

# St. Joe's Counselor's Corner-October 2015

--Jennifer Moyer-Taylor

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

**K-2nd** -Second Step, Kelso's Choices    **3rd**-Steps to Respect "Snack and Chat" for 1<sup>st</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> will begin

**4<sup>th</sup>**-Girls Groups    **5<sup>th</sup>**- Life & Leadership    **6<sup>th</sup>**-Life & Leadership    **7th/8th**-Peer Mediation Program

**Virtus Safe Environment Classes are implemented this month in K-8 classes**

## *IT'S ELEMENTARY (K-4) Fostering Spirituality In Kids*

I recently attended a conference about the benefits of spirituality in children. Lisa Miller, the author of the book, *The Spiritual Child: The New Science on Parenting for Health and Lifelong Thriving*, discussed the scientific link between spirituality and positive health (mental and physical). In fact, this is a protective factor for kids and decreases risk for substance use and mood disorders. We are lucky to be surrounded by religion and the Catholic faith at St. Joseph School. Fostering spirituality, with or without religion, is about helping your child find the meaning of life. Giving your child a strong foundation early on will give him or her something to fall back on in trying times later on in life. Daily discussions about seeing God in all aspects of life, serving others, clarifying your own beliefs, and exploring different faiths are a few things you can do to foster spirituality.

## *IN THE MIDDLE (5-8)-Teaching Self-Control*

Self-control is one of the most important skills to teach adolescents. Right now your adolescent's brain is "under construction" and you can think of it in terms of **remodeling** a home versus **redecorating** a home. Helping teens with emotional awareness and emotional management is important. Giving them the words to use can help them later be able to express themselves. Setting boundaries and following through on consequences will help teens realize that there are consequences to their actions. Finally, ask "What if..." questions to help them problem-solve.

How involved should I be with my son's school work?

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

**Q-** I am having a hard time knowing when to back off and when to get more involved in my son's homework this year. He is now in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and seems to have a lot of homework and tests but talks about it much less with me than last year. I do try and keep up with PowerSchool but wondering what is the right balance of stepping in and out in regards to his academics?

**A-** This is definitely a tricky balancing act. In one breath your son may say "Go away!" and in the next "Why didn't you help me?" It is hard to know what the right thing to do is. Your role is to continue to monitor PowerSchool and have weekly conversations with your son about the grades and assignments in PowerSchool. Perhaps every Saturday, sit down and spend time on this. This will encourage accountability and honesty. It is important for him to know that you are available to help him when he needs it, and sometimes being in the same room is helpful. For example, he is doing his work, and you are doing your work-but both of you are independent. If he is unsure of an assignment or why he received a certain grade, teach self-advocacy and encourage him to ask the teacher. You can also keep communication lines open with the teachers if grades begin to dip. For more information on helping your child or teen, please feel free to email me at [jmoyerta@stjosephsea.org](mailto:jmoyerta@stjosephsea.org) or call me at 206-329-3260 X220.