

# New Beginnings: Remembering Life Lessons of Kindergarten

*Christine Chen, contributing editor*  
[www.gpprotocol.com](http://www.gpprotocol.com)

**Awww...the lazy** days of summer. Simple meals of fresh tomatoes and corn on the cob. Family get-togethers. Travels to new and exciting destinations. Sleeping in and relaxed schedules. Warm sunshine. Flip flops. Late nights. Did it really have to come to an end? Yes, but summer will be here again.....in nine months.



Now, here we are in the hustle and bustle month of September. In some ways this month is a bit like New Years. We begin thinking about new schedules and new goals. And, of course, for parents and children, September marks the beginning of a new school year where each must adapt to new routines, new teachers, new classmates. Our calendar is filling up with meetings and appointments. Life is getting busier. Even with the not so distant memories of summer, in a strange way it almost feels good to have a more structured and rigorous schedule. It's exciting to consider fresh starts and possibilities.

As many become immersed in home, school, and work life, there's an element that should not be overlooked when considering new opportunities and personal growth. It's essential to focus on social skills and the manners that encompass them during a time when incivility is the norm. In fact, a survey conducted in 2010 by Weber Shandwick and Powell Tate in partnership with KRC Research found that "most Americans (86%) report they have been victims of incivility." The survey adds, "94% of all Americans consider the general tone and level of civility in the country today to be a problem, with approximately two-thirds believing it is a major problem."

In light of this, it is quite appropriate that September is National Children's Good Manners Month? What a great way to start the school year by encouraging good manners. It almost seems it would be just as fitting to add another national day to our September calendar - National Adult's Good Manners Month. It seems so elementary, doesn't it? Good Manners. Didn't we learn about that in kindergarten? That's kid's stuff. Or is it?

It turns out that "grown ups" really should consider good manners and social skills. A study conducted by Harvard University, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Stanford Research Institute all found the same amazing statistic. Success in getting a job, keeping that job, and even advancing depends 85 percent on people skills and only 15 percent on technical knowledge and skills. It seems even employers would rather hire a person with manners.

So, once again, we are reminded of the good manners our kindergarten teachers encouraged each day. Maybe it's time to take a trip down memory lane and review those simple but yet crucial lessons. Do any of these ring a bell? Smile. Make eye contact. Say "hello." Hold a door. Use the magic words. Ask to borrow and then return (in same or better condition), Write a thank you note. Say "I'm sorry." Don't whisper in front of others. Share. Be nice. Not too sophisticated but certainly effective!

Yes, summer's gone and September is here. Lazy days are now filled with busy calendars. Why not take this opportunity to put into practice some of those life lessons learned so long ago? Slow down, just for a moment, and look for golden opportunities to make our world a little brighter. If your kindergarten lessons have stayed with you, great! If not, put them into

practice today and learn the secret to a successful and fulfilling life while being a blessing to others.