



## **The Importance of Teaching Leadership Skills**

By Nancy Shonamon, Christian School Representative

Leadership skills are essential for every student to build, regardless of the future career path he or she takes. In Christian education, building leadership skills is particularly important, because we expect Christian leaders to exhibit specific qualities such as servant leadership, integrity, and compassion for others. Intentionally developing leadership skills in Christian school children can help them become effective and compassionate leaders in their homes, communities, churches, and workplaces. This article explores the importance of building leadership skills in Christian education and suggests five activities that can help students to develop their leadership skills.

### **The Importance of Building Leadership Skills in Christian Education**

Christian schools aim to create positive change in the world by preparing students to become Christlike leaders who can solve complex problems and serve others with compassion. To become effective Christian leaders, students must develop their leadership skills. Developing leadership skills in Christian education offers many benefits for students, including:

1. **Empowerment:** Building leadership skills empowers students to take the initiative and create change in their communities. This is particularly important in Christian education, where teachers can encourage students to serve others and live out their faith by engaging in works of compassion and social justice.

2. **Self-Awareness:** Developing leadership skills can help students become more self-aware, identifying their strengths and weaknesses. This is essential for students to become the best versions of themselves and create a positive impact within their communities.
3. **Collaboration:** Developing leadership skills helps students work effectively with others, leading to improved collaboration and teamwork skills. These skills will enable them to accomplish common goals with others.
4. **Decision-making:** Developing leadership skills helps students become better decision-makers. Good leaders make decisions by considering the needs and perspectives of others and choosing the best option that aligns with their vision, values, and goals.
5. **Servant-Leadership:** Developing leadership skills also helps students to become servant-leaders, placing the needs of others before their own interests and leading with humility and love.

### **Intentionally Building Leadership Skills in Christian Schools**

Here are five activities that help students develop leadership skills in Christian education classrooms:

1. **Service Projects:** Offering students numerous opportunities to serve will be instrumental in developing leadership skills. These projects show them how to put Christlike love and compassion into action while developing critical leadership skills.
2. **Leadership Workshops:** Intentionally teach students leadership skills through workshops and instruction. This will assist students in building foundational principles of skills such as personal integrity, communication, teamwork, strategic thinking, and servant leadership. Embracing these key components of leadership will build confidence in students to step out and lead.
3. **Mentoring Opportunities:** Implement a mentoring program where older, experienced students can mentor younger students. By receiving mentoring, younger students can develop leadership qualities such as self-awareness, decision-making, and collaboration.
4. **Leadership Roles:** Encourage students to accept leadership roles such as leading group projects, planning events, or being responsible for managing group activities and assignments. Practicing leadership skills will pave the way for students to implement the skills independently in the future.
5. **Extracurricular Activities:** Encourage students to engage in extracurricular activities that require strong leadership skills such as sports teams, student council, drama productions, and music groups. These activities can serve as an opportunity to put leadership skills into practice in real-life scenarios.

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