



Good Manners

Teaching manners reminds children that other people deserve kindness and respect. Since children at this age are naturally inclined to want to please their parents, it is a perfect time to teach social graces and create good habits.

- **Be kind**
 - Let your child know that taking turns, sharing, and being friendly to others is important behavior
 - Point out other people exhibiting the behaviors you would like to see in your child so they can identify with the actions being shown
 - Sharing can be difficult and uncomfortable for your child...continue to encourage sharing, be sympathetic, and show enthusiasm when they offer a toy or take turns!

- **Say Please & Thank You**
 - Using “magic words” are a fun routine that carry into lifelong good habits
 - Children love to imitate mom and dad, so be a role model—they’ll learn to use please and thank you even faster when you react quickly and praise their polite responses.

- **Do not interrupt**
 - Patience is now something your little one can understand and put into practice
 - Explain that when you are talking with someone else, on the phone, etc. that it is not okay to interrupt unless it is critical (i.e. someone is hurt or it is a bathroom emergency)
 - Follow through when you’re done by thanking your child for being patient and then giving your undivided attention

- **Greet nicely**
 - Greeting others, saying goodbye, and answering simple questions are essential social graces
 - Challenge your child to notice something about the person they are speaking to (“Can you tell me what color Mrs. Smith’s eyes are?”) which will encourage them to make eye contact and be present
 - Adding in greetings while playing at home can help your child practice their “hello’s” and “goodbye’s”

- **Eat at the table**
 - It is important for your child to recognize that dinnertime is family time. Staying in their seat for more than a few minutes is challenging, but start with a few minutes at a time and work your way up.
 - Have your child help set the table, insist that food be eaten only at the table, avoid juice/snacks right before meal times, and promote good table manners (phone off table, chewing with mouth shut, etc.)