

## Keep Your Elbows Off The Table



Photo Credit: KinderCare Learning Centers

(NAPSA)—Emily Post said: *“Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others. If you have that awareness, you have good manners, no matter which fork you use.”*

While all parents want their children to have good manners, the process can be daunting, acknowledges Barbara Anderson, Ed.D., vice president of education for KinderCare Learning Centers, which operates 1227 early childhood education and care centers nationwide. Anderson offers some suggestions for teaching children the importance of good manners.

Set an example by using good manners yourself, says Anderson. Praise your children when they get it right and encourage them to try again when they don't. Let children know right away when they're rude but don't lecture. Be specific and be realistic about your expectations.

Even toddlers can master the basics: hello, goodbye, please and thank you. Three- and four-year-olds can remember to say, “Excuse me” and should be encouraged to share their toys. By five or six, children begin to develop empathy and can learn to respect others' feelings. In the pre-school world, that means “No shoving,” “Don't interrupt” and that old standby, “Chew with your mouth closed.” By the time children are seven or eight, they'll begin to understand what's appropriate in a variety of social situations.

Good manners at any age are a way of showing respect and consideration for others. Children with good manners will have an easier time with friends, as well as with teachers and other adults.