

# Learning real life skills

**S**TUDENTS in year 9 are at a pivotal moment in their development. It is at this age that they begin to ask the questions "Who am I? Who do I want to be? How do others perceive me?" It is a period when young adults are tentatively developing a sense of self, are beginning to explore how they fit into the world around them, and start to question the status quo.

In response, The King David School (KDS) has developed a full day program specifically designed to support and challenge its year 9 cohort on their journey of self-discovery. Called 'Nitzan' (bud), the initiative is dedicated to providing practical skills for a self-reliant future. The program gives King David students ownership over their learning, empowering them to build skills for their future through a variety of vibrant, dynamic and practical learning opportunities. Students will wear their Nitzan T-shirt and casual clothes every Wednesday to further emphasise that Nitzan is special and to create a sense of belonging.

"Our year 9 program is about engagement and empowerment; it supports their need for independence as adolescents as well as building them for the future," explained senior school wellbeing coordinator Jayne Wise.

Starting each Wednesday with a physical activity – either an early-morning run or a yoga session – the students then

spend the rest of the morning exploring themes of social justice, ethics and tikkun olam.

The afternoons are spent learning practical skills including ironing a shirt, repairing a bike, basic landscaping and home repairs. By the end of the year, each student will have accreditation in food handling, CPR and barista basics. Along with the ability to apply for a tax file number and write a CV, KDS aims for its students to be well prepared for entering the part-time workforce.

Each term has a theme, which is developed through activities, excursions and peak experiences. The model follows the school's understanding of educational neuroscience combining project-based learning (PBL) and design thinking (DT) and is supported by content from the KDS wellbeing curriculum.



KDS Nitzan students Tara Rotstein (left) and Emily Givoni.