Tattle or Tell?

Telling keeps someone safe or gets them help. Tattling tries to get someone in trouble over something small.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Ask the three questions Stop at the first YES

1	Is someone hurt, in danger, or about to get hurt?	YES →	Tell an adult right now
2	Is someone being picked on again and again, or bullied?	YES →	Tell an adult today
3	Is it small, and can I fix it or let it go?	YES →	Try a small problem tool

All three NO, or not sure? Ask an adult. Asking for help is never tattling.

2 Sort it Tick one box for each, then talk about why

	Tell an adult	Try it myself
1. A child fell off the climber and is not getting up.	☐	☐
2. Someone cut in front of me in the lunch line.	☐	☐
3. A kid calls Maya a mean name at recess every day.	☐	☐
4. My table partner keeps humming while I work.	☐	☐
5. Someone has something dangerous in their backpack.	☐	☐
6. Jake took two turns on the swing instead of one.	☐	☐
7. An older kid told me to keep a secret that scares me.	☐	☐
8. Two friends are whispering and I want to know what.	☐	☐
9. Someone keeps posting mean pictures of a classmate.	☐	☐
10. A kid is not doing their worksheet.	☐	☐
11. A classmate says they want to hurt themselves.	☐	☐
12. Someone says I am not playing the game right.	☐	☐

Some cards can go either way. A small problem that keeps happening after you tried can become a tell.

3 Small problem toolbox Try one or two before asking

- ☐ Ignore it
- ☐ Walk away
- ☐ Say: Stop, please
- ☐ Use an I message
- ☐ Take turns
- ☐ Let it go

Emergency: call 911 · Crisis help for any age: call or text 988 (US)

Original layout by Lotus & Tulip. A teaching tool, not a school safety or reporting policy.

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My Telling Plan

Know who to tell, what to say, and what to do if the first adult is busy. Fill it in with a grown up.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 My trusted adults People I can tell

At school: _____ At school: _____

At home: _____ At home: _____

Somewhere else (coach, family friend, bus driver): _____

2 How to tell Say it calmly, with the facts

Start with: "I need help with something important."

Who was involved: _____

What happened (what I saw or heard): _____

Where and when: _____

What I already tried, if anything: _____

Who I want to keep safe (me, a friend, someone else): _____

Surprise or unsafe secret?

Surprise:
fun, and everyone finds out soon, like a gift or a party.

Unsafe secret:
makes me feel worried, scared or confused, and someone says do not tell anyone.

Unsafe secrets are always OK to tell.

Keep telling

If an adult is busy, say: It is important, it is about safety. Still no help? Tell another trusted adult. Keep telling until someone helps. That is brave, not tattling.

- ☐ I know two adults I can go to.
- ☐ I practiced telling once.

My practice log T = told an adult, M = tried it myself

Date	What happened	T or M?	What I did	How it went
		☐ T ☐ M		
		☐ T ☐ M		
		☐ T ☐ M		

For the adult: when a child comes to tell

1. Thank them first, every time, even for small reports. A child who is brushed off may stay quiet about something big.
2. Ask: Is anyone hurt or unsafe? Is this happening again and again? If yes, act, follow your school's reporting steps and check back later.
3. If it is small, coach instead of fixing: Which tool could you try first? Then ask them to come back if it does not work.
4. Do not use the word tattletale or shame the child. Aim for a class rule like: Telling about safety is always welcome.
5. Teach it before it is needed: role play the sort with the class, and review it after long breaks and when new students join.

Notes: _____

Emergency: call 911 · Crisis: call or text 988 (US) · Child abuse: Childhelp 1-800-422-4453

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