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## Let's Not Forget Manners

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The word "etiquette" can make some kids and adults cringe. It is associated with dressing up and stuffiness. Royal Keys is a new business in Southlake that is trying to break out of that mold. The goal of their programs is to teach kids and adults manners and social skills while boosting their self esteem in a hands-on and fun approach.

"These are basic life skills that are so important," said Christie Teller, franchise owner of Royal Keys in Southlake. "I am so excited to be doing this to help kids and parents."

Royal Keys located in Southlake offers more than 30 types of programs from table manners to telephone etiquette. Some of their other classes include: basic etiquette, character building, friendship skills, interview skills, bully proofing, dating etiquette and many more. The classes are made for both young children into adolescent and adults. The group is offering a summer camp for kids at the Colleyville Center.

"To me Royal Keys is the perfect complement to what the school offers and what the city offers," said Denise McCrummen, parent of a camper at the Royal Keys program. "I'm just so happy its here. It will complement the academic programs at CISD and the city rec programs."

McCrummen went on to say that she feels like her son, Jack, is learning important social skills and life skills at Royal Keys.

"I think as you get older the situations get a little scary," McCrummen said. "I think this will make him a more self confident young man going into these things."

Royal Keys classes are offered to day cares, private schools and public schools at all grade levels as after-school enrichment programs. The programs and classes are tailored to the needs of each client depending on what type of program they are requesting. Teller has been working with private schools and day care centers to set up programs that will start in the fall.



Matt Nachtrieb/Staff Photo Anita Dabney describes her summer vacation during the etiquette class. View photos at [scntx.com/production/southlake/datedfolder/07-17/front](http://scntx.com/production/southlake/datedfolder/07-17/front)

"We are getting to learn about nice manners, and people will like me more because I have nice manners," said Zack Rickerson, 9-year old Southlake resident and camp attendee.

The camp going is on this week at the Colleyville Center is Royal Keys first camp. Another camp is scheduled to follow July 29 through Aug. 1 in Trophy Club at the country club. Teller said she spoke to all the parents after the first day of camp and the parents expressed how happy their kids were.

"I spoke to a mom yesterday, and her little girl was very engaged, lots of questions, happy, and the first to raise her hand," Teller said. "I felt so good that we provided an environment where she could be so comfortable to participate, learn and have fun."

The kids at this week's camp are ages 6 to 12. The class is a small group of 12 kids working with Teller and two additional teachers. Each child is given special attention and one-on-one time with the teachers.

"We have learned this thing on the telephone that if someone isn't available, you don't say what they are doing, you just say they aren't available and ask to take a message," Rickerson said. "I think I like it (Royal Keys classes). It teaches you things. I didn't know most of this stuff, and now I do."

The camps offered for the summer teach kids about handshakes, first impression, being a good friend, the five important phrases: sorry, please, thank you, your welcome and excuse me; public speaking and other things. The lessons are designed to teach the children life skills and build self confidence.

"Kids learn things by having fun," Teller said. "We are trying to teach not be critical. This is based on positive reinforce."

Teller has gone through 80 hours of training, and her instructors have gone through 40 plus hours of training before placed in an environment with a child. All the instructors also went through a tough interview process before being hired.

"I was very impressed that all the teachers here are all licensed and certified teachers," McCrummen said.

Teller believes that one of the reasons the program is so successful is because "we tell kids why". The kids are given an explanation and brief history lesson to explain why they are doing each activity that they are doing.

Teller hopes to one day be able to expand her business into other parts of the metroplex and later incorporate business etiquette into their classes also.

The program was originally started more than 20 years ago by Cynthia Smith, a former model and actress. Southlake is the first franchise to open in Texas.

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