



NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

PARENTING or PAMPERING?

During a recent visit to a hyper store, I noticed a woman pushing a trolley while her teenage son followed her, texting and not wearing a mask. He spotted a chocolate and announced, "I want one of those". She left the trolley and gave him the chocolate. He promptly returned it to her to open, no "please" or "thank you" demanded or offered. He ate the snack and passed the wrapper back. Again – no "thank you" demanded or offered.

When I left the store, the mother's car was parked next to mine. She was unloading the trolley with a car guard helping, while her son leaned against the car, texting. "Hurry up, Ma, I want to go!" She apologised and asked the car guard to hurry. I am certain that if I had spoken to my mother that way, I would not have enjoyed a chocolate and my ear would have become strangely warm. I know better now.

My parents taught me the magic words are "please", "thank you" and "sorry". I have noticed far too often these days that "please" is used to beg adults to change a "no" answer to "yes, okay". There are constant reminders to say "thank you" and sometimes the phrase is not used at all. "Sorry" is used as a last resort to try get out of trouble. At our great school, we insist that learners greet us when we pass by. We insist on manners. These greetings sometimes stop at the end of the day or when we pass one another at a mall. Why?

During many years visiting other schools, I have noticed that learners there do not greet adults or strangers, which creates a cold and unwelcoming environment. When colleagues from other schools come to Edenvale High, they are astounded at the way our learners greet and offer assistance. It makes us so proud to hear this.

Schools do not offer "Manners" or "Respect" as a subject. Surely these should be brought to school and not taught there. Has society forgotten just how far good manners will get people in this harsh world? Believe or not, complaints are made about learners being made to feel uncomfortable when reminded to have manners. The million-dollar question is: Are we parenting our children or pampering them?

In the scary times in which we live, discipline and self-discipline have never been more important. Taking precautions against Covid-19 and seeing others (especially children) do so is vital because all our lives depend on it.

I. Johnston
HOD Technical Subjects



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