

Chapter 8 Lesson 2: Peer Pressure and Refusal Skills

Introduction:

In this lesson, you learned about how your peers influence the way you think and act. Peer pressure isn't always a bad thing—in fact, it can be good if your peers encourage you to study hard or try new, healthy activities. However, sometimes your peers can influence you to do things that aren't healthy, like drinking or smoking. At the Web site below, you learn more about how to recognize this kind of unhealthy peer pressure—and how to resist it.

Links to Explore:

Peer Pressure

<http://www.thecoolspot.gov/pressures.asp>

Directions:

- Read the introductory page.
 - Next, click on “Why Peer Pressure Can Work” and read that page as well.
 - Click on “Spoken vs. Unspoken Pressure” and click through the cartoon that pops up.
 - Click on “Peer Pressure Bag of Tricks.” Click on each of the four headings under “The Tricks” and read the descriptions that pop up.
 - Finally, answer the following questions based on what you have read:
1. Define *peer pressure*.
 2. List three reasons why teens may give in to peer pressure.
 3. Explain the difference between spoken and unspoken pressure.
 4. Identify the four “tricks” that teens can use to pressure other teens.
 5. Suppose that a friend offers you a cigarette. When you say no, your friend says, “Come on, one cigarette isn't going to kill you.” Which type of pressure is your friend using?

Answers:

1. The feeling that someone your own age is pushing you toward making a certain choice—good or bad.
2. Any three of the following:
 - They are afraid of being rejected by others.
 - They want to be liked and don't want to lose a friend.
 - They want to appear grown up.
 - They don't want to be made fun of.
 - They don't want to hurt someone's feelings.
 - They aren't sure of what they really want.
 - They don't know how to get out of the situation.

3. Spoken pressure occurs when a friend or peer says something directly to influence you. Unspoken pressure occurs when you feel the urge to dress or act the way everyone else does, even if no one says anything about it.
4. Rejection, put-downs, reasoning, and unspoken pressure
5. Reasoning

Additional Links to Explore:

Use the links below to gather additional information on the activity topic. When appropriate, have students extend their research to include important concepts contained in these Web sites.

Peer Pressure Can Be Good, Too

http://www.thecoolspot.gov/peer_pressure6.asp

The Right to Resist

http://www.thecoolspot.gov/right_to_resist.asp

Preparing Youth for Peer Pressure

<http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/CA-0047/default.asp>