

MANNERS: APRIL 2010

Dear Family,

This month we will focus on the character concept, "manners." Therefore, our power-chat discussions and activities will aim to help children understand what manners are and how to use them. We will be encouraging them to actively engage their manners at home, in school, and out in the community.

Manners show other people that their comfort and their feelings matter. They involve several of our other Powerful Words such as self control and empathy. Empathy is so critical to manners that etiquette expert, Amy Vanderbilt once said, "Good manners have much to do with the emotions. To make them ring true, one must feel them, not merely exhibit them." In other words, manners are not just about going through the motions-- we need to imagine how others might feel in various circumstances and act or react accordingly. While good manners might mean different things to different people depending on values and societal norms, one commonality is that manners help us all follow the Golden Rule: Treat others the way we want to be treated.

People who use polite words and behave with other people in mind tend to make others feel comfortable and valued. As a character-based academy, we are focusing more on being aware of other people's feelings than on "etiquette for etiquette's sake." Phrases like, "Can I help you?" and "You're welcome" and words like "please," "sorry," and "thank-you" all have ways of helping our friends and family feel like their feelings matter.

A recent 2009 online poll of 1000 mothers showed a renewed interest in manners. In fact, 81% of mothers said that manners are more important than ever, specifically; 39% said treating adults with respect was of most importance, followed by saying please and thank you (29%) and then, treating other children with respect (19%). Parents feel that manners can ground children in a world that seems "freewheeling" (Babycenter.com).

The definitions of manners are as follows:

Young students: "Showing kindness in everything I say and do!"

Older students/teens/adults: Words and behaviors that show respect for other people.

During the four weeks of April we will be discussing the following:

- (1) Week 1: Please, thank-you, you're welcome and nice table manners
- (2) Week 2: Polite interruptions, apologies, criticism, compliments, and insults
- (3) Week 3: Polite phone manners and polite introductions
- (4) Week 4: Saying thank-you and showing gratitude to those who help the most

Upcoming Powerful Words

<i>May:</i>	Sportsmanship
<i>June:</i>	Focus
<i>July:</i>	Attitude

As always, one of the best ways to teach and reinforce Powerful Words is by modeling strength of character ourselves. By encouraging your children to practice their manners at home and out in the community, they can develop respectful habits that will make others, and in turn, themselves, feel more comfortable and valued.

We thank you for your support. You are pivotal in helping to make our school one of the best Martial Arts and personal development centers in the world.

Best Regards,
Your Motivated and Dedicated Martial Arts Instructors

