

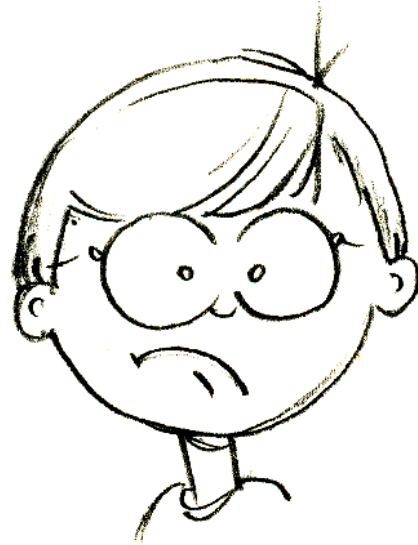
I'm not Lying, I Promise!

Really! The lamp fell over when I didn't even touch it!

Sometimes I tell stories to avoid getting in trouble. Other times I may tell tall-tales. My imagination and my real life tend to run together and I can't always tell them apart. Normally, I'm not trying to deceive you. I just get carried away.

What I Want You to Know

I'm not trying to be bad when I tell you stories. In fact, sometimes I get confused about what is true. If you punish me, I feel sad or angry. You can teach me to be honest if you set a good example, understand my feelings, and *patiently help me learn what is*



true. Then, I'm likely to learn while also feeling loved.

Here's How You Can Help Me

Please *don't label me a liar.* If you do, I may think that's what I will always be.

Don't tempt me to lie. Imagine that I have eaten a cookie when you asked

me not to. When you see the cookie crumbs around my mouth, you don't need to ask, "Did you take a cookie?" You already know the answer. Instead, you could say, "I see that you ate a cookie. I'm disappointed. I hoped you would wait until after dinner." Or you might say, "I can see that you have already eaten your dessert for tonight."

Sometimes I may tell you something that you know to be false. For example, maybe I will tell you that I didn't take my brother's toy. If you know that I did, you can first show understanding by saying, "You really wanted to play with that toy didn't you?" Then you can teach me: "We don't take each other's toys without asking. Please ask before you borrow."

You encourage me to lie when you won't accept what I truly feel. If I tell you that I hate my brother, it won't help for you to make me say I love him. Instead, you might simply understand without agreeing or disagreeing: "Sometimes you wish your brother would leave you alone."

At times I may exaggerate. I may tell you that I am the fastest person in our neighborhood. You don't need to correct my error. You can just say, "You really love to run!"

It will take time for me to learn the difference between truth and imagination. By the time I start school, I will probably know what is true and what is not. Thanks for your help.

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating

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