



Know About Peer Pressure and You Won't Fall

Identify Problem: What is Peer Pressure? Have you ever had to say “No” to a friend? Kids are not always taught refusal skills, how to cope with peer pressure or how to avoid peer pressure. Research has found that those who make a decision early on to not do something such as drugs and alcohol, are less likely to participate or use the substance before being asked and have a much better chance of reinstating than do those who wait to make a decision until they are confronted with the choice. The early decision means they have already thought through the reasons not to use and are comfortable to resist the situation they are in, not the decision of whether or not to use. This activity will help kids understand what peer pressure is, differences between positive and negative pressures, how to avoid and cope with peer pressure and learn techniques to refuse substances.

Materials: Jenga Game, rainbow colored with a dice, labels with peer pressure information (see below) printed on them, cut to fit and stick to individual Jenga blocks. Left hand column focus on Refusal Skills, make them all red. Middle column is random questions about peer pressure, make them all yellow. Right hand column focus on how to avoid and cope with peer pressure and the difference between negative and positive peer pressure, make them all blue.

Exercise: Play the game as directed on the box. But after they remove a block from the stack, they must read out loud the questions and answer it before continuing to the next person. You may also discuss as a group the question and answers they give.

Questions and Discussion:

- Discussion happens while playing the game with each question. Below are refusal skills, how to cope with peer pressure and how to avoid peer pressure for explaining and answering the questions.

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.



Refusal Skills- **Repeat yourself if necessary.** Sometimes it takes more than once. Give an example

Is it harder to resist friends or people you don't know? Why?

Give an example of how you would **cope** with peer pressure?

Refusal Skills- **Power in numbers,** More is stronger than 1. Give an example

What kind of pressure is hardest to resist?

Give an example of how you would **cope** with peer pressure?

Refusal Skills- **Be assertive,** stick up for yourself. Give an example

What is a peer group? Who is your peer group? Do they encourage you to make good or bad decisions?

Give an example of how you would **avoid** peer pressure?

Refusal Skills-**Broken record,** say "No" as many times as you need to. Give an example

Do you think advertising pressures us to do things? How?

Give an example of how you would **avoid** peer pressure?

Refusal Skills-**Give a reason** why you don't want to participate. Give an example

Who would be good to practice refusal skills with?

Give some examples of **positive** peer pressure.

Refusal Skills- **Cold shoulder or walk away,** ignore them or find someone else to talk to. Give an example

List 3 people who can help you make good decisions and will be your support system.

Give some examples of **negative** peer pressure.

Refusal Skills- **Ask Questions,** be sure you know what someone wants you to do. Give an example.

What is peer pressure?

How to cope with peer pressure - **Know how you are.** Describe what this means.

Refusal Skills- **Name the trouble**, why is this something you don't want to do. Give an example

Refusal Skills-**State the Consequences**, what could happen if you did the action. Give an example

Refusal Skills- **Suggest a Realistic Alternative**, something fun and safe to do. Give an example

Refusal Skills- **Move on**, get yourself out of the situation. Give an example

Refusal Skills- **Switch topics**, use humor. Give an example

What does "**Move it, sell it, leave the door open**" mean?

Refusal Skills - Make an excuse why you can't. Give an example

Have you ever had to say "No" to a friend?

Why do people have trouble saying "No" to friends?

Besides drugs and alcohol, what are some other things you should say "No" to?

How can you prepare yourself for these situations?

Would you risk losing a friend over something you felt strong about?

What are some factors that influence your decisions?

Do you think of consequences when someone tries to pressure you into doing something?

How to cope with peer pressure - **Build your self esteem**. Describe what this means.

How to cope with peer pressure - **Trust your instincts**. Describe what this means.

How to cope with peer pressure - **Surround yourself with like-minded people**. Describe what this means.

How to cope with peer pressure - **Learn to say "No"**. Describe what this means.

How to avoid peer pressure - **Avoid putting yourself in situations that could put you in a negative situation**. Describe what this means.
How to Avoid Peer Pressure - **Be careful when choosing friends to hang around with**. Describe what this means.

How to Avoid Peer Pressure- Start saying "No" to your friends when you don't want to do something. Describe what this means.

Refusal Skills- Ignore the suggestion, pretend you didn't hear it and change the topic. Give an example

Refusal Skills- Just say "No" plainly and firmly so they know you mean your not joking. Give an example

When someone suggests doing something you don't feel right about, what are some things you can do besides just saying "No"?

Describe a clique or crowd in your school, how do they affect you and your own peer group?

How to avoid peer pressure - Learn how to be an individual. Describe what this means.

What is the difference between negative and positive peer pressure?