



KidsHealth.org/classroom

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
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- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Your state's school health policies:
nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State_Policy.asp

Peer pressure is a normal part of growing up. As friends gain importance in adolescents' lives, they also gain influence over behaviors in positive and negative ways. These activities will help your students learn to recognize and respond to positive and negative peer pressure.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Teens:

Peer Pressure

KidsHealth.org/teen/homework/problems/peer_pressure.html

Assertiveness

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/friends/assertive.html

Coping With Cliques

KidsHealth.org/teen/homework/problems/cliques.html

How Can I Improve My Self-Esteem?

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/emotions/self_esteem.html

Alcohol

KidsHealth.org/teen/homework/problems/alcohol.html

Drugs: What You Should Know

KidsHealth.org/teen/homework/problems/know_about_drugs.html

Smoking

KidsHealth.org/teen/cancer_center/q_a/smoking.html

Shoplifting

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/friends/shoplifting.html

I'm Not Ready for Sex But I'm Feeling Pressured. Should I Give In?

KidsHealth.org/teen/expert/sex_health/not_ready.html

Should I Send My Boyfriend Naked Pictures?

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems sexting.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. Define peer pressure in your own words. Why do you think kids and teens are so susceptible to the influence of their friends and classmates?
2. We often hear about negative peer pressure, like friends talking friends into trying drugs or alcohol. But peer pressure isn't always bad. Friends can encourage and inspire friends to do great things. Give some examples of positive peer pressure.
3. Have you ever experienced peer pressure, good or bad? How did it feel?
4. Why is it sometimes hard to stand up to your friends? What advice would you give to someone dealing with peer pressure?



Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Peer Pressure Role-Playing

Objectives:

Students will:

- Evaluate the effects of positive and negative peer influence
- Share real-life experiences of peer pressure

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- “Peer Pressure Role-Playing” handout, pen or pencil

Class Time:

- 45 minutes

Activity:

Peer pressure’s been around a long time. In fact, nearly all the tactics that kids and teens use to influence each other today were used by your parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents.

Today we’re going to role-play two peer pressure situations. Then we’ll compare and contrast what’s going on in each, including:

- Who’s doing the pressuring
- What kinds of words they’re using to do it
- What effect those words could have on others
- Whether they’re using their influence in a positive or negative way

Afterward, we’ll discuss some realistic examples of good and bad peer pressure and how they can be equally powerful.

Extensions:

1. Look at the words the students used to describe Sofia’s encouragement of Maia in Scene 2 of the “Peer Pressure Role-Playing” handout. Using them as a starting point, make a classroom word collage that illustrates the positive power of peer pressure.
2. Discuss the role technology and social media (iPhones, texting, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) play in peer pressure.



Great Escapes

Objectives:

Students will:

- Develop verbal responses to use in negative peer pressure situations
- Practice refusal skills

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- “Great Escapes” handout, pen or pencil

Class Time:

- 45 minutes

Activity:

Just like you study for a test or practice before a game, it’s a good idea to prepare for the challenges of peer pressure.

One of the best things you can do is to come up with a few “great escapes” - responses you can have ready to use if you ever find yourself in a sticky situation. Responses can be straightforward (“No way”); deliberately distracting (“A drink? No, thanks. But where’s the pizza?”); or even funny (“Nope. I get really bad gas when I do things like that.”). And guess what? They don’t necessarily have to be true - they just have to get you out of an uncomfortable situation safely.

For each scenario on the “Great Escapes” handout, come up with three responses that make it clear you’re not participating.

Extension:

In groups of two, role-play these scenarios using the various responses. Which ones would you be most likely to use? Which ones seem most likely to work?

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Peer Pressure Role-Playing

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/growing/peer_pressure_handout1.pdf

Handout: Great Escapes

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/growing/peer_pressure_handout2.pdf

Quiz: Peer Pressure

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/growing/peer_pressure_quiz.pdf

Answer Key: Peer Pressure

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/growing/peer_pressure_quiz_answers.pdf



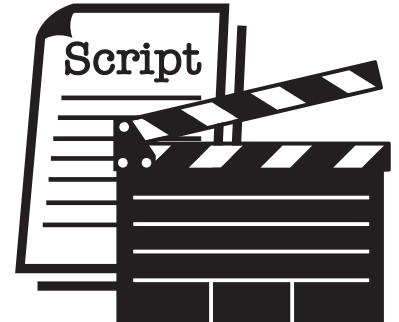
Name: _____

Date: _____

Peer Pressure Role-Playing

Instructions: Read each scene and answer the questions below each one.

Scene 1



Jayden: Look at that kid. He's such a loser

Eric: Who?

Jayden: That new kid. What's he even wearing anyway? That shirt is so dumb.

Eric: He's alright. He's just quiet.

Jayden: He's alright? Did you see him in P.E.? He's the whole reason we lost today. I was talking with the guys and we think we're going to have to teach him a lesson.

Eric: What kind of lesson?

Jayden: You know. Just scare him a little on the bus ride home today. You in?

Eric: I don't know. I think we should just leave him alone.

Jayden: You're such a chicken, Eric. Are you worried about getting in trouble? Because that bus driver is like 90 years old. There's no way he'll know.

Eric: It's not that. It's just that ...

Jayden: Just that what? You'd rather hang out with that loser than us? Fine. I'll find someone else to go to the game with me this weekend.

Eric: That's not what I said, OK?

Jayden: Wow, Eric. You used to be so cool. Now you're like my little sister or something. Are you with us today or not?

Who's doing the pressuring?

What kinds of words is he using to do it?

What effect might those words have?

Is influence being used in a positive or negative way?



Name: _____

Date: _____

Scene 2

Sofia: I wish you would try out for the school musical with me.

Maia: But I don't sing. I play basketball.

Sofia: Who says you can't do both? Besides, I've heard you sing. I know you have a great voice.

Maia: Me? No, I don't.

Sofia: Yes, you do. You have a beautiful voice. You just try to hide it.

Maia: Well, it's embarrassing to sing in public.

Sofia: Why is it any different than making a jump shot in front of hundreds of people?

Maia: I don't know. It just is.

Sofia: Well, it can't hurt to try, can it? Plus, Josie and Nina are already going. It would be so cool for all four of us to do it together.

Maia: What if I bomb?

Sofia: I'm pretty sure you won't bomb. But if you do, I'll buy you a milkshake to make you feel better. Look, just think about it, OK? And stop worrying so much. It'll be fun!

Who's doing the pressuring?

What kinds of words is she using to do it?

What effect might those words have?

Is influence being used in a positive or negative way?



Name: _____

Date: _____

Great Escapes

Instructions: When peer pressure comes knocking, it's a good idea to have a few responses ready to help you "escape." Read the following scenarios and write three comebacks for each to get you out of the sticky situations.


Example

You're at a convenience store, and a friend stuffs a bag of chips into your coat pocket.

1. "Dude, really? I'm not a thief."
2. "No way - my parole officer said one more strike and I go away for a long time."
3. "All this junk food must be going to your brain. I'm putting it back."



Dude,
really?
I'm not
a thief.



All this junk
food must be
going to
your brain.

You have a math test in 7th period. Your friend, who had the same test in 3rd period, steals a copy and offers it to you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Your friend wants you to pretend you're her mom and call in sick for her so she can cut school.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Your friend thinks it would be funny to block up a toilet in the boys' bathroom.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

You've had a bad day and your friend says he has just the thing to help you feel better: a joint.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Your friend shows you an inappropriate picture of the girl who just broke up with him. He wants you to forward it to everyone you know.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz

1. Your peers are:

- a) people about your own age
- b) your parents
- c) your teachers
- d) kids you babysit

2. True or false: Peer pressure is always bad.

3. Peer pressure can influence:

- a) clothing styles
- b) hairstyles
- c) taste in music
- d) all of the above

4. List three things friends might do to try to get kids or teens to do what they want. _____

5. List three reasons why people might give in to peer pressure. _____

6. List four ways friends can be a bad influence on each other. _____

7. List four ways friends can be a good influence on each other. _____

8. True or false: Kids and teens can pressure each other without even speaking.

9. All of the following are examples of body language that can make someone feel excluded except:

- a) hugs
- b) eye-rolling
- c) pointing and giggling
- d) turning away

10. Personal qualities that can help people resist negative peer pressure include:

- a) speed and agility
- b) self-confidence and assertiveness
- c) nice smile and lustrous hair



Quiz Answer Key

1. Your peers are:

- a) people about your own age
- b) your parents
- c) your teachers
- d) kids you babysit

2. True or false: Peer pressure is always bad.

3. Peer pressure can influence:

- a) clothing styles
- b) hairstyles
- c) taste in music
- d) all of the above

4. List three things friends might do to try to get kids or teens to do what they want. Any three of the following: tease, call names, say they're not cool, threaten, exclude from group, ignore, etc.

5. List three reasons why people might give in to peer pressure. Any three of the following: to seem cool, to seem brave, to get in with a group of friends, to impress others, etc.

6. List four ways friends can be a bad influence on each other. Any four of the following: they can encourage each other to smoke, drink, try drugs, be sexually active, cheat, lie, steal, bully, be lazy, not do their homework, etc.

7. List four ways friends can be a good influence on each other. Any four of the following: they can encourage each other not to engage in drinking, smoking, drugs, and sexual behaviors; they can encourage each other to work hard in school or sports; try a positive new activity; volunteer; believe in themselves; be kind; be physically fit; be honest; etc.

8. True or false: Kids and teens can pressure each other without even speaking.

9. All of the following are examples of body language that can make someone feel excluded except:

- a) hugs
- b) eye-rolling
- c) pointing and giggling
- d) turning away

10. Personal qualities that can help people resist negative peer pressure include:

- a) speed and agility
- b) self-confidence and assertiveness
- c) nice smile and lustrous hair