

## Dear Parents

“A recent survey of 1000 parents found that the basics of good old-fashioned courtesy were rarely used by children. Words such as ‘please’, ‘thank you’, ‘may I?’ and ‘excuse me’ were replaced by grunts and demands. The survey commissioned by the Disney Entertainment Group to mark the release of a new DVD edition of Beauty and the Beast, indicated that three out of four parents thought that children were less well-mannered than in previous generations.” Heather Zubek.

There is no doubt that our earliest relationships provide a model for all our future relationships, and learning to trust other people as feeling, thoughtful human beings, will form the basis for having happy, satisfying relationships. To develop these happy, satisfying relationships, we will need good manners and basic courtesy.

Good manners need to be taught for they are important skills that our children should develop when they are young, so they can enjoy the benefit of them for the rest of their lives. It is in the family home that the “manners seed” needs to be planted and nurtured, along with core values and ethics. It is in the family home that children learn to be considerate, tolerant and respectful; this learning comes through parental guidance and example.

Actions really do speak louder than words:  
“I can’t move it, you can’t move it.  
It won’t move an inch.  
But if we work together,  
Moving it’s a cinch.” Author Unknown.

When children are polite, kind, honest and cooperative, they develop character and exhibit social skills that help others feel comfortable. These relationship building skills, also help children -and adults- to get on with friends and neighbours and, if the occasion arises, to resolve differences of opinion in a courteous and healthy way.

It has been said that “Rudeness is the weak person’s imitation of strength”. Author Unknown. It is also an expression of ignorance of courteous behaviour and children who do not have social skills, can have a difficult time making lasting friendships with their peers and being accepted generally. They have missed out on learning the “Golden Rule”: Treat others as you yourself would like to be treated.

“I have super manners. Yes I do.  
I can say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’, too.  
When I play with my friends, I like to share. That’s the way I show I care.”

Author Unknown.

Manners are respect in action and should be learnt and taught through the experiences of daily living. “Mind your manners” often used to come from the lips of parents and indicated that their children knew what it was that needed to be “minded”. In a society that rarely offers example or support for parents, teaching manners to our children can be lonely and tedious. However, to see our children grow in respect and consideration for themselves and others will be a rich reward for effort.

“Grandma says I shouldn’t lie,  
The truth is always better.  
I just hope she doesn’t ask,  
If I like my birthday sweater.” Judith Lalli.

Peace and Best Wishes.