

LIFESTYLE

If you lie to your children, they will lie to you later

New research shows that children who have been lied to by their parents are even more likely to lie to their parents later in life.

You get square eyes from sitting in front of the screen for too long - and if you don't behave properly, I'll call the police.

Most parents have probably made a similar lie to the kids at some point, and even though it seems quite innocent, it can actually hurt your child in the long run.

It shows a new study done by Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore in collaboration with the University of Toronto, the University of California and Zhejiang Normal University.

In the study, 379 young adults from Singapore have been asked if they have been lied to by their parents - lies in the style of the above examples - and how much they themselves lie to their parents today.

"Our research suggests that parents' lies have negative consequences for the children as they grow up," the study's lead author, Setoh Peipei, said in a statement.

Not only did children who had been lied to more often lied to their parents later in life - many also had more difficulty coping with social and psychological challenges in their adult lives.

The study's conclusion does not surprise child psychologist Margrethe Brun Hansen.

- When you lie, you not only teach the child that it's okay to speak untrue - you also plant a message that the child cannot trust mother or father, she says.

And it doesn't matter if you are lying because it is easier for you than telling the truth or if you are lying to spare the child.

For example, when you blame others for not being able to take the conflict - "the lady in front of the queue gets annoyed when you make a noise", or "the grandmother gets upset when you don't eat up" - you help deprive the child of the courage and ability to stand by his actions.

- They have to learn how to handle a conflict, and they don't if they are repeatedly lied to because it is most convenient for the adult, says Margrethe Brun Hansen.

And when you fail to tell that grandma is in the hospital because you don't want to upset the baby, you are actually doing both yourself and your child a disservice.

- Children can easily feel the mood, and when they have not been given an explanation, they become insecure and scared, says the child psychologist.

That is not to say that you have to tell your children the truth raw for the unsweetened. Talk to your child based on their age and stage of development.

- It can be really difficult when you want to protect the little person - but it is still better to tell things as they are, so that the children are confronted with reality, says Margrethe Bruun Hansen.