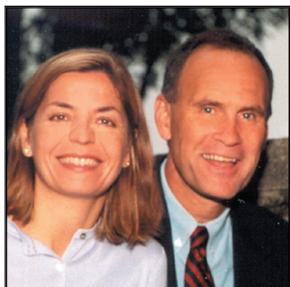


Is Lying an issue in the family?

Q Our 17-year-old son seems to lie constantly. It's gotten to the point that we don't even trust him.

My husband and I have talked to him about this many times, but he swears he's not lying, even when we know he is. What should we do?

A: If you believe he is lying, then stop



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everything and address it. Figure out where you stand. Are you ready to play hardball? Is lying an issue in the family? Sometimes we can set up an atmosphere in the home where the child doesn't want to tell us the truth and we don't want to hear it.

Make it clear in your family that honesty is truly the most important policy. Worry less about proving

that he's lying and more about making the effort to get to the bottom of the situation.

If you make a commitment to the truth, there may be times where you will need to apologize for making incorrect assumptions. However, most of the time, your instincts will be right on.

Q: How do I get my child to take more pride in her work? She recently did a book report that was sloppy and full of spelling errors. She got a D on it. She said she didn't care.

A: Most students want to do well and many have high expectations, but they are afraid their best efforts will not pay off, so they act as if they do not care.

When I used to say I didn't care, I didn't mean it. It was easier not to care because I didn't want to put my best effort in. My stepfather made a huge deal about working hard and while I thought I was tuning him out, it did have a profound effect on my

development.

You start with making attitude, effort and character the most important aspects in the home as factors that can be controlled. "In this house, you are going to try your hardest and I do not care if that translates into an A, B, C, or D." Reward hard work and set the example of a strong work ethic.

Q: We caught our 17-year old sneaking out at 3 a.m. He said it was the first time he had done this, but I do not believe him. What should I do?

A: Tell him that you do not believe him. You know that if a kid is sneaking out at 3 a.m. he is going to do things that are not good.

Resist the temptation to try and control things so that this cannot happen in the future, (set alarms, stay awake, etc.) What is more effective is to confront the attitude and hold the teenager accountable for his actions.

Laura and Malcolm are the authors of The Biggest Job® We'll Ever have, based on the nationally acclaimed Hyde School® Program for character-based education and parenting. For more information visit www.Hyde.edu. The Gaulds are the parents of three children.

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