

## [24 Ideas for Instilling Manners in Children](#)

Many adults agree that a lack of manners in children is a growing problem in our society. Parents are partly to blame if they ignore their children's rude behaviors. Some parents demonstrate poor sportsmanship, display inconsiderate attitudes and blame educators or other influences for their child's problems. Disrespectful conduct portrayed in the media is also at fault more than ever.

Educators can play an important role in children's development by demonstrating basic civility. Modeling a respectful attitude and requiring students to be considerate of the rights and feelings of others help create a cooperative learning environment. When people treat others with respect, they feel better about themselves and develop self-confidence. When educators model courtesy, children can learn to be considerate of others.

Creative Early Learning Center Child Care & Preschool employees are always working hard to demonstrate early childhood "Best Practices." In order to be at our best for our families and meet Step Up To Quality standards, all our teachers are required to complete several hours of specialized training each year. We wanted to share one of our newest industry topics we feel is extremely important to help instill in your children daily. Below is the 24 tips, would love some feedback and suggestions, we need your help:)



### What else can educators and parents do to instill manners in children?

1. When possible, greet each child as they enter the classroom. Also, send best wishes with them at the end of the day.
2. Take pleasure in being their teacher, so that the children feel valued.
3. Have children name examples of good manners and list them on the board. Then have them identify examples of rude behavior. Divide the children into groups to make

posters illustrating desirable and undesirable behaviors. These can be hung on the wall to remind children of appropriate conduct.

4. Discuss socially acceptable behaviors. Read the Kelly Bear Behavior book or other books that discuss appropriate conduct.

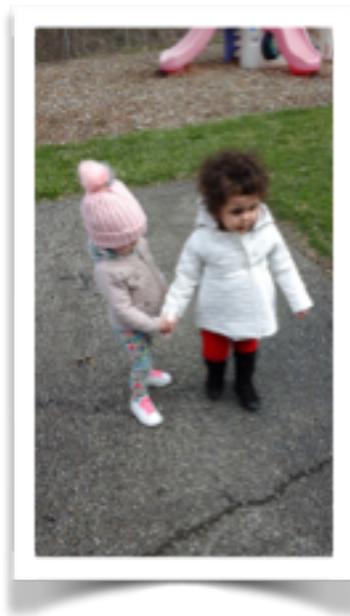
5. Teach, model, and post a respectful vocabulary such as "Please," "Thank You," "You're Welcome," "I'm sorry," "Excuse me," "I like the way you ..." "May I?" Have students add to the list.

6. Call attention to the harm that thoughtless, unkind words and actions can cause.

7. Teach students to stand up for themselves and others if they are called derogatory names.

8. Assert that any form of bullying including gossiping, excluding, and aggression is unacceptable.

9. Stress the importance of treating others the way you would like to be treated. Help them learn to empathize with others by reading books such as Kelly Bear Feelings.



10. Use role plays and/or puppets to reinforce positive behaviors.

11. Have the children practice a manner each week or month; for example, raise their hands to receive permission to speak. Role-play it, reinforce it, and review the last manner before adding a new one.

12. Acknowledge students when you see them acting in a kind or helpful manner by describing the specific behavior you observed.

13. Have a bulletin board that promotes manners. When you observe a child being especially courteous, write down the action on a colorful card with the student's name at the top and post it. Have students observe good manners in others, write down what they saw on a card, and add it to the board.

14. Take pictures of children using good manners, have the students add text, and make a PowerPoint presentation for children in lower grades or parents to view.

15. Have the children write, illustrate, and publish a book on manners. Students might work in groups to brainstorm situations. They could create questions for each page with several answer choices.

For example, a child grabbed another child's pencil. Possible choices:

- a. Grab it back.
- b. Scream, "Stop!"
- c. Say, "That is my pencil and I need it back. Please give it to me."

16. Have the children create a song, poem or play about manners.

17. Help establish a school-wide "Good Manners Program" to include all subject areas. A music teacher could teach songs about manners. An art teacher could have the children make posters depicting manners. A physical education teacher could play games where children introduce themselves to each other, and a classroom teacher could have the students write thank you notes to adult classroom helpers, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, custodians, etc.

18. Advise children of behavioral expectations. Classroom rules you may want to use:

- Be respectful.
- Be responsible.
- Be kind.
- Be safe.
- Listen and follow directions.
- Do your best.

19. Depending on the age of the children, decide on the rules together with your students. Discuss what needs to happen in the classroom for everyone to be able to learn. Write the student's suggestions on large chart and hang it in the room. The students could also help you define consequences for inappropriate behaviors.

20. During work time, establish a classroom non-verbal signal to warn an individual student of inappropriate behavior. Stare at the child, and if necessary call out his or her name and then use your signal. For example, hold your hand up in the stop position, lower your hand, or put your thumb down. Or, touch a student gently on the shoulder as

a reminder of appropriate behavior. If the child does not stop, administer a consequence.

Students interrupting a teacher are a problem in many classrooms. The following are some ideas concerning this behavior:

21. Tell the children that you want them to get the most out of school so you will not allow them to be rude and to interrupt you when you are speaking. Say, "I am here to help you learn; therefore, you need to listen and follow instructions. I am worried that you will be missing important information if you talk while I am giving instructions. When I am speaking, it is teacher time."

22. Let them know that they will have "student time" to talk to each other when they are working in pairs or groups or at other designated times.

23. Tell them exactly what you expect of them and follow it up with consequences. If children are talking when they are supposed to be silent, stop talking, stare, and do not start again until the room is quiet. If you start to talk, and someone interrupts, then stop again. You may want to say something like, "I am waiting," or move the disruptive child to another seat. An additional idea is to make a mark on the board to indicate that the class will lose one minute of recess. When it is quiet, begin again. Be consistent in whatever classroom management plan you use.

24. Teach the students that when they hear a bell, chime or see your hand up, they are to stop talking, not move, and listen.

Other manners that may be taught and practiced:

How to give and receive a compliment

Child says: "I like to play with you. It's fun!" Response: "Thank you. I like playing with you, too."

Child says: "You play fair!" Response: "Thanks, I try to follow the rules."

How to greet an adult

Look them in the eye.

Shake their hand.

Child says, "It's nice to meet you."

How to engage in polite conversation

Child asks, "How are you?"

Show interest in what the other person is saying.

Do not interrupt.

Do not talk about embarrassing topics.

How to behave during a meal

Sit up straight in a chair.

Put the napkin in your lap.

Keep your elbows off the table.

Wait until everyone is served before eating.

Take small bites.

Do not talk with your mouth full.

Chew your food with your mouth closed.

Do not interrupt a speaker.

Talk in a normal tone of voice.

Make eye contact when speaking.

Do not play with food.

Say "Please pass the \_\_\_\_\_," rather than reach for an item.

Say, "Thank you" when appropriate.

Say, "The \_\_\_\_\_ was very good," or give some other compliment to the host or hostess.

Say, "May I be excused, please?" and wait for consent before getting up from the table.

Staff need to encourage basic standards of behavior while eating.

Helping children learn basic manners early will be an asset for them as they mature.

The effort works best if appropriate behavior is emphasized throughout the school in conjunction with character education lessons.