



# Mountview Road School

*Counselor's Corner: May 2021*



## Character Education Theme of the Month is:

### FAIRNESS

**\*\*Use this quote as a discussion piece for older children: "Equal is everyone getting the same thing. Fair is everyone getting what they need to be successful. We will always try to be fair, but it won't always feel equal." - Unknown**

#### What is Fairness?

According to *Psychology Today*, there are three different ideas about what is meant by fairness. The first idea is *equality*, which simply means that everyone is presented the same opportunities for success. The second is *deservedness*. This is the idea that fairness involves people getting what they deserve. The third is *need*. This takes into account the obligations all humans have toward one another, and is the idea that people who are less able should be given what they need to succeed.

#### Lead by Example

It all starts with you. Despite what you might think, your children are constantly observing you, integrating your behavior and speech into their own lives. If you want your kids to be fair, you're going to have to be the model of fairness for them. That means being fair to your spouse. It means being fair to strangers, to waiters, to hotel staff, to everyone, no matter their lot in life. If your children learn that they only have to be fair to a certain type of person, they have failed to learn fairness.

#### Practice Positive Reinforcement

Whatever the case, whenever your child exhibits fair behavior, recognize it. Make sure that they know you admire this behavior, and that it makes you happy. Creating this link between fairness and positivity is incredibly important. It's easy to fall into the trap of believing that fairness means loss, that it means "I won't get what I want". This ignores the big picture; when people are fair in their dealings with one another, everyone benefits—society flourishes, and no one is left behind.

#### Encourage Empathy

This suggestion is one that does not deal directly with fairness, but rather provides your child with motivation to be fair. Teach your children empathy. Make sure that they know the inherent value of a human being, that they realize that every other person they encounter has an inner life as rich and detailed—and sometimes hurt—as their own. When your child learns to begin thinking outside of their own wants, fairness flourishes.

1. Encourage your child to read! Books allow us to live within the mind of someone who is not us—we get

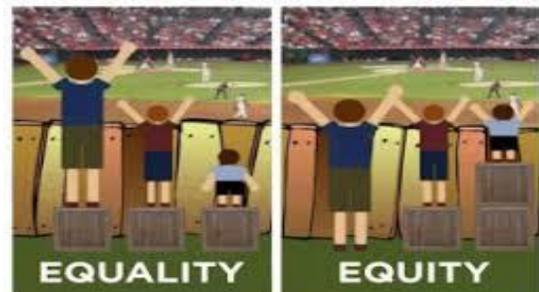
to see a protagonist's thoughts, feel their feelings, and dream their dreams.

2. Volunteer! Watching people helping people is an incredible experience, and if your child participates, all the better. Be careful not to force this—that can lead to resentment. But allowing your child to observe the effects of kindness and empathy can go a long way toward teaching them to be all-around better people.

It can be tough to bring a kid out of self-centered ways of thinking, but it's very possible. Encourage empathy, and you encourage fairness.

#### Talk About It (for older children)

In addition to the quote above, use the picture below to talk about Fairness vs Equality. Discuss how being fair may not always be the same as being equal.



**\*\*\*A special thank you to the MTV PTA for all of their hard work everyday! This year was a challenging one, but they still managed to come together and provide our students and staff with fun virtual events throughout the year. To our wonderful PTA, we appreciate you and all of your dedication to playing a role in making MTV the wonderful family that it is!**

#### Important May Dates/Events

- **May 17 - 19:** MTV PTA Outdoor Bookfair
- **May 31:** School's Closed - Memorial Day

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