

Manners are making a comeback

VONNIE MOSTAT

Churches and parents can teach courtesy and kindness to children and reach out to the community at the same time.

If the children at your church are like the ones at my church, they could use a good dose of old-fashioned manners. They often rush through the foyer with little regard for the elderly. They rarely say “Hello” or think to offer their chair to a lady or an older gentleman. “Excuse me,” “please,” and “thank you” are rarely heard.

Courtesy has fallen on hard times. Sadly we can no longer refer to “common courtesy” because courtesy is no longer common. With bullying and bad attitudes among children at an all time high, parents are seeing the need for getting back to basics. Many churches are discovering that they can help families in this area.

Judi Johnston Vankevich is ready to help through her ministry as “Judi The Manners Lady” and with “The Manners Club.” Featured on Canada AM, CBC, CTV and Focus on the Family, Judi travels across Canada and the U.S. performing her high energy concert, “*Being Cool with the Golden Rule*” at concerts sponsored by public schools, Christian schools, churches and summer camps. She notes, “It’s exciting to see children having a blast—laughing and singing... while learning God’s important truths on how he wants us to live. Jesus taught us the most important good manner in Matthew 7:12: The golden rule—treat others the way you want to be treated.”

Biblically based

The Manners Club has three main themes: to live by the golden rule; to respect; and to have an “attitude of gratitude.” Judi says, “My vision is to influence this generation with important principles of self-control and respect for others—principles that many of us were raised with, but which many of today’s youth are not grasping.”

THE GOOD MANNERS PLEDGE®

I PLEDGE:

- To practice good manners every day.
- To say “please,” “thank you” and “you’re welcome.”
- To honour and obey my parents at all times.
- To respect my elders and those in authority.
- I will be kind to my brothers and sisters and my friends and neighbors.
- I will say sorry and ask for forgiveness when I have done wrong.
- I will respect other people’s property.
- I will do my part in keeping a clean and healthy environment.
- I will treat others the way I would like them to treat me.
- By practicing good manners, I will do my part to build a more polite and happy world.

The Bad Manners
MONSTERS



Grouchy - Rouchy



Raised in Ontario through the ranks of Sunday school at Calvary Baptist in Woodbridge, youth groups at Streetsville Baptist and Chartwell Baptist in Oakville, and summers at MBC, Judi strives to build stronger and happier families and healthy communities. She launched The Manners Club & Life Skills Int’l in 1995 as a unique vehicle to provide churches, schools and parents with the music and materials to run their own Manners Club—at home, schools or Sunday school and kids club ministries. She also teaches fun, interactive workshops for youth groups.

Years of teaching Sunday school and Bible clubs taught Judi the power of music to reach children. She wrote a different song for each principle—little dreaming that her CD, “*It’s Fun to Have Good Manners*” would go on to win the Canadian Gospel Music Award for Best Children’s Album of the Year and Best Song of the Year. Also nominated for the West Coast Music Awards and the People’s Choice “Vibe” Awards it is available at Christian bookstores. Judi notes, “Almost every song is based on Scripture, so churches can have the children memorize the relevant Bible verse, then sing the song.”

Children love it

North Burlington Baptist Church in Ontario recently hosted a Manners Lady concert for the community, as a grand finale to a four-week Manners Club course led by parents from the church. The course taught children about obedience, good attitudes, interrupting politely, introduction skills, table manners as well as telephone, church and party manners. Participants also memorized Scripture verses to go with each theme, did some crafts and said “*The Good Manners Pledge*” (see sidebar). The highlight of the Manners Club at North Burlington was when six moms dressed up as the “Bad Manners Monsters”—Grouchy Rouchy, Messy Bessy, Whiney Rhino, Grabba Jabba, Slobbo Roo and Wiggly Jiggly. Pastor Merv Budd notes, “Hosting The Manners Club was a great way to serve our neighbours, as well as to help build character and good manners into the hearts of our own children.”

South Langley MB Church in British Columbia, hosted The Manners Club as part of their summer camp ministry, and one grade four boy said, “It was a blast—the best week of my summer!”

Judi’s has a burning desire to inspire children to realize that their choices make a difference in people’s lives. “By our words and actions, each of us has the power to bring light and life to people, or to bring darkness and despair. I pray that through the music and the message of The Manners Club, children will learn the skills and be motivated to bring life and kindness to others.”

Note: For ideas on how The Manners Club music and materials might enhance your church ministry to young families and your community, go to www.TheMannersLady.com or call 1-866-ASK JUDI.