Tips for teaching manners

1. Set an example. Children are always watching what their parents and other adults do. Model good manners and your child will pick up on them. For example, when you sit down at a table and take a drink of water, say “Thank you for offering me a drink.”

2. Don’t over-react. By blowing up, you are showing your child how to handle situations. Instead, calmly remind your child of what is expected and how to handle the situation. For example, if your child is playing with a toy and throws it across the room, calmly say, “Please clean up your toys and put them away.”

3. Read your child books. Stories that offer lessons on how to have good manners are excellent teaching tools. Examples:
   - "Just Say Please" by Lita and Mercer Mayer
   - "The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners" by Stan and Jan Berenstain
   - "Elmo’s Good Manners Game" by Sesame Street

4. Give praise. When your child exhibits good manners, let them know that you are proud of them. For example, when your child says “please” and “thank you,” praise them for their good manners.

5. Be patient and consistent. Remember that very young children aren’t yet capable of controlling much of their behavior. Be patient and consistent in teaching them good manners.

6. Be your child’s coach. Be proactive about using role-playing games, books, and other activities to teach your child good manners. For example, if your child is having a hard time saying “please” and “thank you,” you can practice saying them together.

7. Use your child’s favorite characters to help make the point. Children love to be like the characters and people they love. For example, if your child is in a Barney stage, ask them, “If you were Barney, what would you do?”

8. Help your child understand the consequences of their actions. For example, if your child is having a hard time sharing, you can discuss what would happen if they didn’t share.

9. Be a role model. Children learn by imitation. By modeling good manners, you are teaching your child how to behave.

10. Encourage cooperation. By having your child help you with chores, you are teaching them the importance of cooperation.

11. Set boundaries. By setting limits on what your child can do, you are teaching them the importance of boundaries.

12. Be consistent. By being consistent in your expectations, you are teaching your child the importance of consistency.

13. Be patient. By being patient, you are teaching your child the importance of patience.

14. Be your child’s coach. Be proactive about using real-life opportunities to teach your child good manners.

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