

# Reframe & Reconsider: Lying

**Lying** is to purposefully say something untrue, often to avoid an unpleasant situation: a misrepresentation.

*"I had anxiety, I just felt a little pressure.... I couldn't form my thoughts and say them clearly."*

- Adult with FASD

## Could be misinterpreted as...

- Deliberate dishonesty
- Lacking a conscience
- Being difficult
- Making up stories
- Being sneaky
- Being untrustworthy

## Should be interpreted as possibly...

- Confusion around how events originally occurred, including details
- Having problems with memory/sequencing
- Trying to please by telling you what they think you want to hear
- Poor verbal communication skills
- Trying to save/preserve a relationship
- Trying to maintain dignity/self-image

## STRATEGIES

- Consider that they may be telling the truth when they say: "I don't know"
- **Memory:** discuss contradictions and work through the facts/timelines
- **Language:** teach narrative words: *maybe, I think, wouldn't it be great if..., probably, I don't quite remember...* reserve proper names/places/times for true, not creative, stories; ask open-ended questions with a curious mindset
- **Social Skills:** teach the damage that comes from creatively filling in unknown information rather than admitting: "I don't know"; help them consider consequences of lying

