



KidsHealth.org/classroom

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- 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.

National Health Education Standards:
www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm

Peer pressure is the natural influence groups of people have on each other. It can be a force for good or bad, and either way, it can be powerful. Help your students learn to think critically about the positive and negative effects of peer influence with these activities.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Teens:

Peer Pressure

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/peer-pressure.html

Assertiveness

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/assertive.html

Coping With Cliques

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/cliques.html

How Can I Improve My Self-Esteem?

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/self-esteem.html

Alcohol

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/alcohol.html

Drugs: What You Should Know

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/know-about-drugs.html

Smoking

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/smoking.html

Shoplifting

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/shoplifting.html

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

TeensHealth.org/en/teens/not-ready.html

Should I Send My Boyfriend Naked Pictures?

TeensHealth.org/en/teens sexting.html

Discussion Questions

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

1. What kind of influence do peers have over each other?
Why do some teens seem to be more susceptible than others to such pressure?
2. We hear a lot about negative peer pressure.
But many experts would argue that positive peer pressure is just as powerful.
Give some examples of positive peer pressure. Have you ever seen it in action?
3. Is it easier to stand up to friends or to strangers when you disagree?
Have you ever lost a friend or a group of friends over peer pressure?
4. How do technology and social media affect the way people influence each other?
5. What advice would you give to someone dealing with negative peer pressure?



Activities for Students

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

Let's Be Positive

Objectives:

Students will:

- Write a persuasive speech to promote positive peer pressure

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access, word processing software
- “Let’s Be Positive” handout, pen or pencil

Class Time:

- 2½ hours (1 hour for outline; 1½ hours for speech, which may be done at home)

Activity:

Peer pressure gets a bad rap. It gets the blame whenever teens influence other teens to smoke, drink, do drugs, or generally do the wrong thing.

But peer pressure has another side, too. It’s the side that can turn one teen’s community service project into a respected national charity; or a single newspaper article about a social injustice into a cause that an entire city rallies behind. This kind of peer pressure is positive; it can inspire, encourage, get people involved, and help change the world.

You’re going to write a persuasive speech that will convince your audience that peer pressure can be a force for good. Use the “Let’s Be Positive” handout to organize your thoughts and jot down notes before you start writing. [Note to instructor: Your students might find this article helpful: Writing a Paper, Teenshealth.org/en/teens/writing-papers.html.]

Extension:

Have students present their speeches to the class.



Influential Words

Objectives:

Students will:

- Explore and explain quotations related to peer pressure through writing and art

Materials:

- “Influential Words” handout, pen or pencil
- Art materials, dependent upon students’ choice

Class Time:

- 30 minutes for in-class writing; the art project may be done at home

Activity:

From ancient proverbs to the stories of Dr. Seuss, the world is full of advice about staying true to yourself and not following the crowd. So why do people find that so hard to do?

Choose one quotation from the “Influential Words” handout, or choose another quotation that relates to peer pressure. Write a paragraph about the meaning of the quotation, especially as it relates to a peer pressure experience you’ve had, read about, or learned about in history.

Next, use the quotation as the basis for a form of artistic expression. Create anything you like - a painting, T-shirt, cartoon, graphic art design, song, piece of jewelry. Don’t worry if you don’t consider yourself “artistic” - your goal isn’t perfection, it’s to convey a message.

Extension:

Have an in-class art show so students can display or perform their artistic creations and discuss their meanings.

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Let’s Be Positive

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/personal/growing/peer_pressure_handout1.pdf

Handout: Influential Words

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/personal/growing/peer_pressure_handout2.pdf

Quiz: Peer Pressure

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/personal/growing/peer_pressure_quiz.pdf

Answer Key: Peer Pressure

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/personal/growing/peer_pressure_quiz_answers.pdf



Name: _____

Date: _____

Let's Be Positive

Instructions: Use this outline to organize your thoughts and/or jot down notes to help you write a persuasive speech to promote positive peer pressure.

I. Introduction (grab your audience's attention and state your main point, or thesis)

II. Body

a) Argument #1 (supports your thesis)

b) Argument #2 (cites real-world examples as evidence)

c) Acknowledge and refute opposing arguments

III. Conclusion (restate your thesis and end with a recommendation for people to act on, also called "a call to action")



Name: _____

Date: _____

Influential Words

Instructions: Choose a quotation from the list below, or choose another quotation that relates to peer pressure. Write a paragraph about the meaning of the quotation, particularly as it relates to a peer pressure experience you've had, read about, or learned about in history.

“Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.”
- Dr. Seuss

“Don't think you're on the right road just because it's a well-beaten path.” - Unknown

“Those who stand for nothing fall for anything.” - Alexander Hamilton

“One who walks in another's tracks leaves no footprints.” - Proverb

“If 50 million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing.” - Anatole France

“Yield to all and you will soon have nothing to yield.” - Aesop

“If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking.” - George S. Patton

“You don't get harmony when everyone sings the same note.” - Doug Floyd

“Only surround yourself with people who lift you higher.” - Oprah Winfrey

“The true test of a man's character is what he does when no one is watching.” - John Wooden





Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz

1. Peers are:

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

2. True or false: Peer pressure ends after high school.

3. Peer pressure can influence:

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

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

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

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

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

8. True or false: 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. Peers are:

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

2. True or false: Peer pressure ends after high school.

3. Peer pressure can influence:

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

4. List three things teens might do to try to get friends 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 five ways friends can be a bad influence on each other. Any five 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 five ways friends can be a good influence on each other. Any five 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: 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