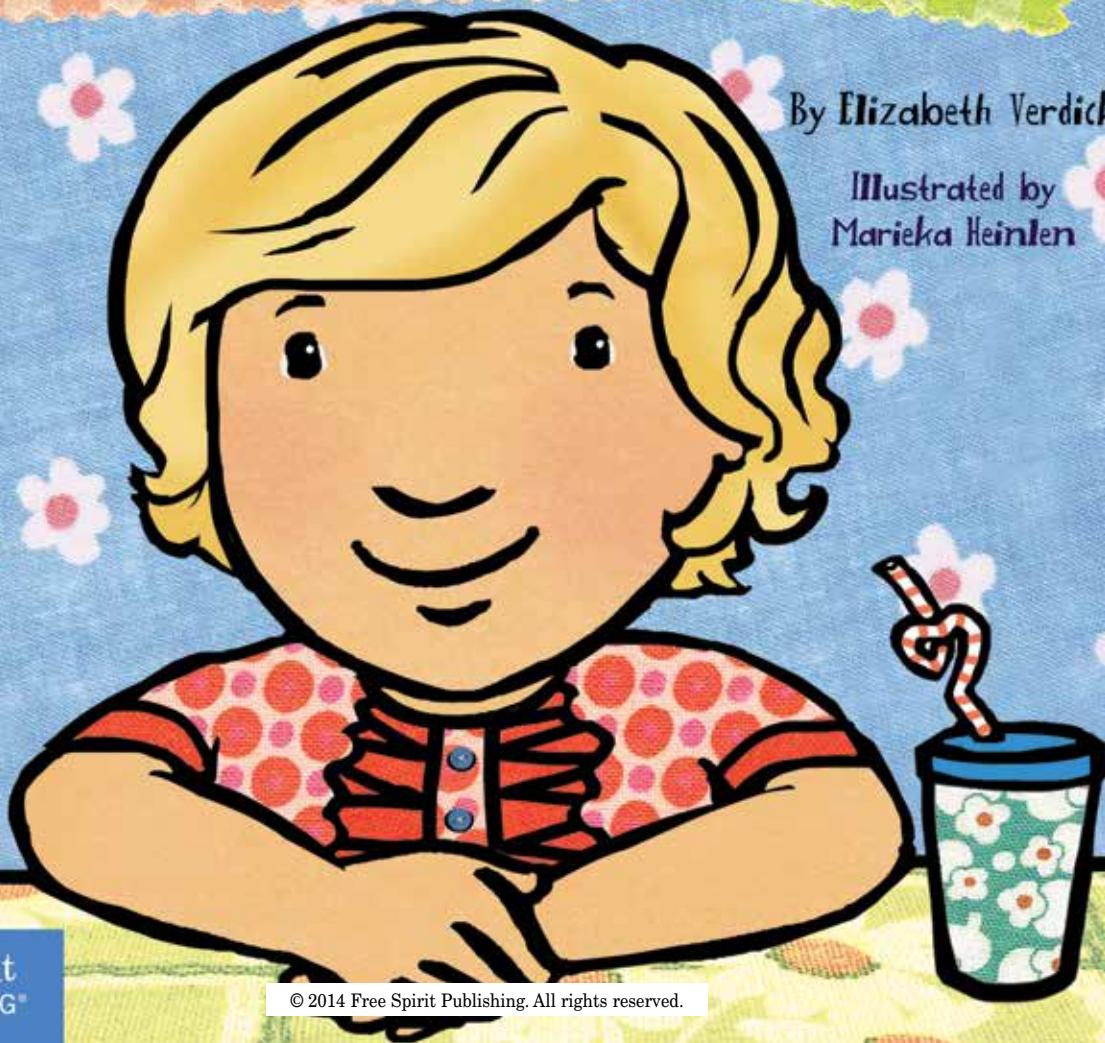


Manners Time

By Elizabeth Verdick

Illustrated by
Marieka Heinlen



Manners start here, *with a smile.*



Then you add the words . . .



Hello

is how you
greet someone.

Do a little wave!



Manners Tips for Parents & Caregivers

Toddlers who get a head start on manners are learning social skills that will help them all their lives. But remember, at this age children tend to be messy, silly, outspoken, and impulsive (which is part of what makes them so irresistible). Set age-appropriate expectations for their etiquette, and begin with the basics:

Help your child get the words out. It can be tough for a toddler to remember to say “Please,” “Thank you,” “Hello,” or “Good-bye.” Offer friendly reminders: “Let’s be sure to thank Grandma for your new toy.” “Time to give a big good-bye wave!” To remind a child to say “Please,” ask, “What’s the magic word?”

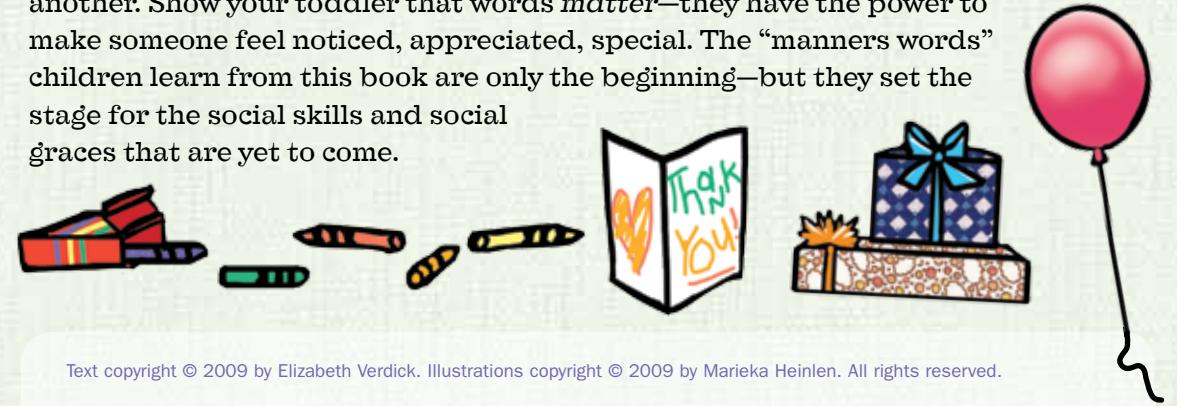
Be a role model. Toddlers are like sponges—they soak up what they see and hear. So let them hear you saying “Please,” “Thank you,” “No, thank you,” “Excuse me,” and other courteous phrases. (The family table is a wonderful place to practice.) Let them see you write and send thank-you notes, too. Your own polite behavior will continually reinforce the lessons you’re trying to teach.

Work on apologies. Toddlers have lots of chances every day to practice saying “I’m sorry.” When they accidentally hurt a friend or grab a toy from a sibling’s hands, gently step in and model how to say “I’m sorry.” Let the other child know that the words “I forgive you” can help make everyone feel better.

Teach the many uses of “Excuse me.” Young children typically think body noises are to be followed by fits of giggles. Encourage saying “Excuse me” instead. Also help toddlers remember to say “Excuse me” if they need to pass by someone, if they mistakenly run into another person, or if they need to interrupt a conversation to get help from an adult. This all-purpose phrase sure comes in handy.

Help children cheer each other on. Everyone likes to hear “Good job” now and then—especially young children, who need encouragement as they learn and grow. Notice and praise good behavior and manners. Encourage toddlers to say “Way to go!” and to give high-fives to friends and peers, too.

Promote kindness and respect. Why *do* we teach manners? Because they make life better for all of us by encouraging us to be kind and respectful toward one another. Show your toddler that words *matter*—they have the power to make someone feel noticed, appreciated, special. The “manners words” children learn from this book are only the beginning—but they set the stage for the social skills and social graces that are yet to come.



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