



PowerTalk for Families

Being a Positive Influence on Your Peers

Peer behavior, both positive and negative, has a powerful influence on adolescent decision making. When adolescents associate with positive social peers, they are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors and make responsible decisions.

Students are sometimes faced with situations that involve peer *pressure*. It's not easy to resist peer pressure. The best way to stand up to peer pressure is to have a strategy *before* you are put under pressure. If we have a plan in place ahead of time, it's much easier to resist the pressure. Review the *10 Stay Safe Strategies to Deal with Peer Pressure* on the next page. Not all strategies work all the time, so it's good to have options. As a family, talk about how your child might be able to use these strategies. Then use those strategies as you role play the following 5 scenarios. Make sure all family members take turns being the teen—it's more fun that way!

1. A friend asks you to help her cheat on a test. What's your strategy?
2. You are at a friend's house and he wants to watch a show or play a video game that you know your parents wouldn't approve of. What's your strategy?
3. Your parent has given you permission to go to the park with a group of friends, but when you get there, they decide to go back to someone's house and that person's parents are not home. What's your strategy?
4. A friend is involved in something that you know is dangerous and unhealthy. She wants you to participate with her. What's your strategy?
5. You go to a party with some friends. When you get there you realize that some of the kids at the party are drinking alcohol and are encouraging you to join them. What's your strategy?

We are all influenced by the behavior of others. YOU are an influence on those around you. What type of influence do you want to be to YOUR peers?

Use your POWER of INFLUENCE in a POSITIVE way!

10 Stay Safe Strategies to Deal with Peer Pressure

It's not easy to resist peer pressure. The best way to stand up to peer pressure, is to have a strategy *before* you are put under pressure. If we have a plan in place ahead of time, it's much easier to resist the pressure. Here are some strategies that you might use if you find yourself in a peer-pressure situation. Not all strategies work all the time, so it's good to have options. Think about how you might be able to use these strategies.

1. **AVOID**- If you see trouble ahead, don't even go there. Avoid the situation completely.
2. **"NO"**- If someone asks you to do something you know you shouldn't, say "no". Do not get into a debate or judge them. Just simply say "no."
3. **WALK**- If you find yourself in a dangerous or uncomfortable pressure situation, walk away and find a safe place. Don't let them call you back or get into a debate. Keep walking.
4. **PHONE**- Use your phone to contact your parents. Set up a code word with your parents to let them know you need them to help you out. You could call or text and use the code word to let them know to come and get you NOW!
5. **IGNORE**- Pretend you didn't even hear the peer-pressure statement. Don't look at the person or say anything. Just keep doing what you were doing and eventually they will get the message.
6. **BETTER IDEA**- Offer a better idea for something to do. If someone asked you to do something dangerous, offer a safer alternative.
7. **REPEAT**- Keep saying the same thing over and over again. If someone asks you to cheat on a test, just keep saying "I don't' cheat. I don't cheat."
8. **EXCUSES**- Come up with a believable excuse to get you out of a tricky situation. Say something like "I promised my mom I would come right home." There is always something you could be doing instead of what you are being pressured to do. Make that "something else" your priority and use it as an excuse.
9. **FACTS**-Tell the person pressuring you the consequences of engaging in the activity. For example, "If we get caught we could get suspended."
10. **REVERSE**- Put the pressure back on the person pressuring you. Say, "Why are you pressuring me? A true friend wouldn't make me do something I don't want to do."