

Tattling versus telling

Tattling and telling are not the same thing. Children need to know the difference.

Tattling is when a child tells an adult about something another child did that is not going to hurt anyone. A lot of the time, it is about something that does not matter. It is done to get the other child in trouble.

Example: LaToya tells her teacher that she thinks Javon is looking at her in class.

Telling is when a child tells an adult about a serious situation where someone could get hurt.

Example: After school Joel hears Sam in the hall saying he's going to beat up his classmate. Joel finds Ms. Jones and tells her what he heard.

Talk with your child about tattling and telling.

Use these questions to get started.

1. What is the difference between tattling and telling?
2. Can you tell me about a time that you used telling to get help from an adult?
3. Can you tell me about a time that you tattled to try to get someone in trouble? Have you ever heard someone else tattle?

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