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About Town

By **Sherry Grindeland** November 22, 2010

THE NEIGHBORHOOD FILES

Bellevue Author Advocates Against Bullying and Incivility

Corinne Gregory, a Bellevue speaker and author, fights against the incivility that she says has invaded our political processes and has led to at least 40 suicides. **Corinne Gregory** expresses dismay and indignity

over what our society endures these days in the way of incivility and bullying. We need to improve our manners, she said. Even worse, she worries; our society will self-destruct if we don't do something to turn it around.

It's made our political system nasty, and our children potential targets of their peers.

"But the tragedy of all this is that we've had 40 kids commit suicide in the last eight weeks due to bullying," she said. "And those are just the reported and documented ones I've been able to track."

Gregory, who teaches classes in for children and business executives, has turned her passion into a book (<http://corinnegregory.com/free-chapter/>) and lecture tours around the country. Her business, **Social Smarts** (<http://www.socialsmarts.com/>), is based in Bellevue. Recently, she was on KING 5 and Q13 Fox television shows advocating that better social skills and more involved parents will prevent some of the bullying.

Her passionate message seems simple. Two of the basics are to be properly polite to one another and for parents to take a firm hand with their children to prevent them from bullying other children --- and to protect them from becoming victims of it.

Gregory has been doing the social skills classes for a decade. Gregory laughed and said she sometimes has to dig deep into her own social manners to keep her business out of the red.

"I get a lot of groups that want me to present my program but want me to waive my fees," she said. "Someone recently told me that since what I'm doing is so good for the kids, I shouldn't charge."

Gregory politely explains that yes, she knows what she doing is good for kids but she has a slight problem. If she doesn't charge for her classes, she won't be able to keep doing them because she'll have to work another job to feed her own kids. She does speak to service clubs and other groups about her program for free, encouraging them to underwrite Social Smarts classes for local classrooms.

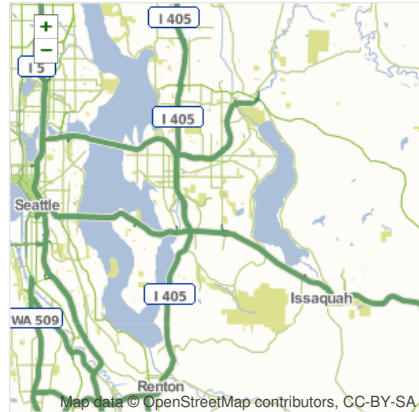
The classes don't hurt business people, either. She's even written a book on the subject of social manners, called "**It's Not Who You Know, It's How You Treat Them.**" (<http://corinnegregory.com/free-chapter/>) The book is \$14.95. Gregory keeps a blog at <http://socialsmarts.wordpress.com/> (<http://socialsmarts.wordpress.com/>). Her book is available on her website at <http://www.corinnegregory.com>. (<http://www.corinnegregory.com>)

If enough people read her book, she said, we wouldn't have another election season like this last one with all the nastiness and mudslinging.

"What we've done obviously isn't working well," she said. "We need to become a more civil society and world."

Got a tip for Sherry? E-mail her at sherry.grindeland@gmail.com or Tell us in the comments.

About this column: Sherry Grindeland, a longtime Eastside resident, brings her veteran reporting skills to Bellevue Patch's About Town column. Look for this column every day. She welcomes your input and ideas for About Town. You can e-mail her at sherry.grindeland@gmail.com



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