



Penny Sylvia

She's also very pretty—a point not lost on my two boys.

Why do manners matter? As Lisa explains to her rapt audience, good manners are a sign that we're showing respect and caring for another human being. (I'm hoping that *I'm* the other human being my two will start showing a little more respect toward!) Greetings with a handshake, proper table manners, and—dare I dream it?—sharing with others!

The funny truth about humans is that we often learn best from someone who's not in our immediate circle. Even saying, "please, say please!" to my kids 50 times a day didn't have the same impact on them as one class with Lisa. I was stunned in the days following to find that her wisdom had actually stuck. Visiting a friend's home, my sons started the incessant doorbell ringing that kids love to do. I posed to them, "Would Teacher Lisa say that ringing the doorbell a hundred times is rude or polite?" They both

**SILLY WAYS TO TEACH KIDS MANNERS AT HOME**

- In jest, demonstrate several times what not to do at the dinner table and let your kids correct you. ("Mom! Use your napkin, not your pants, silly!")
- Use puppets, trains or dolls to role-play mannerly behavior. ("Very nice to meet you, Thomas. Would you like to share my coupling rod?")
- Create moments for your kids. Buy or snip (from your own garden!) a bouquet for your child to give to her teacher. Prepare kids prior to a play date about how to exit graciously. ("I had fun. Thank you.")

looked up with bright eyes, obviously engaged, and shouted, "*Rude!*" Even more miraculously, they actually stopped pushing the bell.

Nearly speechless that my children responded to me so quickly, I managed to choke out a whispered, "Thank you." **K**

For more information, call (916) 564-2879 or visit [www.busybeesstudio.net](http://www.busybeesstudio.net).

**Busy Bees Studio offers modern day etiquette classes for kids** BY WENDY IRVINE

When it came to manners, my mom was unrelenting—especially when she cleared her throat at a social event. My sister and I knew what that meant: We'd messed up. When I heard my mom gagging like a cat working on a hairball, I knew I had one millisecond to figure out which etiquette rule I'd breached. Did I not say thank you? *Thank you!* Did I take too much food from the buffet? *Here, I'll scrape some back. Just please make my mother stop with the coughing and the clearing!*

Fast forward a couple decades. I so thought I would be a cool mom. My kids wouldn't spew "please" and "thank you" like wind-up toys. How inhumane and robotic—or so I thought. I was unprepared for how intensely I would cringe when my 4-year-old boys had the slightest lapse in manners.

When one of my kids demands, "Where's my milk?!" to another mom

at preschool snack time, you'll find me under the table, curled into a fetal position, whimpering, "I've taught them to say 'please.' I swear I've mentioned it a million times. You've got to believe me!"

On a scale of one to ten, my boys are about a six or seven in the manners department. With the holidays upon us, I'm looking to buy a nine, Bob. Enter Busy Bees Studio. Prior to Lisa Dupre opening this Arden-based studio full of cutting-edge classes, including Spanish, advanced music and yoga for the kidlets, our Sacramento region was sorely lacking in etiquette instruction for kids. And if you're expecting an uptight, large-bunned teacher from yesteryear, you couldn't be more wrong.

Lisa's energetic and full of smiles and tricks for teaching our little monkeys how to "fake it 'til they make it" in polite society.

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