Manners for the Real World

BACKGROUND
Research has shown that many acts of violence can be traced to one single incidence of rudeness. Studies also show that people with manners tend to be more successful in personal and professional life. However, between text-messaging, emails, and video-games, many of the once-common courtesies are slowly becoming extinct. With an ever more competitive job market, social graces can really make someone stand out and get noticed. This lesson will help youth with manners concerning cell phone use, flag etiquette, and eating out in a restaurant.

INTRODUCTION
What happens when you throw a boomerang? If thrown correctly, it will come back to you. Good manners are a lot like a boomerang- eventually, they come back to you. Communication and being considerate for others are important life skills that can help you get what you want, but more importantly, they are required to be a good, productive citizen of society. It is not hard to learn good manners, it just takes a little practice. Today, we are going to practice three different types of manners:
- Cell Phone Savvy
- Flag Etiquette
- Restaurant Rules

WHAT TO DO
You can have the entire group do each lesson in succession, or have smaller teams rotate through three different stations. Read or share the background information for each category of manners, and then have youth perform the activity.

Cell Phone Savvy - refer to youth handout for background info. You can ask youth to take turns reading the do’s and don’ts. Divide youth into teams, and give each team a role play card. Have the teams take turns acting out the right and wrong way to handle each situation.
Flag Etiquette- refer to the youth fact sheet on flag etiquette for background info. Allow youth to take turns reading each paragraph. Divide youth into pairs, and let them take turns folding the flag (flags that are ready to be retired can be used).

Restaurant Rules- refer to the youth fact sheet on Restaurant Rules for background info. Allow youth to take turns reading each paragraph. Distribute copies of the Tip Math Worksheet and let students solve. See who can correctly calculate the tip the fastest.

TALK IT OVER
Sharing-
- What was the hardest part of this activity?
- What did you enjoy the most?
Processing-
- Have you ever been around someone who did not have good manners? How did it make you feel?
Generalizing-
- Why is it important to have good manners?
- Do you think good manners have anything to do with first impressions during a job interview or first date?
Applying-
- What types of situations in life require you to demonstrate good manners?
- How do you think having good manners will help you in the future?

ENHANCEMENT IDEAS
- Take a trip to a local restaurant to practice restaurant manners.
- Participate in a flag ceremony at a 4-H event, school assembly, athletic event, or Memorial or Veteran's Day Ceremony.
- Have youth create a flag pin from safety pins and beads.

For more information and activities, the following books and websites are recommended:
  Teen Manners: From Malls to Meals to Messaging and Beyond by Cindy Post Senning, Ed.D. and Peggy Post
- Emily's Everyday Manners by Cindy Post Senning, Ed.D. and Peggy Post

TRAINER TIP
Role playing is much more fun with props. Provide toy phones or old cell phones (or youth can use their own), and interesting costumes for the cell phone activity.
An icebreaker is always a good idea to help build enthusiasm and introduce the topic. Here are a few ideas:

- **Manners Mix-Up** - Give each youth a card and have them find their match (red cards are questions and green cards are answers). For example: *Where should you wear an American Flag pin?* Answer: *On your left lapel or shoulder.* Once they find their match, have them introduce each other, and read their question and see if the group can come up with the correct answer.

- **Circle of Compliments** - Tape a paper plate to the back of each youth and have them form two circles (one inside the other). The outside circle should rotate all the way around the inside circle, stopping to write a compliment on each person’s paper plate (the inside circle can’t see who is writing what). Have the circles switch places and repeat, then let the youth see what was written. Make sure you direct them to only write positive comments!