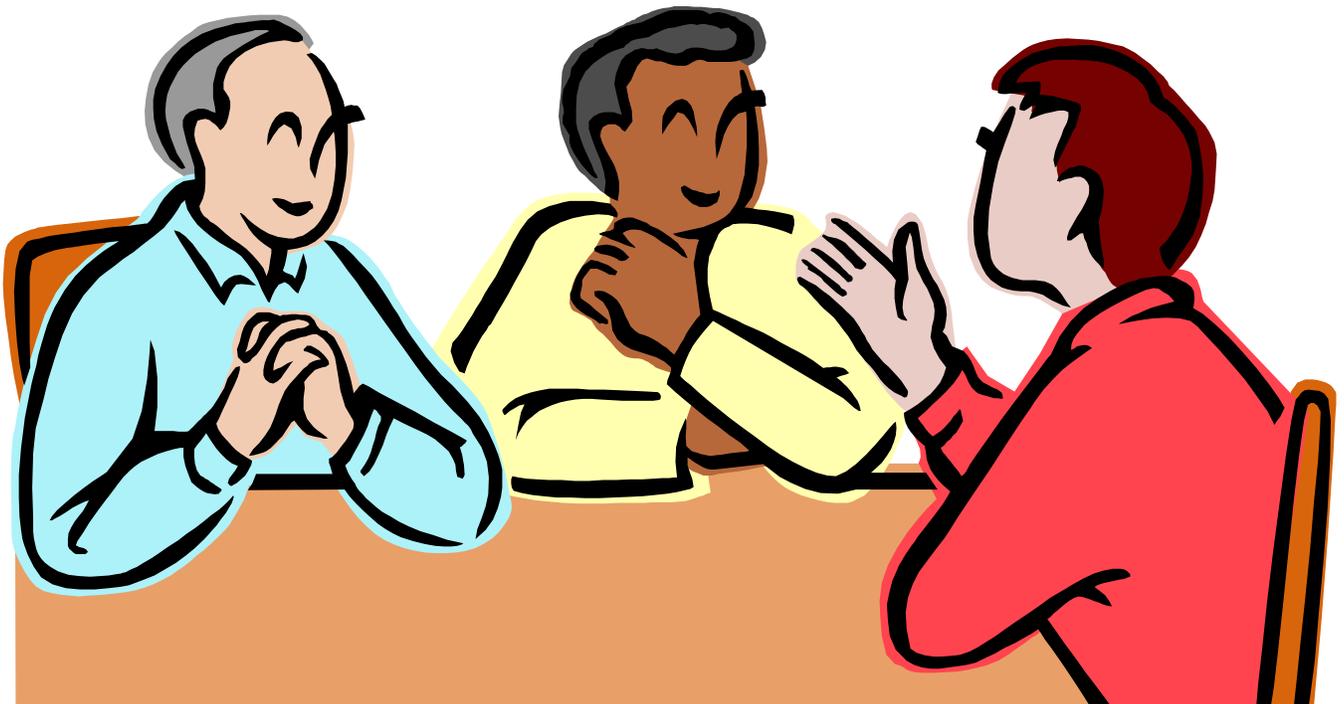


Who's Line is it?



Who line is it?

Identify Problem: Peer pressure is the ability for someone to influence another person's decision. The greater the pressure the harder it is to resist. Peer pressure usually works best on those that are least prepared to handle it. Peer pressure is a real issue with kids. It is important to teach kids refusal skills so they know how to react when they are in a situation they need to get out of. One important thing to know about refusal skills is that once you have learned about them, you must always practice them so you are prepared when faced with a situation.

Materials: Pens or pencils, paper to write on, copies for each person of "Avoiding and coping with peer pressure, and refusal skills".

Exercise: Give everyone a copy of the "Avoiding and coping with peer pressure, and refusal skills". Read through each one together as a group. Discuss and explain what they mean. Have the kids help you with examples so they understand each one. Divide into groups of 2 to 3.

First round: Give each group a possible scenario. Give them a few minutes to read it and come up with how they would refuse what is happening. Have each group get up in front of the rest of the class and read their scenario and tell how they would refuse. It is fun to have them act out the scenario too.

Second round: You may repeat this same activity and have each group do it again, or skip to round three.

Third round: Have each group write their own scenario and how they would refuse it. This is good to help kids think about what might happen to them where they live or in the school they go to, and how they would refuse it. Have each group read or act out their scenario.

Variation: You can also explain about positive and negative pressures and use those in your scenarios.

Questions and Discussion:

- Discuss and explain what each skill means in the beginning while you are reading them as a class.
- After each scenario, you may discuss or comment about it
- You may also use questions like:
 - How can you prepare yourself for situations like this?
 - Have you ever had to say no to a friend?

Would you risk losing a friend over something you felt strongly about?
Why do people have trouble saying 'no' to a friend?
What are some factors that influence your decisions?
Do you think about the consequences before you decide?
Is it harder to resist friends or people you don't know?
Have you ever had a friend pressure you to do something?
How did you react?
List 3 people who can help you make good decisions and will be our personal support system?
Besides substances, what are some other things to say "No" to?

Identify Skills:

How to Avoid Peer Pressure

1. **Avoid putting yourself in situations that puts you in a negative situation.** For example, if you don't smoke and you know a lot of people go to a certain spot to smoke, steer clear of that place.
2. **Be careful when choosing friends to hang around.** Look for friends with positive qualities.
3. **Start saying no to your friends when you don't want to do something.** This is perhaps the hardest thing to do. Your friends may not want to hang around you because they might say you've changed.
4. **Learn how to be an individual.** You don't have to always be in the "In Crowd". This will help you later in life too. You don't always have to be accepted by everyone.

How to Cope with Peer Pressure

Know who you are. Develop a strong sense of identity. Be clear about what you want out of life. If you are sure about your values, then you will be less likely to compromise them for someone else. It is easier to cope with negative peer pressure when it is in opposition to your beliefs.

Build your self Esteem. Feeling bad about yourself makes you more vulnerable to peer pressure. Take good care of yourself. Set goals and celebrate your accomplishments. Participate in activities that make you more confident.

Trust your instincts. No one knows what is right for you more than you. If something feels wrong, then chances are that it is wrong. Your intuition is a great too. Heed its warning to make good choices and cope with peer pressure.

Surround yourself with like-minded people. Everyone needs a support system. If your confidants are people who wouldn't steer you in the wrong direction, then that's one less source of negative

peer pressure for you to worry about. Those same people will be there for you when you experience peer pressure from elsewhere. **Learn to say “No”**. Everyone wants acceptance, but your need for approval should not make decisions for you. Exercise your freedom of choice to cope with peer pressure and avoid creating resentment. Compromise is a part of every relationship, but people pleasing can be detrimental to your well being.

Refusal Skills:

1. Ask questions - Be sure you know what someone wants you to do. “Do you have any money for that candy bar?” “Will there be drugs at the party?” “Who’s going to be at the party?”
2. Name the trouble - Tell them that this is something you don’t want to do and why. “Taking the candy bar without paying - that’s stealing?” “That’s illegal.”
3. State the Consequences - What could happen if you went against your better judgment? “If I do that I could get grounded” “If I do that I could get in an accident” “If I do that I could be arrested.”
4. Suggest Realistic Alternatives - Suggest something fun and safe to do. “Instead, why don’t we go to a movie” “Instead why don’t we play video games.”
5. Move on - Get yourself out of the situation. Move it, sell it and leave the door open: “If you change your mind, I’m going to get some friends to play basketball at the park, come over if you want” “If you change your mind, I’ll be at my house watching a movie, you can come if you want.”
6. Other ideas - Switch topics, use humor, walk away, use an excuse, don’t pay attention.

Possible Scenarios:

- i. You are at school taking a test. The person sitting next to you is cheating and offers the test answers to you.
- ii. You are on your way home from school. Your best friend shows you a pack of cigarettes and says “Let’s go over here behind the building and try one.”
- iii. You are walking to school. Your friend, who skips school a lot, tries to get you to cut with him.
- iv. You are going to the store for your mom. You see two of your older friends hanging around the store. They try to get you to steal a bag of chips for them and in return promise you a ride on their motorcycle.

- v. It is after dark and you're hanging around outside with some of your friends. They decide it would be fun to throw some rocks through car windows.
- vi. One of your friends saw some money in a teachers' desk. When she leaves the room, your friend wants to get it and split it. She will never know who took it.
- vii. There is a new kid at school. She wears old looking, wrinkled clothes. Your friend makes a comment about "How messy the new kid looks and she has no style. Let's not talk to her."

You can write your own if you want.