



The Case for Good Manners At School
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Hilda Graham Consulting
Building communities of safety and effectiveness

Round Table Discussion Activity:
The Practice of Good Manners

- Form groups of 2-3.
- Use the Round Table Discussion questions, to talk about the topic of good manners.
- Be sure that each person contributes to the discussion.
- Move throughout the questions in any order, until time is called.

Discussion Activity Debrief...

Simple Definition of Good Manners

*positive codes of conduct,
behaviors, actions and attitudes
based on kindness and respect for self and others...
tactics of Kindness*

**What are good manners
made of?**

- Consideration, tact, courtesy, discretion, artfulness, finesse, poise, generosity, charm, elegance and self-discipline
- Grace, honor and civility,
- Shared courtesies and social agreements,
- Dignity, integrity, positive character, fairness, justice, trust and kindness,
- Social problem-solving, empathy and altruistic inclinations.

What more are good manners made of?

- Peace-keeping strategies
- Ethics, distinctions of right and wrong
- Rules that govern respectful communication and actions
- Diplomacy, inclusion, goodwill, moral strength
- Reciprocity and positive mutual regard
- Citizenship, personal responsibility

Name the people you consider to be well-mannered

- Family members...
- Friends...
- People you go to school with or work with...
- Public figures...
- Celebrities...



Ideas that help shape good manners:

- **Common sense...** knowing what is reasonable to most people and expected by most others.
- **Consideration for others...** being aware that our behaviors affect others. Knowing which actions hurt, humiliate or isolate others. Knowing which actions validate, honor or respect others.
- **Custom...** doing something in a learned or traditional way.
- **Habit...** doing something repeatedly, without thinking

Enter Empathy

- **Cognitive empathy...** simply sensing the feelings and thinking of another
- **Emotional empathy...** feeling along with the emotions of another
- **Compassionate empathy...** sensing the feelings of another and being moved to take action with good conscience

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Notes on the Subject of Empathy (Website Resource)

- Definition
- Types of empathy
- Empathy and school bullying
- Promoting Emotional Literacy and Empathy
- Steps to Empathy and Acts of Compassion
- Personal & Social Skills of Empathy
- The Language of Empathy
- Assessing the Role of Empathy In Your Classroom
- Activities That Teach Empathy
- Quotes

American the “Rudiful”

- In our Aggravating Circumstances survey, eight people in ten call “a lack of respect and courtesy” a serious social problem.
- Four in ten people admit they’ve behaved badly.
www.publicagenda

America the Rudiful Activity

- Form a group of 4
- Take turns reading a section of the 4 part article
- Discuss the questions at the end of the article
- Be ready to share your discussion points with the larger group

Why teach about manners?

- We are social creatures who live in relationships with/alongside others.



- Well-mannered people help create desirable and positive environments.
- Manners are building blocks for important behaviors in the future.
- Having good manners can be a lifetime advantage.

Can good manners make a school more effective?

Well-mannered words and actions can help promote a learning environment in which students and adults feel safe and respected. Manners can help create a welcoming atmosphere for all students, where it is safe to concentrate on the challenges and rigors learning.

Can good manners make a school safe?

- Well-mannered behaviors are the goals of many school rules and behavior management programs.
- Problem behaviors like bullying, harassment, coercion and hurtful teasing thrive in environments of disrespect and indifference.
- The role of students as co-creators of safe and respectful schools is at its' popular best. They are at the front-line of safety. Only students can shape "student" norms.

The Social Side of Schooling...

The social side of schooling can bring students the greatest joys, lifelong friendships, happy memories or the greatest angst. For educators, paying attention to the social side of schooling can mean the difference between a fulfilling job and a psychologically battering one.

What about manners and different cultures?

- Diverse cultures may not display manners or etiquette in the same way, but their intentions are often very similar.
- Many world cultures share the values of honesty, truthfulness, generosity, helpfulness, kindness, honor, courage, justice and tolerance.

You have the opportunity to use good manners to create the culture of your school!

A key challenge of teaching good manners: *Inspiring children to care...*

Inspiring kids to care:

Teaching gentleness in a violent world

- **Fact:** Children and youth spend time in a world that often seems harsh, uncaring and just plain unhappy...it may seem as though violence and cruelty seem to be common and acceptable.
- **Actions:** Work in every way you can to make your school an identified safe haven, in every way possible

Inspiring kids to care:

Teaching gentleness in a world of media and technology

- **Fact:** Parents, guardians, caregivers and teachers often feel overwhelmed and concerned by the impact of media and technology in young people lives.
- **Actions:** Do not underestimate the powers of education, common sense and traditional values that have served us well in the face of other challenges.

Inspiring kids to care:

Teaching gentleness in a world of so many differences



- **Fact:** The diversity of our communities and schools will continue to emerge and challenge us.
- **Actions:** Proactively build your classroom communities. Do not assume even the most basic of social connections or that a sense of cohesive identity exists for all the members of your school community.

Inspiring kids to care:

- **Fact:** None of what has been suggested to teach children about caring and compassion will work in the absence of an indestructible link of caring between adults and the children they are responsible for. The most inspiring influence for children who learn to care is the caring they receive for others, especially adults.

A key challenge of teaching good manners: Creating a Community of Practice

A community of practice is created by:

- What members know and understand in common.
- The notion that they are a cohesive community and share a *social fabric*.
- Things that they agree to, and do consistently.

As they proceed forward they work together to improve and refine their individual and group practices toward their common goal.

What connects us?

People can be together in their public and private lives without feeling connected to those closest to them. They may even experience feelings of not belonging and loneliness while in the midst of a crowd of people or the places they visit daily. It is also possible for them to feel no sense of responsibility to those around them.

Toward a Community of Practice...

Use things you have in common to further connect members and build your social fabric:

- Your History
- Your Missions
- Places and spaces
- Routine activities
- Traditions
- Symbols, mascots
- Shared accomplishments
- Unique culture of your school
- A common vision
- A shared sense of pride
- A sense of shared responsibility
- Common/shared feelings of worth
- A sense of influence
- Feelings of belonging

Creating a Community of Practice

Creating a sense of “membership” in your school community makes the following things possible:



- Shared agreements rules and boundaries
- Emotional safety
- Risk taking
- An openness to learning
- Personal investment
- Meaningful recognition & rewards
- Sharing a culture, including *the way you want to do things from now on!*

What gives life to a community of practice?

It is when members begin to apply common knowledge and efforts toward a common vision and assume the roles of:

- Active leaders
- Responsible partners
- Problem solvers
- Creative thinkers
- Advocates
- Protectors
- Givers of service
- Teachers of others

Building Blocks and Indicators of a Well-Mannered School

- Assess
- Validate current practices
- Identify new goals

Tools and Resources

- Text from the PowerPoint (Website)
- The Case for Good Manners At School Article
- Building Blocks and Indicators of a Well-Mannered School
- Good Manners Campaign Worksheets (Website)

Campaign Worksheets

- Basic Problem Analysis of Ill-Mannered Behaviors
- Analyzing the Actions Goals for Your Target Audiences
- Taking Stock of Your Resources
- Naming Your Partners and Their Roles
- Designing the Cornerstone Message of Your Campaign

George Washington Carver

"How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these."



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