P.S. Projects

“Snack and Chat” for 1<sup>st</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> **7th/8th**-Peer Mediation Program **Parenting Class**-Begins Monday, Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> !

## *IT'S ELEMENTARY (K-4)-Encouragement Vs. Criticism*

As a parent it may be tempting to try and give feedback every time your child makes a mistake or does something you don't approve of. However, what you feed grows... and what you ignore dies. Criticizing is feeding that behavior (the very behavior you are trying to decrease.) I was reminded of this mantra when Chris Fontana and Mary Dalton from Global Visionaries came to work with 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and I on building the democratic classroom. Try and point out what your child is doing that you want to see GROW. Try pointing out the specific things your kids are doing well-this will encourage them to do more of the same.

## *IN THE MIDDLE (5-8)-Take A Beat Before You Speak*

Think before you speak. Resist your first urge to scold, nag, or comment on negative behavior. This tip is similar to the one above in that it is more important to focus your efforts on the positive behaviors you see (albeit there may not be many in the moment) and focus on encouraging versus criticizing. Parenting a middle schooler can be a challenge because they are old enough to see and recognize your own faults as adults and parents-and they won't necessarily hesitate to point them out. Your “buttons” will be pushed more now as opposed to when they were younger when you were once seen as perfect and infallible.

My child is bossy!

## **ASK THE COUNSELOR...**

**Q- My daughter is bossy. Her teacher said she tells other kids what to do and how to complete their work. I have also seen this on play dates with her friends at home.**

A-You may have a future leader on your hands! However, right now, she may need to shift her actions and words so that kids see her as a flexible friend. There are many things you can do to help your daughter to be less bossy. The first step is talking with her on how to be a good friend. Point out ways she is being a good friend and provide some feedback about what she could improve upon. She could try phrasing her words differently, using suggesting words versus demanding words, or focusing on being responsible for herself and allow others to make their own decisions about school work or a play activities. These new strategies should help her be less bossy and be a better friend to others.

Thank you!

Jennifer Moyer-Taylor