

Dos and Don'ts for raising truthful kids

Kids lie for many of the same reasons adults do: to avoid getting into trouble, to avoid hurting another person's feelings, or to make themselves look better. Here are some tips for encouraging honesty in your child.

For more, visit <https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/12-tips-raising-truthful-kids>

DO model honesty

If you don't want your kids to lie to you, don't lie to them, and don't let them hear you telling lies. It's easier to say, "I don't have any money with me" than to explain to your child that they can't have ice cream because it's too close to dinner. But "little white lies" teach your child that dishonesty is okay in some situations — and leaves them to interpret which situations those are.

DON'T set them up

When you see your child with a juice-stained lip and an overturned bottle on the table, there's no need to ask, "Did you spill this juice?" They're likely to lie to avoid getting in trouble. "Looks like you spilled some juice. Let's clean it up together," keeps things focused on the issue at hand.

DON'T reward the lie

When your child lies, they're seeking something. If they get it, that reinforces lying as an effective strategy. If you notice that your younger child makes up a story about getting hurt at school as soon as your older child has the floor, it might be an attention-seeking behavior. Are there ways you can ignore the lie so they don't get the reward? Can they get what they're seeking in some other way?

DO Catch them being honest

Notice when kids tell the truth, especially in situations where it might have been easier for them to lie. When your child tells you the truth about something they've done, take a moment to show that you appreciate their honesty.

DO discipline calmly

That doesn't mean you shouldn't discipline. But simply remaining calm and sticking to the facts you've observed will make kids more likely to tell the truth