



“He who permits himself to tell a lie once, finds it much easier to do it a second and third time, till at length it becomes habitual; he tells lies without attending to it, and truth without the world’s believing him. This falsehood of the tongue leads to that of the heart, and in time depraves all its good disposition.”
 -- Thomas Jefferson

STUDENTS ARE LEARNING THE IMPORTANCE OF HONESTY IN LIFE

By Suzanne Goodall

Can being honest be taught? Should it be? Thorndike and Barnhart define honesty as being “truthful behavior”. Think of how great our schools could be if we all worked together to tell the truth. Older students could role model how to be truthful for younger students. Larger disputes could be resolved or altogether eliminated if people would be truthful with each other.

- “HE THAT IS GOOD AT MAKING EXCUSES IS SELDOM GOOD AT ANYTHING ELSE.” Benjamin Franklin
- “A FRIEND WHO LIES FOR YOU MAY ALSO LIE AGAINST YOU.” Unknown
- “OH, WHAT A TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE WHEN FIRST WE PRACTICE TO DECEIVE!” Sir Walter Scott
- “THERE IS NO ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR HONESTY; THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR DISHONESTY.” Unknown
- “WHEN YOU STRETCH THE TRUTH, PEOPLE USUALLY SEE THROUGH IT.” Unknown
- “SO LIVE YOUR LIFE THAT YOUR AUTOGRAPH WILL BE WANTED AND NOT YOUR FINGERPRINTS.” Unknown
- “BEING HONEST MEANS PRACTICING THE HABIT OF TELLING THE TRUTH.” Mohammed
- “I HOPE I SHALL ALWAYS POSSESS FIRMNESS AND VIRTUE ENOUGH TO MAINTAIN WHAT I CONSIDER THE MOST ENVIABLE OF ALL TITLES, THE CHARACTER OF AN ‘HONEST MAN’.” George Washington

Honesty, perhaps, is best associated with one of our past presidents, Abraham Lincoln.

“Lincoln”

By: Nancy Byrd Turner

*There was a boy of other days,
A quiet, awkward, earnest lad,
Who traveled long weary miles to get
A book on which his heart was set—
And then no candle had!*

*He was too poor to buy a lamp
But very wise in woodmen’s ways.
He gathered seasoned bough and stem,
And crisping leaf, and kindled them
Into a ruddy blaze.*

*Then as he lay full length and read,
The firelight flickered on his face,
And etched his shadow on the gloom,
And made a picture in the room,
In that most humble place.*

*The hard years came, the hard years
went,
But, gentle, grace, and strong of will,
He met them all. And when today
We see his pictured face, we say,
“There’s light upon it still”*

“For your teenager, your words are not trustworthy until your actions are found to be so.” Author unknown. Think about it

“No child is taught to kill, but he is taught to love, respect, honor and value, not only his own life, but the lives of his classmates, parents and teachers. He has to experience love and acceptance. He has to know his life has purpose and meaning. No amount of money can do that.”
-- Cal Thomas

Mary's 10 Commandments of

Parenting

1. Thou shalt love thy children with all thy heart and mind—but don't confuse love with license!
2. Thou shalt set the rules and stick with them—but don't be afraid to amend them if the situation warrants.
3. Thou shalt be consistent in reinforcing appropriate behaviors.
4. Thou shalt remember that thou art human and will make mistakes—but don't be afraid to admit them!
5. Thou shalt not raise thy hand in anger—nor thy voice!
6. Thou shalt be honest with thy children—and thyself!
7. Thou shalt listen to thy children—and even look at them while doing so!
8. Thou shalt talk and read to thy children—daily!
9. Thou shalt have values and impart them to thy children by modeling—not by mouthing!
10. Thou shalt stop each night, take a deep breath and pat thyself upon the back for thou art doing the “World's Hardest Job”—From the book *Parenting!* by Mary Bates Wehbi, Early Childhood Consultant, National Character Education Center. Web: www.ethicsusa.com.

Encouraging honesty in your child

Verbally encourage your child when he or she is honest. Always thank your child for telling the truth, even if you didn't want to hear it.

When you are given incorrect change in a store or are tempted to keep an item that is not yours, your child will be watching to see what you do.

Model honest behavior. Don't ask your child to tell someone you're not at home when you are at home.

Help your child problem-solve in situations that tempt him or her to be dishonest. Talk about how he or she can avoid temptation in the future.

Discussions for Families

What does it mean to be honest?

Make sure you discuss the less obvious forms of dishonesty like taking advantage of someone even when the other person might not be aware as well as the obvious forms of dishonesty, such as stealing or cheating.

Make a promise, as a family, to always tell the truth to each other.

Discuss the use of tact that is needed in telling a person a truth that might hurt his or her feelings.

Discuss the courage it takes to admit our mistakes.

Discuss how it makes us feel when someone is dishonest with us.

Try to identify a specific instance, and discuss how the situation could have been different.

Discuss advertising on TV, in magazines, etc.

Pose discussion topics like the following: Are extreme words used (best, always, etc.)? Is there proof of how great the product is? How honest are the ads?

Your child can show honesty by . . .

- Abiding by rules, even when no one is watching.
- Telling the truth when asked a question.
- Not making promises he or she cannot keep.
- Not lying, cheating or stealing.
- Being true to oneself and doing what is right.
- Taking care of things placed in his or her care.
- Not cheering when friends “get away with” something.
- Not cheating on tests or homework.
- Not taking credit for someone else's work.
- Choosing not to take something that does not belong to him or her.
- Not using things that belong to others without getting permission.
- Turning in something that he or she found.