

## Why Preschoolers Lie and What to Do About It

When you catch preschoolers weaving a tall tale or denying something you know she/he has done, keep in mind that the child probably isn't purposefully trying to deceive you. At this age the line between reality and fantasy is still a bit fuzzy.

### Reasons it may be happening could include:

- **Forgetfulness – -children have short memories**
- **Wishful thinking – breaking a vase and “wishing” it didn't happen**
- **A need to feel good**
- **A craving for attention**
- **A sense of control**

### What you Can do About it:

- **Humor your child** (relax -- enjoy his/her creativity and gently nurture the child's instincts to be truthful)
- **Don't accuse –use comments to encourage a “confession”** (“I wonder how these crayons got all over the carpet?”)
- **Explain why honesty is important** (It is not until about 5 or 6 that children fully grasp the moral implications of not telling the truth. Share the story of the boy who called wolf)
- **Reassure your child that you love him/her no matter what!** (When something is accidentally broken, tell the child that you still love him/her even though he did something you wished he hadn't done)
- **Let the child know what you expect** (providing clear defined limits is one of the most loving, positive things you can do for your preschooler. A child who understands that limits are for her benefit will grow up to be an adult who respects them also.