



# Discussion Guide for

## RESISTING PEER PRESSURE

### OBJECTIVES

- To learn that young people can resist negative peer pressure and make the right choices for their lives.
- To show how to resist peer pressure, how to resolve conflicts, to negotiate, etc.
- To define what is right and wrong for oneself, as this is the first step toward resisting peer pressure.
- To give suggestions for coping with a negative home life that often increases a young person's susceptibility to negative peer pressure.

### SYNOPSIS

Exploring the issues and concerns surrounding peer pressure, this program offers teenagers suggestions on how to avoid and resist peer pressure. Students will have a better understanding of the difference between negative and positive peer pressure, the sources of pressure, and how to cope with it.

Resisting Peer Pressure covers the different forms and affects of peer pressure, how we are persuaded by outside influences, how to resolve conflicts, how to negotiate with and listen to peers, how to make judgments and decisions, and how to control emotions.

Armed with this knowledge, young people will feel better prepared to handle peer situations that make them uncomfortable, and be able to choose what's best for themselves.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE VIEWING

1. Think about your relationships with your friends. How much do you think they influence you to do certain things or act a certain way?

2. Define negative peer pressure.

3. Can peer pressure be good? If so, how?

4. What have you done in the past to handle a peer situation where you were pressured to do something you didn't want to do?

### QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER VIEWING

1. List some examples of peer pressure. (When someone your age pressures you to wear certain kinds of clothes, to behave a certain way, or to do something.)

2. Why might someone give in to peer pressure? (To be accepted by our peers is important to any human being, especially when we are at an age when we are trying to decide exactly who we are.)

3. When is peer pressure bad? (It's bad when it confuses you, makes you unsure of your actions, or forces you to behave in a manner which isn't in your best interests. Drug or

alcohol abuse, getting involved in destructive gangs, sex when you're not ready are all negative results of peer pressure.)

4. How do we know if peer pressure is good or bad? (If someone is pressuring you to do something that's wrong for you, that's bad peer pressure.)

5. What is the best way to prepare yourself to face peer pressure before it starts? (Decide ahead of time what's right and wrong for you, and keep thinking about it as time goes on. This is called determining what your personal values are.)

6. What other benefits are there to learning how to resist negative peer pressure? (You will learn how to resolve conflicts, how to negotiate, how to listen, how to control your emotions, and how to make good judgments.)

7. Name some examples of bad peer pressure. (When someone offers you drugs or alcohol, when you're pressured to get involved in a gang, when your friends try to get you to cheat, or steal, or get into trouble-these are examples of bad peer pressure.)

8. What basic steps can you take to resist giving in to negative peer pressure? (Start by saying "no" in a manner that makes you feel in control. Then, if you're tempted to give in, think about why you want to give in. Then work on solving the problem with the help of someone you trust.)

9. List some of the common sources of pressure in your life. (Subjective, but: your best friends, your classmates, the group, or clique you belong to, your teachers, your family, your neighborhood, TV, radio, magazines, the movies.)

10. What are some common areas of negative peer pressure young people can face? (Pressure over drugs and alcohol, sex and daring, peer groups and "belonging", appearance, behavior, the way you talk, gang involvement.)

11. Why do people pressure their friends to do things that might not be best for them? (Peer pressure is about acceptance. The group decides what's normal, and only those who fit the definition of "normal" can be part of that group. If someone in the group doesn't accept its definition of normal, that might make the other members question themselves. Making people fit into the group norm allows the group to feel that it is right, and maybe even superior to other groups.)



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12. When is resisting peer pressure especially tough? (When you come from a home situation where you don't get the attention you feel you need, you might seek acceptance elsewhere.)

13. What can you do if you feel you don't get enough acceptance and approval from Family members? (Get some help from an adult you trust. Tell them your feelings and ask for some guidance. You can join school or community clubs. You can talk with your parents, relatives, or adult friends. You can get help from counselors, teachers, or other professionals. Be honest with yourself, and don't be embarrassed.)

14. How might poor self-esteem make you more susceptible to negative peer pressure? (Low self-esteem can stem any number of problems in a person's life, but if you don't like and respect yourself you're much more likely to crave approval from your peers, even if it means doing something you know is wrong.)

15. What should you do if you don't allow your friends to pressure you and then they don't want to be around you anymore? (It takes a lot of courage to go against what other people want us to do. But if you know you have made the best decision for you, then maybe these friends were not the kind of friends you really need anyway. Go ahead and let them be uncomfortable if you don't give in to peer pressure. Let them be insecure or upset because that's going to happen whether you like it or not. If they are true friends, when you stand up for yourself, chances are that they will respect you, and may even decide to resist peer pressure as well. You'll all be better off.

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1-8159SG Dealing with the Causes

1-8147SG Teenage Troubles: How to Survive the Teenage Years

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### PROGRAMS DETAILS

#### LENGTH:

22 minutes

#### SUBJECT AREAS:

Health & Guidance

#### AUDIENCE LEVELS:

Grades 8-12

#### ORDER NUMBER:

1-9266SG

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