

MAMA TENDO

TEACH CHILDREN TO TELL THE TRUTH

As a child, I remember lying about stealing sugar; even when it was visible on my lips, I would insist I had not eaten any. I know I was not alone in that behaviour. What begins as something small can grow into habitual dishonesty if it is not addressed early.

Children telling lies is a concern many parents face and should handle with understanding rather than anger. Lying that is ignored or handled harshly in childhood can become a habit that damages character, relationships and trust.

Most children lie out of fear, confusion or a desire to protect themselves. When they expect harsh punishment, shouting or rejection after a mistake, lying can seem like the safest choice. Some lie to please their parents or avoid disappointment, especially when expectations are high. Others exaggerate or give untrue answers because they are still learning to separate imagination from reality. Many also learn dishonesty when they see parents or caregivers tell "small" lies; they understand that dishonesty is sometimes acceptable.

Helping children overcome lying begins with creating a safe and loving home. They should know that telling the truth, even after doing wrong, is always better than lying. When a child is honest, parents should first acknowledge that honesty before correcting the behaviour. Harsh reactions, public shaming or labelling a child as a liar often worsen the situation, pushing the child to hide their mistakes.

The goal is not perfection, but building character. Correcting lying requires patience, consistency and love. When children feel heard and accepted, they are more likely to choose honesty even when it is difficult, ultimately growing into integracious adults.