



the family values toolkit

For Children Ages 11 to 13

This Month's Featured Value Is: **Honesty**

Honest people consistently hold themselves to a high standard of truthfulness. They communicate in an open, upfront way; they do not lie, steal, cheat, or manipulate information to conceal it from others. However, an honest person may occasionally tell a "white lie" to protect another's feelings.



What Can Parents Do to Nurture This Important Value?

First, Set Goals:

Solidify an internal sense of honesty to help override temptations from peers to cheat or lie.

In the preteen years, peers gain in importance and influence. Seeing other kids who lie or cheat and get away with it, a child may question the need to maintain a high standard of honesty. He or she may also agonize over whether to "tell" on cheating classmates. If kids who have internalized honesty tell a lie, they may feel tremendous guilt--until they confess. Parents, now is your chance to ensure the lines of communication remain open. Reinforce your desire to have an honest dialogue between yourself and your child. Listen with understanding when your child confesses to having lied.

Next, Take Action! Try These Activities:

- ✓ **Talk about tactfulness.** *Materials: index cards, pens or colored pencils.* If you can't say something nice... try making "situation cards." First, have your kids write out potentially embarrassing situations, such as: "I don't want to spend the night at my friend's house," or "grandma's fruitcake is inedible," or "that gift I got is the ugliest thing." Have the kids write down possible nice ways to respond that won't get them in trouble, like, "It was so thoughtful of you to get me that gift," or, "I really appreciate how much time and effort you put into making this."
- ✓ **Point out that even if a friend has gotten away with cheating, there will be consequences to the dishonesty later** (she will have trouble on the next math test, for example).
- ✓ **Talk about role models in sports or other public figures who've been caught lying or cheating.** Discuss frankly why you think their behavior is wrong, and ask your kids to share their own disappointment in these "heroes" who've let their fans down.

Then, Report Back!

Share your stories of success, your challenges, and overall experiences with others in our community @

responsibilityproject.com/familyvalues