

Speaker Notes

Teens and the Power of Peer Pressure

Page 1 – Title Slide

- NOTE: Before beginning the presentation/workshop, the presenter may want to start with an ice breaker such as a name toss:
 1. Arrange the group in a circle.
 2. One person starts off by saying the name of someone else in the circle, and tossing the ball to them.
 3. That person then in turn says the name of a different person, and tosses the ball to someone else who has not yet received the ball.
 4. That continues until everyone in the circle has received the ball once.
 5. Generally, the objective is to pass the ball around the circle without dropping it. If the ball is dropped, the group restarts until the game is completed without the ball being dropped.
 6. You can add a "thank-you, (name)" from the receiving person if you like.

Page 2 – Objectives

None

Page 3 – Introduction

- Making decisions on your own is hard enough, but when other people get involved and try to pressure you one way or another, it can be even harder.

Page 4 – What is Peer Pressure?

- People who are your age, like your classmates, are called peers. When they try to influence how you act, to get you to do something, it's called peer pressure. It's something everyone has to deal with—even adults.
- Let's talk about how to handle it.

Page 5 – Giving Into Peer Pressure

- NOTE: Ask participants to give examples of times they may have given in to peer pressure and done something they didn't want to do. Talk with them about how they felt when they gave in.

Page 6 – Why We Give In

- Other reasons why we might give in:
 - They don't want to hurt someone's feelings
 - They aren't sure of what they really want
 - They are curious to try something new that others are doing.
 - The idea that "everyone's doing it" may influence some kids to leave their better judgment, or their common sense, behind.
- NOTE: Ask participants if they can think of any other reasons why someone may give in to peer pressure.

Page 7 – Understanding Peer Pressure

- Almost everyone faces peer pressure once in a while. Friends have a big influence on our lives, but sometimes they push us to do things that we may not want to do. Unless you want to give in every time you face this, you're going to need to learn how to handle it.

Page 8 – Spoken vs. Unspoken Peer Pressure

- Spoken:
 - Example: Someone asks you to come drink with them. "Hey, come on and get wasted with us! Don't stay home like a loser."
- Unspoken:
 - Example: You think you are supposed to dress or act a certain way because everybody else is doing it.

Page 9 – Unspoken Peer Pressure Tactics

- The huddle: A group of kids standing together in which everyone is talking and maybe looking at something you can't see, laughing and joking.
- The look: Kids who think they're cool give you a certain look that means "we're cool and you're not."
- The example: A group of popular kids decide to get the same backpack and you want one too.

Page 10 – Spoken Peer Pressure Tactics

- Put downs: Insulting or calling a person names to make them feel bad. Examples:
 - "You're never any fun."
 - "You're such a baby."
 - "You're such a wimp."
 - "You're so uncool."
- Rejection: Threatening to end a friendship or a relationship. This pressure can be hard to resist because nobody wants to lose friends. Examples:
 - "Who needs you as a friend any way?"
 - "If you don't drink/use drugs/cut class/shoplift, we won't hang out with you anymore."
 - "Why don't you leave if you don't want to drink/use drugs with us?"
- Reasoning: Telling a person reasons why they should try something or why it would be ok if they did. Examples:
 - "It won't hurt you."
 - "Your parents will never find out."
 - "You'll have more fun."
 - "Everyone else is doing it."

Page 11 – Can You Identify the Peer Pressure Tactic?

- NOTE: Tell the participants that you are going to give them several scenarios, and ask them to see if they can tell you which type of peer pressure is being used. These could be presented as a handout. The participants could be broken into groups to discuss the tactic and share any similar experiences they have had with the particular tactic. Each smaller group could then share with instructor and the larger group. Types of peer pressure to include in the activity are:
 - Put down
 - Rejection
 - Reasoning

- Unspoken
- Scenario 1:
 1. Girl 1: "Hey, want a cigarette?"
 2. Girl 2: "No thanks, I don't smoke."
 3. Girl 1: "What? Oh come on, you've gotta at least try it."
 4. Girl 2: "No thanks. I'm really kind of scared to."
 5. Girl 1: "Good grief, you're such a baby."
 6. Peer pressure type: put down

Page 12 – Standing Up to Peer Pressure

- Rehearse: Think about what you would want to say in a situation where you might be pressured by your friends. This requires being clear on where you stand. (NOTE: Ask participants to think of situations where they have felt pressured and come up with ideas of what they would like to have said.)
- Know where you stand: Think about what your opinion is about key issues. Being clear on your opinions, values, attitudes and beliefs will help you in determining whether or not you want to go with peer pressure or resist.
- Say no assertively: Be assertive, but do not come across as self-righteous or preachy; this can lead to others wanting to rebel against you. Being assertive means:
 - Speaking in a firm voice, but without attacking the other person
 - Standing up straight
 - Looking the person right in the eye
 - Choosing words well (for example, instead of a saying, "Gee I don't know," say "No, I don't want to")

Page 13 – More Ways to Stand Up to Peer Pressure

- Stand up for others: This means not participating in anything designed to hurt, exclude or bully others and firmly stating this to others.
 - Example: "Leave her alone. She said she didn't want to."
- The little word "we" holds power. Use it to rescue friends from peer pressure.
 - Example: "We don't want to; we're going to go do something else."
- Try to help a friend who's having trouble resisting peer pressure. It can be powerful for one kid to join another by simply saying, "I'm with you; let's go."
- Walk away: If you're not comfortable with the situation you're in, it's ok to just leave.
- Don't participate in pressuring others: Be a positive role model for others.
- Don't give your power away to others: Those pressuring you will lose their power once you begin to stand up to them.
- Choose your friends wisely: You've probably had a parent or teacher advise you to "choose your friends wisely." Peer pressure is a big reason why they say this. If you choose friends who don't use drugs, cut class, smoke cigarettes, or lie to their parents, then you probably won't do these things either, even if other kids do.

Page 14 – The Right to Resist

None

Page 15 – Positive Peer Pressure

- Peer pressure is not always a bad thing. For example, positive peer pressure can be used to pressure bullies into acting better toward other kids.
- If enough kids get together, peers can pressure each other into doing what's right!

Page 16 – Friends Can Pressure Each Other To...

- NOTE: Ask participants to think of a time when a friend or group of friends pushed them into doing something good for themselves or helped them avoid something that would've been bad.

Page 17 – Summary

None

Page 18 – Questions

None

Page 19 – Resources

None

Page 20 – References

None

Page 21 – Thank You

None

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