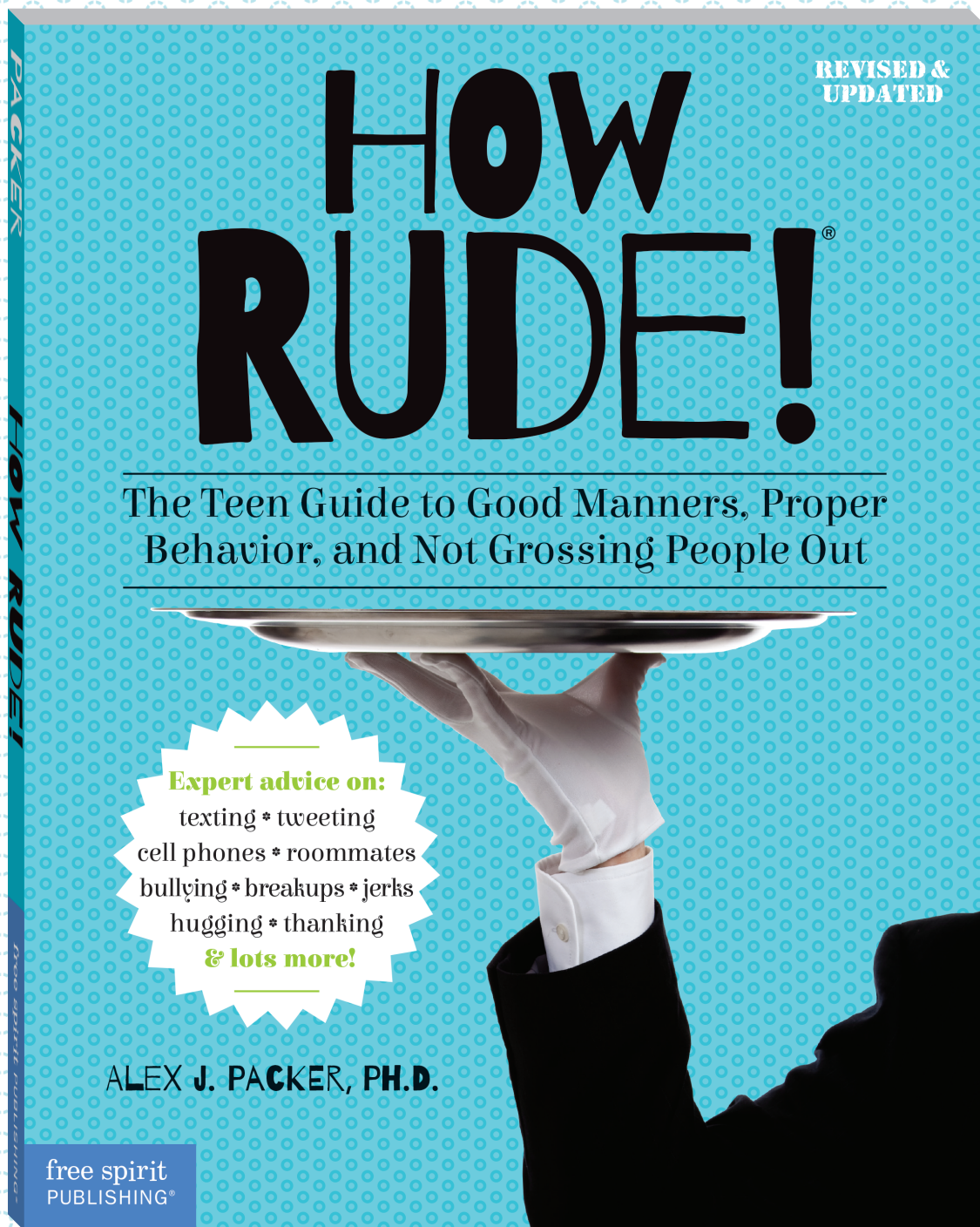


A Leader's Guide to



HOW RUDE!

REVISED &
UPDATED

The Teen Guide to Good Manners, Proper
Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out

Expert advice on:
texting * tweeting
cell phones * roommates
bullying * breakups * jerks
hugging * thanking
& lots more!

ALEX J. PACKER, PH.D.

free spirit
PUBLISHING®

Alex J. Packer, Ph.D.

free spirit
PUBLISHING®

A Leader's Guide to How Rude!® The Teen Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out by Alex J. Packer, Ph.D., copyright © 2016. Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; www.freespirit.com. All rights reserved.

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	4
Discussion Springboards	7
Activities	8
Manners: What's in a Word?.....	8
Old Rules of Etiquette	8
New Rules of Etiquette.....	8
Etiquette Across Borders	9
What's the Context?.....	9
Good Manners: The Upside	9
Bad Manners: The Downside.....	10
Classroom or Group Mission Statement.....	10
Classroom Etiquette for Students: Do's and Don'ts	11
Classroom Etiquette for Teachers: Do's and Don'ts	12
Peer-to-Peer Etiquette Rules for Teens	12
Manners in the News	12
Parental Etiquette: Do's and Don'ts.....	13
Home Etiquette for Teens: Do's and Don'ts.....	13
Public Etiquette for Teens: Do's and Don'ts.....	14
Etiquette Do's and Don'ts for Any Situation	14
Group Manners Meter.....	15
Manners Quotes	15
Manners Sleuth.....	16
Bad Manners/Good Manners Skits	16
Politeness on the Go.....	18
What About Being Rude Back?.....	18
Conclusion	19
About the Author	20

INTRODUCTION

How Rude!® *The Teen Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out* shows teens how to use good manners to build fulfilling relationships, get what they want out of life, feel good about themselves, and save society from a total manners meltdown.

The book is encyclopedic. The advice is detailed and nuanced, as the topics demand and inquiring young minds deserve. While the content is broad, the presentation style is “bite-sized,” breaking the world of teenagers into easy-to-digest chapters on different areas of their lives: school, family, relationships, social media, friendship and romance, public settings and rituals, communications, personal hygiene, and so forth. Other than the introductory chapter, which places the nature and importance of manners in a foundational context, there is no “plot,” sequence, or chronology requiring students* to read the book in any particular order. Indeed, I encourage kids to dip in and out of the book whenever and wherever they wish, letting need, curiosity, and problem-solving be their guides.

I convey the same message to you. You know better than anyone the community, culture, and learning environment in which you work and the priorities and interests of the young people in your charge. You know the tools and techniques that best engage and advance their growth and learning. And, of course, your methods will be influenced by the ages and developmental levels of the teenagers with whom you work, and by the implicit and explicit limits and mandates that govern your role with, and relationship to, young people.

Accordingly, I have not arranged this guide around chapter content. With well over a thousand manners topics, *How Rude!* covers too much ground to parallel in a leader's guide. Plus, some topics may not be relevant or appropriate given the children's ages, your curricular or program guidelines, the values of parents, and other expectations within your setting.

What I have done, therefore, is present overarching concepts to support and inform the use of *How Rude!* in a classroom or other group setting. I have created strategies that can be used to address virtually any manners-related question or issue.

In this guide you will find:

- **Discussion springboards:** Provocative questions to stimulate valuable and transformative conversations.
- **Activities:** Group exercises and interactions designed to increase awareness and reinforce kindness, respect, and the values that underlie good manners.

*My use of the term *students* is meant to represent young people in *any* setting, including classrooms, summer camps, after-school clubs, leadership groups, athletic teams, scouting troops, religious schools, treatment centers, volunteer service or juvenile corrections programs, or others.

Many of the activities provide structures that can be used to engage with virtually any manners-related issue.

- **Highlighted key points:** Important concepts and tips to understand and keep in mind when dealing with manners.

Creating a warm, safe, and civil classroom or group climate means keeping certain values and behaviors alive and visible. This needn't consume large amounts of time. Accordingly, the activities in this guide are designed to accommodate whatever time frame is available. Many can be done in five or fewer minutes. Others, such as discussions, are more variable, and can range from 10 to 30 or more minutes. Skit-based activities can also vary widely in length, particularly when allowing for multiple performances, budding Method actors, and time for debriefing. But even if activities are limited to a shorter-than-ideal period, awareness can still be increased, and concepts can still be introduced. Leaders can adapt the ideas and strategies in this guide to fit whatever time blocks they have.

The ways in which *How Rude!* can be used in the classroom or other group settings are virtually limitless. Since the book is comprehensive in its coverage of situations young people are likely to encounter, it can serve as a primary reference source for adults and students alike. To name just a few ways the book can be used:

- If manners transgressions occur, students can use the book to identify better, more polite ways to deal with similar situations in the future. (Use the Contents and Index as handy reference points here.)
- Preparations for field trips and other group outings can include consulting *How Rude!* to brush up on proper behavior at concerts or museums, or on public transportation.
- Students can use ideas in the book to create etiquette posters for the classroom or meeting room that represent the type of atmosphere and relationships everyone wishes to have.
- Based on the material in *How Rude!*, individual students or groups of students can present "lessons" on different aspects of good manners. These might include skits, role plays, videos, and so forth.
- Teens can create their own manners quizzes similar to those in the book.
- Students can explore the history of manners and write papers or present talks on how manners have evolved over time. For example, how did the handshake develop? When did people stop using fingers and start using utensils to eat?
- Teachers can use the book as an etiquette curriculum, creating their own lesson plans based on topics in the book they feel are most relevant to their students.

- Teachers and group leaders can enlist students to help them create a social media page for the class where students offer compliments, recognize kindnesses, express thanks, congratulate classmates and peers on achievements, and show good manners in other ways.

If you wish, you can also employ recurring elements of the book to spark creative thinking, writing, discussions, and role plays. For example:

- Have the group take the chapter quizzes as introductions to chapter topics; at the end of a topic session, invite kids to write other quizzes.
- Select questions from “The Survey Says” and create your own mini-survey for students to take themselves or to use in surveying family members, peers, or younger students.
- Invite teens to write their own “Dear Alex” inquiries and replies, “True Stories from the Manners Frontier,” or “Do’s and Don’ts” lists for situations they choose.

For the new edition of *How Rude!*, I created online surveys for students, teachers, and parents. I was heartened by my survey finding that 99 percent of teens agree that “it’s important to have good manners” (see page 4 in the book for more on this). Nonetheless, it’s a good idea to take a reading on how your students view manners. Do they see them as optional and irrelevant? Or do they have a mature understanding of how manners represent values for relating to others and for organizing societies and groups to fulfill shared goals?

The discussion springboards and activities in this leader’s guide create a good foundation for introducing manners into group consciousness and for building a classroom or other social environment committed to positive values and behaviors. If time is limited, the activities can be done one at a time over days or weeks. If an entire meeting period is available, you may wish to undertake more than one activity as a way of increasing depth, breadth, and intensity. The page number references included with some of the discussion springboards and activities point you to supporting information in the book.



DISCUSSION SPRINGBOARDS

These questions can be used to stimulate free-flowing discussions. If desired, many can be reframed into resolutions for informal mini-debates, with some students taking the affirmative position, and others the negative. For example: “Are manners sexist?” becomes “Manners are sexist,” “Is honesty always the best policy?” becomes “Honesty is always the best policy,” with different speakers arguing each side of the debate.

- What are manners? (page 6)
- What's the difference between manners and etiquette? (page 6)
- What's the difference between manners and morals?
- Why are manners so important? Isn't it what's inside a person that counts? (page 10)
- Why should you be nice to people you don't like? (page 16)
- Isn't having good manners just being fake? (page 14)
- Is honesty always the best policy? (page 376)
- When might it be okay to tell a lie? (pages 376–380)
- Are manners sexist? (page 9)
- Is it ever okay not to have good manners? (page 16)
- If you're not supposed to talk to strangers, how do you meet interesting new people? (page 71)
- Do you think family members are ruder with each other than they are with outsiders? (pages 115–168)
- What manners-related situations cause the most arguments between parents and teenagers? (pages 13 and 117)
- If someone has food on her chin, should you tell her? (page 454)
- If someone's fly is open, should you tell him? (page 454)
- Is not doing homework rude? (page 193)
- Is cheating bad manners? (page 200)
- When is texting rude? (pages 391–394)
- Is talking on a cell phone in a public restroom rude? (page 342)
- Do you think social media adds more rudeness or politeness to the world? (pages 383–422)
- Do you think using electronic devices and social media to communicate with peers delays or prevents teens from developing skills for face-to-face relationships? (pages 383–422)
- What manners-related behaviors would you most like a boyfriend or girlfriend to have? (pages 232–275)
- What does it mean to be polite to yourself? (pages 457–471)

ACTIVITIES

Manners: What's in a Word?

Goal: To measure the associations teens bring to the word *manners* and help students realize that “good manners” are not superficial extras, but profound principles for relating to others and achieving life goals

Tell the group: **“We’re going to do a word association. I’m going to say a word, and you say another word it makes you think of.”** Now say the word *manners*.

Go around the group or call on individuals. You’ll learn where students’ associations fall along the continuum from “curtsy” to “kindness,” “raised pinkies” to “respect.”

Guide the discussion so students come to see *manners* as a broad term that embodies fundamental guidelines for building good relationships and compassionate, viable societies.

Related questions:

- What are manners?
- What does it mean to have good manners?
- What’s the difference between manners and etiquette?
- Where and how do kids learn manners?

(See pages 6–7 for an explanation of *manners* and *etiquette*.)

Old Rules of Etiquette

Goal: To encourage students to think about how etiquette changes in response to cultural and technological change

Ask students to share an example of an etiquette rule that used to exist but is no longer practiced. (*Examples:* men always picking up the restaurant tab or being the ones to ask a woman on a date)

Related questions:

- Why did these rules change?
- Were they once good ideas?
- Is society better or worse off as a result?

New Rules of Etiquette

Goal: To encourage students to think about how etiquette changes in response to cultural and technological change

THE MANNERS RAP

The word *manners* gets a bad rap. Many people get hung up on teacups and elbows-off-the-table rules. They think of manners as an affectation practiced by prissy, stuck-up, goody-goody two-shoes. It’s all about finger bowls and butter knives, and has very little to do with their lives.

Ask students to find and share an example of an etiquette rule that didn't exist 50 years ago but is practiced now. (*Examples:* turning off a cell phone when at the movies; introducing a same-sex couple; limiting where people can smoke)

Related questions:

- What led to this change?
- Is the change for the better or worse?

Etiquette Across Borders

Goal: To encourage students to think about how etiquette changes from one country or culture to another

Ask students to find and share an example of an etiquette rule that would be polite in one country but considered rude in another. (*Examples:* removing shoes when entering someone's home; belching to show appreciation of a meal; patting a child's head; giving the thumbs up sign)

Related questions:

- Why does etiquette vary from culture to culture or country to country?
- How do you know what the proper etiquette is?
- How can you find out?

What's the Context?

Goal: To encourage students to recognize the role context plays in determining appropriate behavior

Ask students to think of a behavior that is appropriate in one setting but not another. (*Examples:* a watermelon seed spitting contest; belching; texting, telling a certain joke)

Related questions:

- What makes the behavior appropriate in one setting or with one group and not another?
- What should you do if you're not sure whether a behavior is appropriate?
- What does it mean to say "Manners are more art than science"?

Good Manners: The Upside

Goal: To help students realize ways in which having good manners—being kind, considerate, and respectful—works to their advantage

Ask students to think of a time when using good manners helped them.

Go around the group or call on individuals to hear what it was they did and how it benefited them. (*Examples:* "I try to be polite at home and got my allowance raised." "I have been hired for different jobs because adults are looking for kids with good manners.")

MANNERS PAYOFF

Here are the Top Five ways in which being polite has paid off for the teens who took my survey:

1. Got a job.
2. Got something they wanted from their parents.
3. Got compliments and respect.
4. Got in good with somebody they liked.
5. Got help from teachers.

Bad Manners: The Downside

Goal: To help students realize ways in which bad manners—being unkind, inconsiderate, disrespectful, or irresponsible—works to their disadvantage

Ask students to think of a time when using bad manners hurt them.

Go around the group or call on individuals to hear what it was they did and how it harmed them. Ask what they learned from the experience and whether it changed anything in their life, behavior, or relationships. (*Examples:* “I said mean things behind the back of a friend and she found out and I lost her as a friend.” “I yelled at my dad and got grounded.” “I was rude to my foster mom and that made her want me to leave. At the time I didn’t care, but now I wish I had cared.”)

Classroom or Group Mission Statement

Goal: To enlist student buy-in and commitment to shared values for a healthy classroom climate

Have students come up with a one-sentence “climate mission statement” for your classroom or group.

Divide students into groups of four to six people. Ask each group to come up with *two* one-sentence mission statements.

The first statement should represent the type of atmosphere, relationships, and expectations they would *HATE* to have in the class. Encourage them to think in terms of how people relate to each other, what it feels like to be there, what the learning environment is like, and so on.

Example:

In our class, we strive to hurt people's feelings, bully, start fights, take things without asking and break them, make the teacher cry, and prevent anyone from learning.

The second statement should represent the type of atmosphere, relationships, and expectations they would *LOVE* to have in the class.

Examples:

In our class, we respect the property, opinions, feelings, diversity, intelligence, uniqueness, and accomplishments of others.

In our group, we treat others the way we would like to be treated.

WHY ON EARTH SHOULD I INCLUDE EXAMPLES OF BAD BEHAVIOR?

Including a “bad manners” mission statement is important for several reasons:

- It helps students realize that classroom climates can exist along a continuum that ranges from mean to kind, bullying to caring, disrespectful to supportive, scary to safe, unhappy to joyful, boring to stimulating, and so forth.
- Mission statements for a classroom students would not want to be in are funny. Yes, they deal with serious issues, but when stated as a goal, the absurdity of anyone wanting that becomes clear.
- The juxtaposition of negative and positive mission statements makes it clear that the group can make a *choice* about the type of climate it wishes to have. This encourages students to own the choice and make a commitment to it. It’s not just something the teacher wants; it’s something *they* want.

The next two activities can be used to stimulate student brainstorming about polite and rude behaviors.

Classroom Etiquette for Students: Do’s and Don’ts

Goal: To get students thinking about which specific behaviors support or undermine the classroom “climate mission statement.” In essence, students are asked to create the etiquette rules that actualize good manners in the classroom.

Ask students to generate a list of important etiquette rules students should practice when in the classroom in support of the mission statement.

Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Ask each group to come up with 5 to 10 important etiquette rules students should follow when in class. Groups then share their rules. Come up with a master list of do’s and don’ts for students in creating and maintaining the positive classroom climate embodied in the mission statement. This could be turned into a poster. (See page 199 of the book for an example of 30 do’s and don’ts for classroom etiquette for students. Also see book page 13 for manners-related behaviors that impress teachers.)

SUPERCHARGED THINKING

I call the additive process in which students contribute their ideas on top of other students' ideas "supercharged thinking."

It reminds me of the African proverb: *"If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with others."*

Cooperation and additive processes are especially apt for creating a safe and civil classroom community—everyone working together to achieve a shared goal exemplifies the societal benefits of people working together with respect and politeness.

Classroom Etiquette for Teachers: Do's and Don'ts

Goal: To reinforce the "community" aspect of the classroom by including teachers and other adults in behavioral expectations

Ask students to generate a list of important etiquette rules teachers should practice when in the classroom in support of the mission statement.

Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Ask each group to come up with 5 to 10 important etiquette rules for teachers. Groups then share their rules. Come up with a master list of do's and don'ts for adult behaviors that support the positive classroom climate embodied in the mission statement. This could be turned into a poster. (See page 198 of the book for an example of 30 do's and don'ts for classroom etiquette for teachers.)

Peer-to-Peer Etiquette Rules for Teens

Goal: To get kids thinking about how they treat their peers and how they would like to be treated

Ask students to generate a list of important etiquette rules teens should follow when relating to each other.

Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Ask each group to come up with 10 important etiquette rules teens should follow when relating to other teens. Groups then share their rules. Come up with a master list of do's and don'ts for creating and maintaining positive relationships among peers. This could be turned into a poster. (See page 190 of the book for survey responses about rude things students do to each other.)

Manners in the News

Goal: To get kids to relate their personal understanding of manners and proper behavior to current events, societal forces, celebrities, politicians, and other people in the news

Ask each student to share a story read or heard in the news that represents either very good or very bad manners.

Every day there are news stories that relate to rude or polite behavior. Politics is rife with rudeness. A celebrity may have a temper tantrum on an airplane. I once saw a news item about a high school student who, in violation of etiquette and rules stated by the host institution, took a selfie, which she posted on Instagram, of herself next to an undraped cadaver during a field trip to a university bio department.

There are also stories of acts of extraordinary kindness: a police officer who buys shoes for a homeless person; a student athlete who loses the race because he stopped to help an injured competitor, and so on.

Discussion can reveal the contextual nature of manners. For example, let's say a student shares a story about booing during a graduation speech given by a controversial figure. Is that always bad manners? Does it depend on what the speaker is saying?

Parental Etiquette: Do's and Don'ts

Goal: To encourage students to see their parents as people with dreams, plans, disappointments, responsibilities, worries, and problems, and to recognize that parents' manners can be influenced by other things going on in their lives

Ask students to generate a list of important etiquette rules parents should practice with their children.

Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Ask each group to come up with 5 to 10 important etiquette rules parents should follow with their kids. Groups then share their rules. Come up with a master list of do's and don'ts parents can use to help create positive relationships with their children. This could be turned into a poster. (See pages 372–376 of the book for a discussion of parental rudeness.)

Related questions:

- What are some ways in which parents might be rude to their kids? Why do you think that happens?
- What can children do to promote parental politeness?

Home Etiquette for Teens: Do's and Don'ts

Goal: To encourage students to use good manners at home

Ask students to generate a list of important etiquette rules teens should practice at home with their families.

Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Ask each group to come up with 5 to 10 important etiquette rules teens should follow at home. Groups then share their rules. Come up with a master list of do's and don'ts for creating and maintaining a pleasant home environment and healthy, mutually

supportive relationships with parents and siblings. This could be turned into a poster. (See page 13 of the book for a list of manners parents report wanting to see children practice.)

Related questions:

- Do manners matter as much at home as they do in other settings?
- Do you think the behaviors parents and children exhibit toward each other at home are usually more polite, less polite, or the same as the behaviors they use with others in settings outside the home? Why is that?

Public Etiquette for Teens: Do's and Don'ts

Goal: To encourage students to recognize and use good manners in public spaces such as stores, buses, restaurants, malls, and so forth

Ask students to generate a list of important etiquette rules teens should practice when out in public. You may wish to specify a particular location such as a fast-food restaurant, museum, shopping mall, sidewalk, or other location.

Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Ask each group to come up with 5 to 10 important etiquette rules teens should follow when in public places. Groups then share their rules. Come up with a master list of do's and don'ts for proper public behaviors. This could be turned into a poster.

Related questions:

- What are some rude things teens do in public places?
- What do you see people doing in public that bothers you?
- Should setting an example for younger kids play a role in older teens' behaviors?

Etiquette Do's and Don'ts for Any Situation

Goal: To get students thinking about what constitutes polite and rude behavior in specific contexts and build a classroom reference library for different situations

“Do's and Don'ts” can be created for any topic, occasion, or behavior. (*Examples:* school locker room etiquette, a field trip to the natural history museum, welcoming a special visitor to the class, writing a thank-you note, texting, cell phone use, being an overnight guest in someone's home, cafeteria behavior)

Present the event, interaction, or topic to the group by saying: **“What do you think the do's and don'ts of _____ should be?”** Fill in the blank with the topic.

Solicit student ideas by going around the class, creating groups, or having each student write down 3 to 5 do's and don'ts that they share with the class. Have a scribe write the ideas on the board or in a projected digital document, or collect the cards to compile later into a list. The class can develop its own

do's and don'ts reference library, and any list can be turned into a poster or screen saver.

For relatively straightforward issues, a “Do's and Don'ts List” can be a good structure for responding to manners questions. Let's say a student asks about visiting a sick friend in the hospital. This type of topic lends itself to do's and don'ts:

- Do ask first if it's okay to visit.
- Do leave the room to give the patient privacy if hospital staff come in.
- Don't stay too long.
- Do bring an appropriate gift (not a book for someone who's just had eye surgery).

Students may rightly pose what-ifs: *What if the person is dying? What if you don't know the person very well? What if you don't get along with her parents? Do you have to bring a gift each time if you visit more than once?* Welcome such questions: they show that students recognize the contextual basis for manners and that what's proper in one setting or context might not be in another.

Group Manners Meter

Goal: To keep alive the students' commitment to and awareness of a positive group climate

Invite students to design a visual tool that monitors overall classroom kindness. This could be something as simple as an actual calendar where each day gets marked, upon consensus, with a “K” for Kindness, or, on less-than-kind days, with a “K” with a slash through it, or an “O” for “Oops.” Or it could be more sophisticated with daily thermometer-style bar graphs that quantify KCUs (“Kindness and Consideration Units”) or other measurement units students invent that can more precisely reflect the day's climate.

There could also be a graphic on the wall or whiteboard that says: “This class has gone __ days without an unkind act.” Students can be responsible for changing the number. Adding another day to the tally can be a moment of self-congratulation for the class. Having to go back to zero days, or otherwise recognize an unkind event or atmosphere, should be accompanied by constructive discussion so students understand what happened.

The class might also consider *how* to evaluate and measure classroom climate. Surely, if the class has gone 27 days without an unkind act, it wouldn't be right to start over at zero simply because somebody spoke without raising his hand or was unintentionally rude. Or would it? If the goal is progress, not perfection, where do you draw the line? Who decides?

Manners Quotes

Goal: To encourage students to think with depth and nuance about manners

Pose a manners-related quotation to provoke discussion. For example:

"Respect for ourselves guides our morals, respect for others guides our manners."
—Laurence Sterne

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."
—Aesop

Invite students to find and bring in quotes of their own discovery. Another variation is to have students create their own wise or witty sayings.

Related questions:

- Do you agree with this?
- Do you think it's true? Is it always true (or false)?
- How would you change it to reflect your thinking?
- Have you had an experience that supports or refutes the quotation?

Manners Sleuth

Goal: To create a fun method for recognizing positive behavior

Appoint a secret "Manners Sleuth." (Students may want to brainstorm a different name for the position, such as Captain Kindness, Major Manners, or another fun moniker.) The sleuth's job is to anonymously record and recognize positive behavior with a sticker, thank-you card, gift coupon, treat, freebie from a local merchant, night off from homework, and so forth. Teachers and/or students can contribute to a stash of classroom "goodies." Rotate the sleuth position among students.

You might have the recognition occur continuously throughout the week to maintain awareness, energy, and classroom "buzz," with daily contemporaneous reports on good deeds. In this case, a second student (or the teacher), should be the sleuth's public face so that the identity of the sleuth, like the identity of a restaurant critic, remains hidden until the end of the week so that kids don't seek to curry favor or recognition when around the sleuth. ("Hey, look, I'm being kind!") Alternatively, the reporting of kind deeds can be secretly noted but withheld until an awards-style mini-assembly at the end of the week when the sleuth and recipients are identified: *"Best kindness in a leading role goes to Chris for _____."* *"For generosity in a supporting role, recognition goes to _____."* *"Best comedy performance to resolve a conflict goes to _____."*

Bad Manners/Good Manners Skits

Goal: To create an activity template that can deal with virtually any manners-related issue; this format can be used for most manners topics—proper handshakes, public bus manners, interrupting politely, responding to a compliment, apologizing for hurting someone's feelings, and so forth

Introduce a topic or situation to the class for students to act out and discuss.

Ask for volunteers. Explain that they are going to create two skits that act out the topic or situation. The first will demonstrate the use of bad manners or inappropriate/unconstructive behavior.* The second will show good manners and positive behavior.

Ask the class why the first skit represents bad manners. Usually, responses will point out how the behavior hurt someone's feelings, failed to recognize a need, demonstrated selfishness, exacerbated an unpleasant or potentially dangerous situation, and so forth.

Ask the class why the second skit represents good manners. Usually, responses will point out how the behavior avoided hurting someone's feelings, helped someone out, defused a potentially dangerous encounter, proposed solutions rather than adjudged blame, and so forth.

A focus on personal safety, compassion, constructive problem-solving, and consideration of how one's actions affect others is at the core of understanding why one behavior is rude and another is polite.

Variations:

- Use two groups of students, with one preparing the “bad manners” skit, and the other the “good manners” skit.
- Divide the entire class into small groups to create multiple examples of bad and good manners for the same or different topics. Preparation time for students will need to be provided, either immediately before the performances, or earlier in the day or week.

DON'T SKITS THAT SHOW BAD MANNERS GIVE THE WRONG MESSAGE?

No. Students don't always recognize rudeness. But seeing it and discussing *why* a behavior is rude helps them understand and avoid such behaviors. Understanding, as an internalized force, is a much more powerful motivator than a “because-someone-said-so” rule. We can never create enough rules to anticipate every situation a young person might face. But we can create general good-manners guidelines kids can use to assess, both before and after an action takes place, if a behavior is rude and inappropriate or kind and respectful. Seeing examples of bad manners helps students articulate and embrace these general principles of politeness.

Plus, bad manners in a skit can be funny. Classmates pretending to pick their noses, shout into cell phones, text while someone's talking to them, sprawl across a bus-stop bench, chew with their mouths open, fail to offer a pregnant woman carrying six shopping bags a seat on a subway, slam a door in someone's face—such behaviors will get kids laughing. And laughter is an antidote to preachiness. Kids will much more readily accept lessons on etiquette if they arrive packaged in humor.

*Where a rude behavior in a skit might actually hurt or injure another student (for example, stepping on toes, banging into a person with a backpack, teasing someone), it is critical that students understand they must *pretend* to act out the behavior. Just as actors in a movie fight are not really punching each other, kids acting out offensive behaviors must plan the skit so that fellow cast members are not hurt physically or emotionally.

Politeness on the Go

Goal: To help students link polite behavior to specific situations they might witness or experience every day

Pose a situation to the class. For example: **“You’re standing in the school corridor when a student trips and everything he’s carrying—books, lunch, phone, backpack—goes flying.”**

- A. Ask for an example of a rude response (laughing, ignoring, kicking his books down the hall).
- B. Ask for an example of a polite or kind response (helping pick things up, asking if he’s okay).

Discuss:

- Why is “A” the wrong choice?
- Why is “B” the right choice?

What About Being Rude Back?

Goal: To deepen student understanding about human behavior and address one of the main excuses kids use to justify their behavior: “He/she started it!”

Ask the group: **“If someone’s rude to you, is it okay to be rude back?”**
(See pages 18–22 of the book for background on discussing this topic.)

Ask for a show of hands—those who think “Yes, it’s okay” and those who think “No, it’s not okay” to respond to rudeness with more rudeness. Hope for some deep thinkers who protest and say “It depends.”

Related questions:

- What happens if you respond to rudeness with more rudeness?
- What happens if you ignore rudeness?
- What happens if you respond to rudeness with good manners?



CONCLUSION

Healthy schools are polite schools. They nourish and protect every student's right to learn—and every teacher's right to teach—in a safe, respectful school climate. The climate of a school is essentially what it feels like to be there. And research shows that the better a school's climate, the more likely its students are to enjoy school, do well academically, behave morally, and stay out of trouble with the law.

In this leader's guide I have suggested just a few out of many possible ways to actively involve young people in thinking about, discussing, and practicing good manners. Kindness is an essential ingredient in healthy social climates. Fortunately, kindness is contagious. And your students will catch it if you combine the activities in this guide with your own high expectations for behavior. Let these activities stimulate your own good behavior, and before you know it, you'll have a classroom full of kids graduating *summa cum manners*.

Everyone benefits (except lawyers) when people behave civilly to one another. To keep good manners from playing hooky at your school, create—and state—codes of conduct that encourage tolerance, compassion, kindness, and consideration—AND that respect the rights, feelings, privacy, property, and person of all members of the school community. There's no better way to create a warm, productive environment. Now *that's* climate change we can all get behind!

Class dismissed.

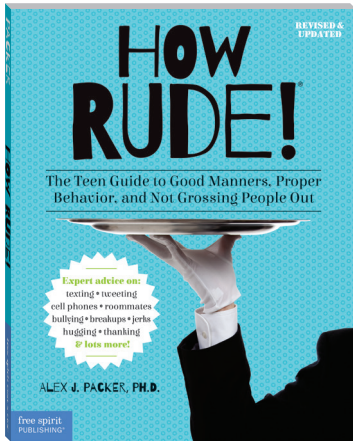


ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Alex J. Packer received his Ph.D. in educational and developmental psychology from Boston College and his master's degree in education from Harvard. He has been headmaster of an alternative school for 11- to 15-year-olds and director of education at the Capital Children's Museum. He is president emeritus of FCD Educational Services, a Boston-based provider of drug education and substance abuse prevention services to schools worldwide. Dr. Packer lectures and conducts workshops across the United States and around the world, meeting with parents, administrators, teachers, counselors, youth-care professionals, and students. Find him at www.alexjpacker.com.

Resources for Teens from Free Spirit Publishing



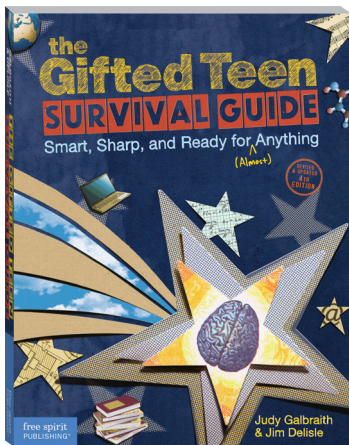
How Rude!®
The Teen Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out (Revised & Updated Edition)
For ages 13 & up
504 pp., illust., PB, 7¼" x 9"
ISBN 978-1-57542-454-5

Coming soon!

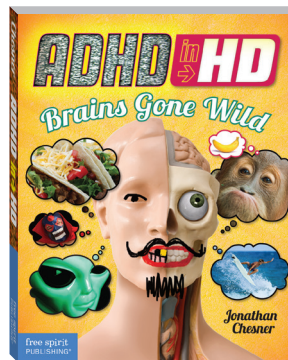
How Rude!® Poster Set



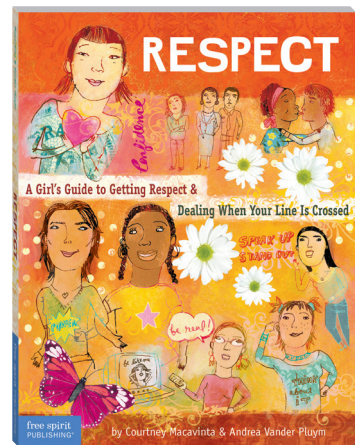
How Rude!® In a Jar®
Prompts, Tips, Skits, and Quips About Social Skills, Good Manners, and Etiquette
101 cards
For ages 12 & up
ISBN 978-1-63198-150-0



The Gifted Teen Survival Guide
Smart, Sharp, and Ready for (Almost) Anything (Revised & Updated 4th Edition)
For ages 11 & up
272 pp., 2-color, illust., PB, 7" x 9"
ISBN 978-1-57542-381-4



ADHD in HD
Brains Gone Wild
For ages 13 & up
160 pp., 2-color, illust., PB, 6" x 7½"
ISBN 978-1-57542-386-9



Respect
A Girl's Guide to Getting Respect & Dealing When Your Line Is Crossed
For ages 13 & up
240 pp., 2-color, illust., PB, 7" x 9"
ISBN 978-1-57542-177-3

Interested in purchasing multiple quantities and receiving volume discounts?
Contact edsales@freespirit.com or call 1.800.735.7323 and ask for Education Sales.

Many Free Spirit authors are available for speaking engagements, workshops, and keynotes. Contact speakers@freespirit.com or call 1.800.735.7323.

For pricing information, to place an order, or to request a free catalog, contact:

Free Spirit Publishing Inc.

6325 Sandburg Road • Suite 100 • Minneapolis, MN 55427-3674 • toll-free 800.735.7323
local 612.338.2068 • fax 612.337.5050 • help4kids@freespirit.com • www.freespirit.com