



NEWSLETTER JULY 2017

DATABASE: 7306 WHANAU CARERS

Tena Koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Malo e Lelei, Bula Vinaka, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri, Greetings to all!

## Queens Service Order

Di Vivian, our wonderful member's support and founding trustee, is seen here receiving her Queens Service Order presented by our Governor General Dame Patsy Reddy, Principal Companion of the Queens Service Order.



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## Teens With ADHD and Lying: Why It's Common and How to Respond

By [Peg Rosen](#)

### At a Glance

- Many teens lie, and some do it frequently.
- Teens with ADHD may have different patterns of lying than other teens.

Teens with ADHD generally don't lie to be defiant, but rather to cope with their challenges.

Most parents of teens have dealt with the issue of lying at some point. Telling lies or leaving out the

truth is a common teen behaviour. Kids at this age have a lot more going on in their lives—sometimes good and sometimes bad—that they may want to keep to themselves.

But when teens with [ADHD](#) (also known as ADD) frequently tell lies, there are sometimes other factors to consider—and to watch out for. Not all kids with ADHD have issues with frequent lying. In fact, some are compulsively honest, which can create a different kind of problem. For many kids, however, lying is a behaviour that [starts when they're young](#) and that can become even more problematic as they travel through their teens

years.

Here's what to know about teens with ADHD and the problem of frequent lying, and how to help.

### Experimenting and Risk-Taking Among Teens

The teen years can be a time of new experiences for many kids, from dating to [driving](#) to going to parties. It's also a time when kids may experiment with [drugs, alcohol](#) or other risky behaviours.

There can be a lot more to hide, keep private, cover up or lie about. That includes whatever it is they've done *and* the consequences, such as driving a car full of friends with only a learner's permit *and* getting pulled over.

Some kids with ADHD may lie more frequently than their peers, however. That may be partly due to trouble with [executive function](#). It may also be a way to cover up areas of weaknesses related to their [ADHD symptoms](#). These factors sometimes put them at greater risk of engaging in risky behaviour to begin with.

### Why Teens With ADHD May Lie

It's not just risky behaviours that teens with ADHD may want to cover up. In fact, when they're not telling the truth, it's often about things that happen in their everyday lives. These are usually events or situations that are impacted by their [ADHD symptoms](#), particularly school and school-work. Consider this scenario. Your 16-year-old with ADHD had a math exam two weeks ago. She's said nothing about it since, so you ask how she did. "Fine," she says. "Fine? What grade did you get?" you ask. "Um, a B?" she shrugs and heads out of the house. You hate to doubt her, but you log onto her school's online portal and see that she got a D. Why would she lie again, you wonder. You've never punished her for bad grades. And she must know how easily you could find out the truth! One answer might be that she really isn't lying. She may truly not remember the grade, or even that there was a test that day. Issues with [working memory](#) and inattention may cause her to answer the way she did.

At the same time, teens with ADHD may lie to cope with a negative outcome or episode. Experts call this a "maladaptive coping mechanism." These teens avoid the truth because, in the moment, it helps offset the shame they might feel for doing poorly. It pushes aside the fear they have about

what their failings might mean, especially as college looms. If their parent doesn't know, it's one less hurdle to face. The "truth" isn't quite real—at least for now.

### The Role of Executive Function and Teenage Lying

As kids get older, their untruths can get more sophisticated. For instance, two friends might say they're sleeping at each other's house, and then head off to a concert they're not allowed to attend. What about that 16-year-old girl with the bad test grade? She may not think about how quickly and easily her parent can go to the school's portal and knock down her lie. Teens with ADHD may, in part, seem to lie more because they get *caught* in lies more often.

Sometimes, teens with ADHD may be truly unsure of what's the truth and what's not. That, too, ties in with their [executive functioning issues](#). A high school senior might *think* she asked her teacher for a college recommendation. But she has lots of things swimming in her mind and has trouble keeping track of and prioritizing them. When her parents ask about that recommendation, she optimistically goes with "Did it!" She may be thinking to herself that she'll do it immediately, but that may or may not occur.

The possible consequences of not doing it may not even cross her mind until it's too late. And her parents may not know if she was lying to cover up, or whether she simply forgot about the whole thing.

### The Consequences of Teenage Lying

When they're younger, kids with and without ADHD may lie or hide things. But parents are still very involved in their everyday life. It's easier to catch lies before they do too much damage. Parents simply don't have that kind of control with teens. High school students have many more teachers and more working parts to their days.

Even when a parent calls attention to a missing homework assignment they see online, a teen might answer back that the teacher's grade portal isn't up to date. It's not probable, but it is possible! In high school, everything has more consequences. Poor grades. Bad behaviour. Lateness and [absenteeism](#). And lying about these issues, of course, only makes things worse. Teens with ADHD may dig themselves in deeper as they avoid dealing with their problems, telling lies to cover lies. If the cycle isn't broken, lying can almost become a way of life. Sometimes,

that kids with ADHD are at higher risk for substance abuse. They're also at higher risk of mental health issues, such as [anxiety](#) and [depression](#). A teen who's using drugs or drinking, and lying about it, may be doing it to self-medicate. It's important to look for [signs of anxiety and depression](#).

### Responding When Your Teen Lies

Helping your teen understand why she tells frequent lies and the consequences of her lies is crucial for her well-being and success.

- **Don't count it as a betrayal.** Even for teens without ADHD, lying isn't typically an action against you as a parent. It's a bad decision. Focus less on the lie itself and more on what the lie was about.
- **Anticipate what your child will most likely lie about.** Keep an open dialogue about these issues. For matters involving school, you can provide tools—like a graphic organizer or shared online calendar—that can help all of you keep track. You can also talk to the school about [classroom accommodations](#) and [informal supports](#).
- **Confront your teen with evidence.** Teens with ADHD may persist with a lie, unrealistically hoping it will somehow become truth or the problem will just go away. If your child insists she handed something in when she didn't, remind her of what

she said. Then show her the missing assignment online and the email the teacher sent confirming that it was missing. Suggest you both go in and sit down with the teacher to "clear things up." It's tough love, but it's often what teens need to let go of an illusion and deal with reality.

- **Remove the shame of lying.** Don't excuse the lie, but show your teen you understand how she came to do it. You might say, "It sounds like you were struggling. Let's figure out how you got to this place to begin with. Then let's figure out how to get you back on track."

**Don't dismiss drinking or drug use as "normal" teen behaviour.** Confront your teen. Talk about what's going on in her life and why she might be using alcohol or drugs. You probably won't be able to stop your teen from lying altogether. But you can help her understand that lying will only make her challenges worse. Learn [why teens with ADHD may take more risks](#). Discover ways to [reduce risky behaviour](#). And keep [showing your support and understanding](#), even when your teen asserts her independence and [seems to push you away](#).

[https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/teens-with-adhd-and-lying?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=understoodorg](https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/add-adhd/teens-with-adhd-and-lying?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=understoodorg)

## Support Group Check-in

Dannevirke Coordinator Malcolm (06 3740407) has informed us they still have regular meetings and recently he and another member travelled some distance to assist a grandparent with 3 under 5 year old children she is raising. Having only been in the home for just over 1 month they are going to assist her with installation of smoke alarms, door barriers and finish of some railing around her deck. Well done folks.

Hamilton Coordinator Pat (0226007672 ) writes: Thank you to all the members that attended last month's meeting, and I look forward to seeing more of you at the next. To those new members, it is always encouraging to see more and more people attend the meetings, you will be aware now that they are facilitated by a charitable cause. (Male Support Waikato) I would love to supply the morning tea, but it I believe is fair to ask for a koha, gold coin, or small plate to share for morning tea would be appreciated. If you cannot contribute, by all means come to the meeting and enjoy the company. The primary focus is to get members together to support one another and to offer advice, and, if you have experience, or experienced, a particular event that you can share. For some it will be, knowing they are in the right service providers and for others it is getting to know the service providers. Some of you know

the work of The Salvation Army, Link House, Single Parent Services, to name but a few, but others may not. Talk and share.

## Our Support Group Coordinators

Please bear in mind that our support groups coordinators are all **volunteers**. Some work part or full time and are also raising or have raised grandchildren. Some offer telephone advice and others hold meetings. Please make contact with your local Co and if you have trouble getting hold of them please feel free to call our help line. Free call from landline 0800 472 637 ext 1 or cell phone 09 4806530. If you feel you may be able to assist your coordinator in their task, also speak to them about this. Many hands make light work.

## Confessions of an Adoptive Parent

Written by Mike Berry on 30 May 2017

*The following article was graciously shared, with permission, by Mike Berry from the blog [Confessions of an Adoptive Parent](#).*

If you've parented a child from a traumatic past for any length of time, you already know that traditional parenting techniques do not work. But, have you ever stopped to consider why, or what you could do differently?

Kristin and I both grew up in traditional households, with parents who used traditional techniques in raising us both. There were rules and restrictions, guidelines and boundaries. And if said rules, restrictions, guidelines and boundaries were crossed, BAM, consequences were enforced. No questions asked. From all accounts, these techniques worked. We both grew up to be responsible adults who knew the difference between right and wrong. But, we also never endured [significant trauma](#) as children. And that was the game-changer. When we first became parents, 15 years ago, we thought we had a healthy understanding of how to parent. We thought we knew how to discipline, how to enforce consequences, and even how to get our point across. In 2004 a little girl and boy came to live with us through foster care and, soon after, became a permanent part of our family. When the little girl turned 7, I caught her in a straight up lie. When I asked her why she lied, she just stared at me. So, logically, I continued to question her...and question her...and question her. This caused her eyes to start darting around the room. She wouldn't look at me. Only a worried look on her face. She would open her mouth to speak but nothing came out. I'd love to tell you my heart gave way and I stopped. Not the case. I became more frustrated. Finally, I'd had enough

and marched her off to her room. The night was over for her. In my mind, she was content with her "bad behaviour," and thus, needed a stiff consequence: time away from others to "think" about it. For several more years I parented this way. If you screwed up, BAM, consequences! It's how I was raised...so you better believe it was how my children would be raised. But, mind you, my childhood was different. I was never starving. I never bounced from foster home to foster home before finding permanency. I never witnessed domestic violence. I never grew up in an orphanage or group home. My mom and dad always took care of me, more importantly, were always there for me. All of the ways children bond with their parents from the get-go, were missing for my children early in their development. And the result was deep cavernous wounds in their minds. Truth is, they're often the very things we gloss over when we are attempting to enforce a consequence or get our point across when our child has screwed up. When I finally realized this, it changed the way I approached my children, and reacted to what I thought was just bad behaviour. I've discovered that traditional parenting, the way I was parented, just doesn't work with our kiddos. Here are 3 reasons (out of many) why this is the case...

1. **Trauma changes the brain.** If your child was drug and alcohol exposed in utero, subject to abuse of any form before coming into your care, malnourished, neglected, or in and out of foster homes before arriving into your care (just to name a few), their brain has been altered by this trauma. They don't see the world around them the same way a child who has not been through significant trauma does. Nor do they behave the same (more on this in a minute). They are thinking, behaving, reacting, and surviving out of loss, most of which has occurred in their mind. That's why you



cannot look at your child and ask, “What were you thinking?” Chances are, they don’t know. And if you continue to demand an answer, or lecture, you will continue to get less answers, or simply, blank stares.

2. **Their behaviour is a voice.** For years I thought my son’s choices, reactions, and attitude, were coming from a bad kid who behaved badly. I disciplined him according to this belief. And then one December night, I stood indignantly in my upstairs bathroom while he threw the mother of all tantrums and attempted to tip over a solid steel claw-foot bathtub. I was furious. I wanted to ground him for life. He was traumatizing my other children and causing me to miss out on a relaxing family movie night. But then suddenly, in that moment, like a lightning bolt striking a tree, a thought struck my mind. While he was behaving badly, it wasn’t due to him being a bad kid. His behaviour was a voice from his traumatic past. It was an outcry. He was in a fight...not against me, but against an intense situation that he could not process. When I realized his behaviour was actually a voice, I started disciplining and enforcing consequences differently.

3. **Fight, flight, or freeze.** Inevitably you’ve heard of this survival mode, whether you’re parenting a child from trauma or not. This is used to explain how every human being reacts to major traumatic, terrifying, dangerous, or intense situations. We see a fight break out on an airplane, we respond in one of these three ways. We experience something devastating or deeply traumatic, we respond in one of these three ways. Someone yells “bomb” or “fire” and we shift into survival mode. While these are very common human reactions when the heat is on, they also help us understand a child who’s come from trauma. This is how our kiddos respond to intense situations (i.e.- when they’re caught in the act of doing something they shouldn’t do). If you’re a lecturer (like we are), you’ve probably noticed it doesn’t work. But, you’ve probably also noticed these three reactions on display. In their mind, when we are lecturing (for example) a series of alarms are going off in their mind, telling them to either fight back, run away, or shut down. It was their defence mechanism when they were in the midst of their highly traumatic past (i.e. abuse,

neglect, or witness to something dangerous). In the case of me lecturing my daughter, all those years ago, after she was caught lying, she shut down (or froze). It’s not because she wasn’t smart, or incapable of speaking. She was in survival mode. I could write a book on all of the many reasons we can’t parent our kiddos with traditional parenting techniques. I’ve heard from hundreds of thousands of readers who have realized this truth but struggle to help their parents, grandparents, coaches or youth leaders understand the same thing (simple because of the way they grew up, or the generation they’ve come from). However, when you can grasp the reality that traditional discipline, lecturing, time-outs, restrictions, boundaries, and consequences just don’t work, you open up a entirely new horizon for yourself and your children. You may be asking yourself, “Well, then what should I do when my child blows it, or makes a bad choice? If traditional discipline doesn’t work, what does?” Great question! I am going to default to the best resources I know, that are available today...

[The Connected Child](#), by Dr. Karyn Purvis. This is the foremost resource on understanding children from trauma and learning how to connect to them through trust-based relational intervention (TBRI).

[Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control](#) by Heather T. Forbes. To answer the big question of “how?,” when it comes to discipline and structure with children from trauma, this is our highest recommendation.

[Born Broken: An Adoptive Journey](#), by Kristin Berry. I recommend Kristin’s book to better understand what parenting children from trauma looks like from the trenches. This is more memoir than how-to.

[Why Traditional Parenting Doesn’t Work For Our Kids- Tapestry’s Empowered To Connect Podcast](#). Our good friends Ryan and Kayla North from Tapestry share some valuable advice and principles in this podcast episode.

<http://www.rainbowkids.com/adoption-stories/3-reasons-traditional-parenting-doesn-t-work-with-kids-from-trauma-2011>

# Grand's reflections...

## Heh, heh, heh



Standing at the clothesline in the dark to gather in some laundry to dry inside, I heard my 4 grand girls ( all aged 10-14) cutting through the church property to climb my back fence as a shortcut home from town. They had been to get a pizza and a movie and were talking amongst themselves as they began to climb up over the fence. They didn't see me slip behind the tree that hid me. I held my breath until they were halfway over THE FENCE and then I moaned loudly out of the darkness, not funny grandma! NOT FUNNY AT ALL!! Guess they know me too well.

Pauline Sloan.

## Umm, OK...

School rang this afternoon to tell me grandson wasn't well and could I pick him up? Sure can, the only trouble was that when I arrived at the gates, I found them locked. These are tall, iron, picket type bars that were really narrow and way beyond my fuller-figure to even contemplate squeezing through, but, maybe I could climb over them, I told myself, placing one foot on the lower bar as I eyed up the height of the damn thing. How fortunate that the school office lady saw my intentions from her window and came racing out to lift the latch that I hadn't seen at the top of the gate so that it swung open before my startled

eyes. "I thought you might be trying to climb the gate and I just couldn't imagine you doing such a thing...." she burbled. Whoops. Nanny P

## Happiness

It is wet and cold outside, brrrr. Fire is going and the warmth of it seeping right through the whole house, pot of ham bone soup bubbling on the back of the stove and neck chop stew simmering in the crockpot. Kitchen aroma is tantalizing. Tele burbling in the background in the other room, sounds of laughter echo through the house as grandies and poppy are watching some comedy show, good book in my hand and a cup of tea within reach - THIS is home. This is family.



## Sleepover

Little man had his first sleepover at my sister's home with her family. He had a blast.

Me: wow, you had a great sleepover.

Lm: it was so fun, grandma, and I was brave.

Me: I am sure you were. Why did you have to be brave?

Lm: I woke up when I was sleeping and you were not there. I remember you are in my heart. Then I was sleeping again.

Me: I am always in your heart.

Lm: I am sleeping in your bed tonight.



[Anti-bullying](#)



0800 456 450



[www.powertoprotect.net.nz](http://www.powertoprotect.net.nz)



Give a Little to GRG

<https://www.givealittle.co.nz/org/grg>

## Can we help you?

Members ONLY services are available nationwide  
Caregivers Toll free helpline  
0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637)  
For landline caregivers only please.  
New members and general information please dial ext. 1

Members' Support Manager:  
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If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or you have changed address please update your details by contacting Kelly at the Trust Office as this is where the total mail out membership is kept.  
Moved home or planning to? Be sure to let us know.

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Member Support Manager: Di & Team (as a caregiver you are part of our team)

Heoi ano, na. *E te Atua, aroha mai..... O God shower us with love.*

*Ka kite Ka Whangaia ka tupu, ka puawai* - That which is nurtured, blossoms and grows

We are respectful, we listen, we learn

*He rōpū manaaki, he rōpū whakarongo, he rōpū ako mātou*

Please pass this on to other grandparents/kin carers you know.

GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am – 2pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)

We are a Charitable Trust



Thank you to our Sponsors and Funders supporting GRG's Support Services throughout New Zealand including this newsletter



# SUPPORT GROUP CONTACT NUMBERS

For the most up to date contact details please go to our website [www.grg.org.nz](http://www.grg.org.nz)

If you are a grandparent or whanau caregiver and need a referral to one of our Field Officers please call 0800 GRANDS (0800 472 637) or if you are in Auckland please call 09 480 6530

\* Telephone Support \*\* Telephone Support and Meetings

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