

Manners

Twenty-five Manners by Age Nine, If Not Sooner

1. When asking for something, say "Please."
2. When receiving something, say "Thank you."
3. Do not interrupt adults who are speaking with each other unless there is an emergency. They will notice you.
4. The phrase "Excuse me" is a useful way of entering into a conversation or getting someone's attention.
5. If you have any doubt about doing something, ask permission. It can save many hours of grief.
6. The world is not as interested in your dislikes and hates as you are. Keep them to yourself, or between you and your friends, out of earshot of adults. Nobody likes a complainer.
7. Do not make comments about other people's physical characteristics unless, of course, it's a compliment, which is always welcome.
8. At the table:
 - Use utensils properly. If you are unsure, get your parents to teach you. And watch what other people do.
 - Keep a napkin in your lap; use it to wipe your mouth when necessary.
 - Don't reach for things; ask to have them passed, "Please."
 - Add something pleasant to the conversation. Talk, don't just eat, and don't eat as fast as you can. Refuse unwanted seconds by saying, "No thank you, I'm full," and not, "I don't like it."
 - Whether at home or away, say something nice about the meal, even if it was the worst meal you ever had. Someone took the time and care to cook it for you.
 - When you have finished eating before others, ask to be excused from the table, do not merely get up and leave.
 - Especially when you are a guest, offer to help clear the table.
 - Thank the person who cooked the meal.
9. When people ask you how you are, tell them and then ask them how they are.
10. When you have spent time at a friend's house, remember to thank your friend's parents for having you over and for the good time you had.
11. When at a friend's house, ask if you can use the telephone before calling home.
12. Knock on closed doors before entering.

13. Call home if you are going to be more than 15 minutes late.
14. When placing a phone call, give your name first before asking to speak with the another person.
15. Be appreciative and say "thank you" for any gift you receive.
16. Never use foul language in front of adults. Adults know all those words and find them boring and unpleasant.
17. Don't call anyone names.
18. Do not make fun of anyone for any reason. Teasing shows others you are weak. Ganging up on other people is cruel.
19. Even if a play or assembly is boring, sit through it quietly and pretend interest. The performers are doing their best.
20. If you run into somebody say, "Excuse me" before running on.
21. Don't pick your nose in public and cover your mouth when you cough.
22. When going through a door, look to see if you can hold it open for someone else.
23. If you come across a parent, or neighbor working on something, ask if you can help. If they say "Yes" do it - you may learn something.
24. When an adult asks you to do a favor, do it pleasantly.
25. When someone helps you, say "Thank you." That person will want to help you again. This suggestion is very useful with teachers!

Author: David Lowry, former head of school for The Lexington School (KY), and currently head of school for St. Edmond's Academy (PA), will become the next school leader for The Elisabeth Morrow School (NJ) in July of 2000.