

Youth Culture Lesson
Finding Teachable Moments in Culture
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Cloudy Thinking

Balloon Boy's Family Grounded

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What Happened:

On Oct. 15, a strange, saucer-shaped balloon floated up from a rural Colorado property. In a later call to 911, balloon owner Richard Heene told officials his 6-year-old son, Falcon, was on board.

For much of the afternoon, the country was riveted. Rescue workers pursued the balloon for 50 miles until it finally settled in a field. Falcon, however, was nowhere to be found. He later was discovered hiding in the attic of his home.

Just days later, officials accused the Heenes of concocting the whole episode – a hoax later confirmed by Falcon's mother, Mayumi Heene. The Heenes, who had twice been featured in the reality show "Wife Swap," were angling to cut another television deal, this one based on the exploits of his family.

The Heenes are now undergoing an impromptu psychological examination by much of the country. Many have focused on young Falcon, who was asked to lie by his own parents. "If a parent tries to coerce them into something, they are not able to make a valid decision about whether it makes sense," says psychiatrist Diane DiGiacomo. "Kids just don't have the cognitive ability to be able to do so."

Source: *New York Daily News*

The Heenes are not alone. A recent study found that 80 percent of young adults had been told that lying is always wrong; 88 percent of those same young adults said their own parents had lied to *them* on occasion.

Talk About It:

Why do you think the Heenes lied? Was it understandable? What do you think the consequences for them should be?

Have your parents told you that it's bad to lie? Have you done it anyway? When? Why?

Have you ever caught someone you trusted in a lie? Your parents? Your teachers? Your friends?

Is it ever OK to lie?

What the Bible Says:

"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who act faithfully are his delight" (Prov. 12:22).

"A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will not escape" (Prov. 19:5).

"Everyone deceives his neighbor, and no one speaks the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies; they weary themselves committing iniquity" (Jer. 9:5).

"... as long as my breath is in me and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit" (Job 27:3-4).