

# GRIP



GRIP LEADERSHIP

Term 2 2017

HELPING STUDENT LEADERS

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# KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE GRIP LEADERSHIP TEAM ON SOCIAL MEDIA

**INSTAGRAM**  
@gripleadership



**TWITTER**  
@gripleadership

**FACEBOOK**  
Grip Leadership



**YOUTUBE**  
GRIP Leadership

Below are pictures that our travelling team post every few hours across all of our social media platforms during recent conferences and school seminars.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## OF 2017 CONFERENCES SO FAR



Between February and April 60 conferences were held throughout Australia and New Zealand. The 2017 conference sessions have been very well received from staff and students, with feedback indicating that the sessions have been even more practical and useful than ever. If you have not yet experienced a 2017 conference you can watch a quick highlights video to give you a taste of what will be coming to you soon.

[www.gripleadership.com.au/video](http://www.gripleadership.com.au/video)

# ‘Outside of the Box’

## Ideas for Providing Staff Support to Student Leaders

Every teacher we speak to at our GRIP Leadership conferences expresses genuine enthusiasm for supporting the student leaders at their school. Most teachers do, however, wear numerous hats so it is often hard for most teachers to support their student leaders to the extent that they would like to. Given this reality, we have collated a few of the great ideas we have heard from teachers who have implemented their own strategies for supporting their student leaders - some of which you may not have considered before...

### 1) HAVE AN ANONYMOUS QUESTION BOX

This is a great idea, as it provides anonymity for student leaders who might feel as though they have a silly question, or one that might be a little sensitive in nature. Having a simple form that leaders can fill out, with space for an optional name and a question can allow you to engage with students’ concerns. It also allows you to encourage transparency – which may sound a little odd, considering the anonymity of the suggestion box – but once students have put forward a question or concern, it can provide a teaching opportunity for how to deal with this type of concern or issue directly in the future, increasing relational ties and encouraging openness and transparency within the team.

### 2) RUN A LEADERSHIP PANEL

At times, teachers who work with student leaders can end up feeling like a one-stop-shop for all student leadership knowledge. Gathering a panel of your fellow staff to form a structured Q&A session can be a great way of drawing questions and ideas from your student leaders, especially towards the beginning of their time in the role. Giving some advanced preparation time will help to ensure that there are plenty of questions to answer, and if you consider chairing the session, then you can simultaneously vet the supplied questions, while allowing a decent amount of in-the-moment spontaneity.

### 3) ALLOW EACH STUDENT LEADER TO CHOOSE A ‘MENTOR TEACHER’

This idea involves each student leader asking a certain teacher to be their leadership mentor throughout the year. Each leader could have a short meeting with their mentor once a term (or as required), with the central focus of this strategy being that the mentor teacher acts a sounding board and encourager to the student leader. Mentor teachers don’t need to play a role in the overall student leadership team, they simply provide support to an individual, making this a low-intensity role and one that many teachers will be prepared to take on.





#### 4) HAVE MORE THAN ONE TEACHER INVOLVED WITH THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Following on from our 'one-stop-shop' reflection earlier, having more than one teacher involved in the student leadership team allows a few things to happen. Firstly, it can lighten the load of an individual teacher, who often accepts responsibility for the leadership team in addition to their normal teaching duties. Secondly, it allows for a different perspective on leadership, and a different voice to speak into the culture of your student leadership team; and thirdly, provides an opportunity for a male and female leadership perspective, which can be particularly useful at co-education schools where young female and male students are looking to their teachers as role models.

#### 5) BRING EX-STUDENT LEADERS BACK TO SCHOOL AS A GUEST SPEAKER OR MENTOR

Finally for our out-of-the-box ideas, bringing an ex-student leader back as a guest speaker or leadership mentor can be a wonderful experience. Ex-students who return to the school can communicate in a different way to staff members, and allowing these peers to engage and interact around the topic of student leadership can produce excellent results. For best results, have a meeting with your returning student leader ahead of time, and discuss what you're hoping to achieve – whether it is a questions-and-answer style session, a guest 'meeting chair', or another contribution entirely.

There are, of course, many other ways to provide support to your student leaders that are a little 'out-of-the-box', but hopefully these five have you thinking a bit more laterally, and you can integrate some of them in your strategy for the weeks and months ahead!

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# Strategies for allowing

# WHOLE YEAR GROUPS

# to lead



**M**any schools now consider their senior year group of students to be their leaders, and often will publicly acknowledge this in front of the remainder of the school. This stance can be fruitful and encouraging to these students, and many can choose to step into the responsibilities as a result. It is true, however, that naming senior students as leaders doesn't necessarily foster the qualities and characteristics of leadership, and merely provides a context or opportunity for these qualities. In order to equip your senior leaders to actually lead, here are four practical strategies that take the title of 'leader' and put it to work.

## **1) HAVE SOME YEAR-WIDE INITIATIVES THAT SET SCHOOL CULTURE**

The sky is the limit with these ideas, but the core premise is to plan events and activities that are focused around an area of school culture, or one of more of the values of your school. Your senior leaders can help with the event planning, and can particularly focus around the displaying and modeling of school values and culture. They visibly become culture-setters via these events, and can begin to take responsibility for setting the right example with their words and actions.

## **2) ATTEND A STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

If you haven't already commenced this type of program, it can create a natural environment for older students to lead. It affords a scalable context for your older students to engage meaningfully with younger students, and can cater for all personality types. If some of your older leaders wouldn't feel comfortable giving a public speech or running an activity for a large group of students, mentoring or buddy relationships afford them an opportunity to lead more relationally and conversationally. There is scope, however, to gather younger and older students together for more high-energy activities within a mentoring or buddy context, such as an mentor and mentee student challenge, whether physical or intellectual, where pairs or groups can compete against each other, and older and younger students can work side-by-side.





### 3) PROVIDE LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND FORMATION

Leaders don't become leaders by accident. Whether you ascribe to the philosophy that leaders are born or made – there is general consensus that leaders are certainly formed. That formation can happen in a variety of environments, and the school environment is certainly one of them. This leadership training could happen as a large year group or in smaller sub-groups, and could focus on the habits, practices, or actions of a leader, as well as the qualities and characteristics of a good leader at your school. You could run training yourself, bring in guest speakers, or even attend a leadership conference. GRIP Leadership runs over 100 student leadership conferences annually, and has also published scores of student and staff resources for developing the culture of leadership in your school.

### 4) STRUCTURE DIFFERENT 'LEVELS' OF LEADERSHIP

Even within your senior students, there can be different 'level's of leadership at which students can contribute. To begin with, we would suggest four distinct levels of leaders that can be cultivated in your senior student cohort. Firstly, the **HELPER** level. These students would contribute by helping complete tasks such as setting out chairs, setting up/packing down an assembly, cleaning up after events, helping teachers with classroom logistics – anything that provides assistance to the school community in a structured way. Secondly, you would have the **TEAM MEMBER** level. These students would be part of a team (transport team, school-yard team, canteen team, etc.) and would contribute by completing the tasks that this team is responsible for. Thirdly, the **TEAM LEADER**

level would be the students who are responsible for making those teams effective, and being the 'point leaders' for their team. Finally, you could have the **SENIOR LEADERS**, who would be your 'pinch hitters' – students who can engage at any of the previous three levels of leadership, as well as being ambassadors for your school in dress, behaviour, word and action. (For more information about these levels of leaders and their implementation, you can refer to the GRIP Leadership resource 'Leadership Across the Year Levels'.)

Naming an entire year group as leaders can be an excellent strategy – but alone it will not be enough to develop an effective culture of leadership within that year group. Practical and regular engagement with your senior year group, as well as providing structured regular training and meaningful opportunities to lead and contribute will allow the word 'leader' to mean something at your school, and will help you take the idea of senior student leaders and put it into practice.



**JOIN US FOR 4 DAYS!**

# **GRIP NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CAMP**

**BRISBANE**

## **3-6 July 2017**

*"The camp was awesome! I had so much fun meeting new people from all across Australia and I have learnt so much valuable knowledge from the GRIP team that has seen me develop my leadership skills."*

- Lloyd, Student VIC



**4 NIGHTS AWAY IN BRISBANE**

**SPEND TIME WITH THE GRIP TEAM**

**MAKE FRIENDS WITH OTHER LEADERS**

**TAKE YOUR LEADERSHIP TO THE NEXT LEVEL**

**For full details of the next camp visit:**

# **[gripleadership.com/camp](http://gripleadership.com/camp)**



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