

Practice Your Manners with Mr. Panda

Prepared by Kathleen Odean

Polite Parties

A tea party or picnic is the perfect place to practice good manners!

- With your child, print and decorate invitations to give to favorite dolls or stuffed animals.
- Plan a simple meal or perhaps just desserts.
- Use real plates and utensils, and a tablecloth and napkins to make it more special.
- Before having the party, talk with your child about simple manners like saying “please” and “thank you.”
- Introduce the idea of asking others friendly questions and giving simple compliments.
- At the party, each of you can be the voice for one or more of the dolls and stuffed animals.
- Model good manners yourself and praise your child for doing the right thing!

The Joy of Saying—and Receiving—Thanks

Thank-you notes show the difference that kind words can make!

- As you and your child spend time together during the day, start pointing out people who are being kind and helpful and have your child start noticing, too.
- Talk about ways to say “thank you” and introduce the idea of a thank-you note. Have your child choose a few people to thank for gifts, help, and kind acts.
- Using the Make Your Own Thank-You Card reproducible, work together on the wording of a brief thank-you note, print it, and have your child decorate it.
- Mail the cards or deliver them in person and watch faces light up as the people in your child’s life feel appreciated.



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Waiting Games

Help children learn to entertain themselves, which makes waiting easier!

- Introduce activity games that you can play together or your child can play alone, anywhere. For example, Find the Color, which is just naming all the objects in sight that are a certain color. Or Name an Animal, naming as many animals as you can think of. Brainstorm other topics like sounds they hear or shapes they see.
- Practice these activities by playing together, taking turns. Then encourage your child to play alone.
- Another approach is to bring bags of simple games or toys to carry on errands. Prepare them together, discussing what would work well for quiet play.

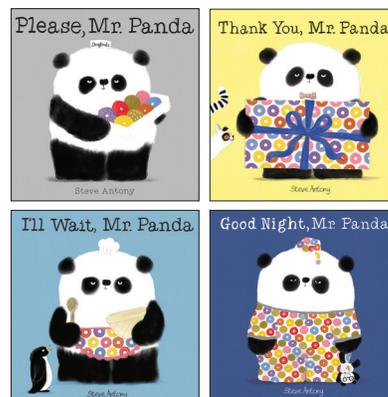
The Comfort of a Nightly Routine

Help your kids get excited about their own bedtime rituals!

- After reading *Good Night, Mr. Panda*, talk with your child about which tasks are part of his or her routine.
- What else is part of your child's routine? For example, picking up toys, folding clothes, a bedtime story, a song, nighttime prayers, or a kiss good night.
- Together, make a chart or small poster that puts the actions in their usual order. You can print the words and, next to them, have your child draw a simple picture to go with each action, like a toothbrush or book. Post it at a child's-eye level in your child's bedroom as a comforting reminder of the nightly routine.



Read them all!



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