

# STEPS TO SAFETY

## Tattling vs. Reporting

### Helping Your Child Understand the Difference Between Tattling and Reporting

- 🐾 **Reporting** involves something that is a threat to your child's safety or the safety of someone else.
- 🐾 **Tattling** is a complaint about someone else's behavior that does not involve a threat to safety.

### How to Talk to Your Child About the Difference Between Tattling and Reporting

#### 🐾 Step 1

An essential step in your child's development is knowing when to report to an adult. While no one likes tattling, the determination of when and what to report is rarely discussed. This leads to confusion, especially as children struggle with moral development. Ask your child to explain the difference between tattling and reporting to you. Help them to understand that how they **feel** about their own safety or the safety of others will help them decide if they are tattling or reporting.

#### 🐾 Step 2

Ask your child which voice they would use when reporting to a Grown-Up Buddy or you. Ask them if they would use the same voice if they were tattling. Remind your child that using their "I Mean Business" Voice is very important when reporting something that is a threat to their safety or the safety of others.

#### 🐾 Step 3

Explain to your child that they must continue reporting until they are **Heard** and **Helped**. Sometimes when a child reports something that is a threat to their safety or the safety of others, they are not heard. While this is devastating to a child, it is important to stress to your child that they must continue to tell the Grown-Up Buddies in their Trusted Triangle or other trusted adults until they are heard. Provide examples of other trusted adults who could help your child, such as teachers, neighbors, parents of your child's friends, a police officer, or a firefighter.

