



Peer Pressure for Teens

The Facts

Peer pressure is when friends or peers attempt to influence how you think or act. Everyday we make decisions, possibly too many to keep track of. Peer pressure can affect our decisions and make them slightly more difficult. How you deal with peer pressure is up to you. Only you are in the driver's seat of your life.

The Consequences of Peer Pressure:

Negative peer pressure is when your friends persuade you to do something that maybe you don't really want to do, or is not in your best interest. This could include:

- *Taking drugs
- *Drinking alcohol
- *Shoplifting
- *Ditching school
- *Engaging in sexual activities
- *Destroying property

These things have severe consequences including getting addicted to drugs or alcohol, damaging your body and possibly even resulting in death. Negative peer pressure can get you into trouble with your parents, at school or even with the law.

Positive peer pressure is when friends influence you to do good things, such as getting involved in school activities, or doing things to help you reach your goals. Sometimes positive peer pressure is when you don't quite have the courage to do something and your friends give you the extra push or self-esteem to follow through with it. This type of peer pressure can lead to great things like new found talents, good grades, new friends and a positive attitude.

Don't fret: There are ways to handle peer pressure and use it to your advantage.

Steps

1. Find out what is really going on:

Analyze the situation and ask yourself the following questions:

- *Where am I?
- *Who am I dealing with?
- *What are they doing?
- *How do I feel about what is



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2. Consider the Consequences:

Next, ask yourself these questions:

- * “How will I feel about myself tomorrow?”
- * “Could I get in trouble with people I know?”
- * “Could I be harming my health?”

3. Make a Conscious Decision:

Decide what is right for you.

You can base your decisions on:

- *The possible consequences:
 - Do the positive consequences outweigh the negative ones?
- *The effect on your self-esteem:
 - Your decision will affect you and the way you feel about yourself.

4. Voice Your Decision:

This may be the hardest part. You can make it easier on yourself by:

- *Looking and acting confident.
 - Stand or sit up straight.
 - Look right into the person’s eyes.
- *Saying something like:
 - “No, thanks.”
 - “I’m not interested.”

If you continue to be pressured, say:

- “No, please don’t ask me again.”
- “I already said no, why are you still bothering me?”

How To Handle Some Situations

Pressure to use alcohol or drugs:

- *Say, “No, thanks.”
- *Do something else. (Go to the bathroom, or make a phone call)
- *Avoid the whole scene- don’t go to a party where alcohol or other drugs might be used.
- *Hang out with friends who don’t use alcohol or other drugs.
- *Say, “Goodbye” and leave.

Pressure to have sex:

- *Say, “No, please respect my wishes.”
- *Say, “I’m not ready to have sex.”
- *Say, “If you love me, you won’t ask me to do something I don’t want to do.”

Pressure to steal or shoplift:

- *Say, “No” and leave.
- *Say, “It’s not worth the risks.”
- *Say, “I don’t need to prove anything to you.”

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Colorado Family Education, Resources & Training
Colorado State University

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Information for this PIP TIP collected from a variety of research based resources.

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