

Classroom Lesson

The Difference Between Reporting and Tattling (k-3)

Goal of the Lesson – To help students understand the difference between reporting and tattling

Research reveals that 40% of elementary students “would report to a teacher” if they were bullied and 20% say they would “tell no one”. By high school, 25% of students say they “would report to a teacher” and 30% say they “tell no one”. In the world of bullying prevention, these numbers are alarming. Reasons students give for not reporting are: they fear retaliation, don’t think it will do any good and they don’t want to be seen as a “rat”, “snitch” or “Tattle-tale”. Obviously, for adults to be able to intervene in bullying situations, we have to know what’s going on. Unfortunately, research suggests adults only see about 5% of the bullying that takes place. Therefore, we must rely on students to report. Helping students understand when and how to report is critical in the process. To get past the hurdle of not wanting to be seen as a “tattle-tale” students must understand the difference between reporting and tattling. Adults also have to be careful not to call incidents of “reporting” “tattling”. If elementary students get a firm grasp on this difference they will be more likely to report issues of bullying and harassment when they are older.

Learner Outcomes

By the end of this activity, students will have learned

- The difference between reporting and tattling
- The benefits of reporting
- How do I report?

Materials Needed

- Computer with internet access
- This handout
- Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8WfDJSBZo0>

Preparation Needed

- Check to make certain you have internet access and volume
- Watch the video and read the lesson plan

Staff Discussion Outline

- 1) Say, “Today we’re going to be talking about bullying. We know that one of the best ways to deal with bullying is to report to a teacher, but many times students don’t report. And if you don’t report, I can’t help you. Sometimes students say they don’t report because they don’t want to

be seen as a “tattle-tale”. But there’s a difference between reporting and tattling and today we’re going to watch a video to help explain that difference. So, I want you to watch closely to see if you can tell what that difference is. Let’s check out the video”

- 2) I’ve included times where you can “pause” the video to ask questions, but some people might want to play the entire video and then ask questions. It’s up to you.
 - a. Start the video, stop at 1:08 and ask:
 - i. What happened to the boy ?
 - ii. Did someone let a teacher know what happened?
 - iii. Did it get better or worse when the adults found out about what happened?
 - iv. How did he feel when his friend told the teacher?
 - v. When his friends told the teacher, do you think that was reporting or tattling? Raise your hand if you think it was reporting? Raise your hand if you think it was tattling? Let’s keep watching to find out the answer.
 - b. Start the video, stop at 1:25 and ask:
 - i. What do you think? Can someone tell me the difference?
 - ii. Let’s see what the video says about the difference between reporting and tattling
 - c. Start the video, stop at 1:45 and say:
 - i. A good way to look at it is “Reporting helps stop trouble. Tattling wastes time and causes trouble”
 - d. Start the video, stop at 3:56 and say:
 - i. Now, why don’t we do the skit they just did. Who wants to be the teacher? I’m going to play like I’m the students and I’ll run up to report or tattle and you tell me which one I’m doing. Just like they did in the video, let’s play like we’re in the movies. When I say “ready”, you say “action” and we’ll start” Note: For older students, you could let them be the one to report or tattle. You could whisper a scenario to them or have them come up with one on their own. After the role play, say, “Let’s look at one last thing on the video”
 - e. Start the video and play through the end
 - i. After the video, ask “If you need help or if a friend needs help who can your report to at our school?”
 - ii. Explain how students can make a report in your class