

Be Active kids make their voices heard

by Jodi Wright

Part of building a respectful community means each of us has a personal responsibility to treat others as we want to be treated. But that's not where it ends. It's also about stepping up and doing something. Draw the line in the sand. When actions or words are not acceptable, speak up and speak out. The actions of many can bring about change and hold everyone to a higher standard.



The message of **respect.** is one that the Be Active kids at the Boys & Girls Club of Thunder Bay want to share. They believe in the power of **respect.** and have stepped up to put their message on display at City Hall. They hope their words will serve as a reminder that **respect.** should be a part of everyday life.

Be Active is a leadership development program run out of the Boys & Girls Club of Thunder Bay. This program challenges its participants, youth from grades five - eight, to get involved in their community and learn to become leaders and role models.

When the Be Active kids were charged with becoming **respect.** ambassadors, they took their role to heart. Their creativity and words are inspiring. "Stand up and make some noise" – Kiara; "It doesn't take much to lend a helping hand" – Brooke; "Don't be afraid to stand up for others" – Mackenzie; "Five ways to respect: love, faith, hope, courage, and patience" – Brianna; "Don't be a bully" – Cheyna; and "Be true, be you" – Brayden. These are just a few of the motivating message these young leaders want to share.

We invite everyone to come down and view the Be Active **respect.** display at City Hall in the main lobby until the end of the month. Take a moment for their inspiring words to sink in and think what you can do to pay-it-forward. What actions can you take to help us build a respectful community?

Be Active is a community action project of Leadership Thunder Bay. Leadership Thunder Bay provides leadership training to emerging community leaders while sharing a broader understanding of the critical issues affecting our community. Leadership Thunder Bay embraces **respect.** They are also spearheading another community action project to bring the message of **respect.** into the local school system. The project team is developing a **respect.** youth campaign in the high schools, including the city-wide launch of a new educational video they have developed with high school students, and a contest where high school students will be challenged to share their own voice on **respect.**, creating unique video messages and a youth slogan on **respect.**

Jodi Wright is the Co-coordinator of Be Active and a 2012-2013 participant of Leadership Thunder Bay.