



For Young Teens

PEER PRESSURE

The Right To Resist

Your classmates keep asking you to have them over because you have a pool, everyone at school is wearing silly hats so you do too, and your best friend begs you to go running with her because you both need more exercise, so you go, too. These are all examples of peer pressure. Don't get it yet?



Pressure is the feeling that you are being pushed toward making a certain choice—good or bad.

A peer is someone in your own age group.

Peer pressure is—you guessed it—the feeling that someone your own age is pushing you toward making a certain choice, good or bad.

If someone is pressuring you to do anything that's not right or good for you, you have the right to resist. You have the right to say no, the right not to give a reason why, and the right to just walk away from a situation.

Have you ever given in to peer pressure? Like when a friend begs to borrow something you don't want to give up or to do something your parents say is off limits?

How did it feel to give into pressure? If you did something you wish you hadn't, then most likely you didn't feel too good about it. You might have felt . . .

- sad
- anxious
- guilty
- like a wimp or pushover
- disappointed in yourself

Resisting pressure can be hard for some people. **Why?**

They...

- are afraid of being rejected by others
- want to be liked and don't want to lose a friend
- don't want to be made fun of
- don't want to hurt someone's feelings
- aren't sure of what they really want
- don't know how to get out of the situation

Peer Pressure Can Be Good, Too

Peer pressure isn't all bad. You and your friends can pressure each other into some things that will improve your health and social life and make you feel good about your decisions.

Think of a time when a friend pushed you to do something good for yourself or to avoid something that would've been bad. Here are some good things friends can pressure each other to do:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| * Be honest | * Be nice |
| * Avoid alcohol | * Respect other |
| * Avoid drugs | * Work hard |
| * Not smoke | * Exercise together |

You and your friends can also use good peer pressure to help each other resist bad peer pressure. If you see a friend taking some heat, try some of these lines ...

- We don't want to drink.
- We don't need to drink to have fun.
- Let's go and do something else.
- Leave her alone. She said she didn't want any.

The word "we" holds power.

Use it to rescue friends from peer pressure.

The Right to Resist Spoken Pressure

Spoken pressure—when someone pressures you with words—can be difficult to resist. Most people don't want to risk making others feel bad, but it's important to stand up for yourself. Check out these strategies for dealing with spoken pressure.

DO

- Say no assertively
- Stay alcohol free
- Suggest something else to do
- Stand up for others
- Walk away from the situation
- Find something else to do with other friends

DON'T

- Attend a party unprepared to resist alcohol
- Be afraid to say no
- Mumble
- Say no too aggressively
- Act like a know-it-all when saying no

The Right to Resist Unspoken Pressure

Sometimes you can feel pressure just from watching how others act or dress, without them saying a word to you. This "unspoken pressure" is especially hard to resist, because instead of standing up to a friend, you're standing up to how you feel inside.

Unspoken pressure may come from role models:

- your parents
- your older siblings
- teachers
- coaches
- celebrities you see in movies and on TV

Unspoken pressure may also come from:

- peers—your friends or other people your age.



Here are some tips for resisting unspoken pressure:

- ✓ Take a reality check—most teens don't drink
- ✓ Remember it's risky—alcohol can be dangerous
- ✓ Walk away from the situation
- ✓ Find something else to do with other friends

Quick Tips:

You can resist alcohol or anything else you may feel pressured into. These tips will make resisting a little easier. Print it, cut it out, and stash it somewhere safe where you can peek at it if you need a refresher.

QUICK TIPS ON RESISTING PRESSURE

Say no and let them know you mean it.

- ✓ Stand up straight
- ✓ Make eye contact
- ✓ Say how you feel
- ✓ Don't make excuses
- ✓ Stick up for yourself



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