

# CBS SUNDAY MORNING M I N D YOUR MANNERS

**Middleburg, VA** - The nationally acclaimed weekend news broadcast *CBS Sunday Morning* was on the trail of the hottest topic in parenting since disposable diapers - manners. Correspondent Martha Teichner traveled the country, profiling the foot soldiers who tirelessly wage war against rudeness and incivility in America.



Their mission was to find out why so many people act rudely, as if they were monkeys! Hosted by Charles Osgood, *CBS Sunday Morning* explored current industry trends, the animal kingdom, and sought the advice of a variety of experts asking, “*what are we doing as a society to be more polite?*”

“*Mind Your Manners*” was the cover story, featuring the *Jon D. Williams Cotillions* Middleburg, Virginia cotillion among other bastions of society committed to making the world a better place by preaching the essentials of a polite civilization.

The news crew descended on the small community outside of Washington D.C. - young ladies arrived

dressed in their finest, while young gentlemen held the door open for them to enter. They have gathered, as did George Washington and John F. Kennedy many years ago, at the historical Middleburg Community Center for an evening of socializing. The soft glow from a crystal wall sconce fills the room as chatter and laughter help prepare the students for their first television appearance. They are learning to foxtrot, waltz and swing dance amid lessons of respect, tolerance and civility.

Straight out of the 50's? Believe it or not, this is the 21st century and these classes, offered nationwide, are

no longer exclusively available for the socially elite or wealthy. The millennium has shed new light to the topic of manners and respect. Parents, schools, companies, even religious groups are realizing the importance of a peaceful, civil environment.

The broadcast reported good news –

plenty is being done to address this ever-growing problem and the question remains, is it enough? The opening scene suggests that rules of social conduct are common among all living species and are as old as civilization itself. A primatologist who studies the evolution of etiquette in chimpanzees observed, even in the most primitive of societies, codes of conduct exist. This research supports the notion that civil conduct can act as a catalyst for social acceptance and serve to smooth relations among competing interests and beliefs. So what can learn from the monkeys? At the very least, they can help us understand that our behavior amongst our peers allows us to be part of the group and can make life in general easier. We also learn that our behavior is a function of our education and the everyday practice of good habits. No one is more responsible than our parents, but there is still hope for those who missed that boat.

Peter Post, great grandson of Emily Post, was on the program teaching college students the finer points of manners and etiquette in the business world. It seems every industry is being affected by this polite revolution including Southwest airlines who have gone to great lengths to improve their image by hiring customer service trainers to teach their employees to “be nice.” So are we minding our manners? *JDWC* and *ESP* continue to forge the front lines in the battle against bad manners, and intend to make a difference with each and every act of kindness.

