

## **Let's Talk Pressure** Video Facilitator Guide

### **Learning Objectives**

Defining Pressure – students will be able to accurately define pressure

Identifying Pressure –students will be able to identify two types of pressure, unspoken and spoken

Resistance Skills – students will learn three steps to avoid pressure

**What you will need for this activity** – “Let’s Talk Pressure” DVD and the ability to play the DVD via computer or DVD player (if available), or access to the internet to play the YouTube video. Access the [YouTube video](http://www.drugfreeaz.org/LetsTalkPressure) and worksheets here: <http://www.drugfreeaz.org/LetsTalkPressure>. Chalkboard, smart board or flipchart to write down youth responses, post it notes, markers to write youth responses, and enough “Name the Pressure” and “Pressure Pushback” worksheets for each student.

Introduce the activity by discussing that as teenagers you might be feeling pressure from those around you. You might be feeling pressure to fit in or go along with the crowd—and you're not alone. It's a difficult time, so this activity is designed to prepare you for those situations before they happen. Try to think about what you might say to your friends if they ask you to do something you aren't comfortable with. The more you know about who you are and what you believe in, the easier it will be to just be yourself—and to be comfortable with that.

### **Initial Perceptions of Pressure**

1. Ask the students, “Have you have ever”:
  - a. Found yourself doing something you really didn’t want to because your friends, or people that you wanted as friends, were doing it?
  - b. Laughed at something because your friends thought it was funny?
  - c. Worn trendy jeans or shoes because everyone is wearing them?

Explain to the students that this subtle pressure to go along or conform to a group is often called peer pressure, but in reality, what we see more is peer conformity, which is that internal push to go along with the crowd.

1. Ask the students, “Tell me what your idea of pressure is?” Write those responses on a chalkboard, smart board or flipchart.
2. Then write *Spoken* and *Unspoken Pressure* and their definitions – SpokenPressure =Direct Pressure, and Unspoken Pressure = Indirect Pressure. Explain to students that there are two types of pressure: Spoken Pressure – also called direct pressure. Direct pressure is when a person asks you directly to do something, or says things to you that push you toward a certain choice. Unspoken Pressure – also called indirect pressure, is when nothing is actually said to you, but because you see others doing something, you feel pressure to do the same.

Hand each child a post-it note and then ask them to write down an example of a spoken or unspoken pressure. After they write down their responses, have the students (in small groups or by rows) walk to the board or flip chart and place their post-it note under the appropriate heading of spoken or unspoken pressure. (An example of a spoken pressure may be a friend asking another friend if they want to come to a sleepover where there will be beer. An example

of an unspoken pressure may be everyone has a cell phone and you want one too, to be like everyone else.) Read the responses aloud and discuss with the class.

### **Pressure Video**

After discussing pressure and the two different types, spoken and unspoken, play the “Pressure” 7 minute video for the classroom. Let the students know the video is a collection of stories from Arizona youth who draw upon their own life stories. The video is designed to get teens to think about the pressures they face and the choices they make each day.

After the video: Explain to the students that there will be times when the pressure is really on and friends will try to persuade or pressure them into doing something. This pressure takes three forms - rejection, put downs and reasoning. Distribute the *Name the Pressure* worksheet and go over the definitions.

- Rejection: Threatening to end a friendship or a relationship. This pressure can be hard to resist because nobody wants to lose friends.
- Put Downs: Insulting or calling a person names to make them feel bad.
- Reasoning: Telling a person reasons why they should try something or why it would be OK if they did.

Have the students take a few minutes to fill out the *Name the Pressure* worksheet. After they are finished with the worksheet, go over their answers in class and discuss why each of the statements is reflective of its category. After you go through the worksheet answers, ask the students if they have ever had a friend use one of these statements on them. If they have, now they know they’ve been pressured.

### **The Pressure Push Back**

So now that we can name the pressure, how do we push back? Explain to the students that whether you’re actually pressured to do something you don’t believe in, or just feel the internal desire to conform and fit in, you need the ability to resist in a way that feels good to you. Ask the students if anyone can name the three ways discussed in the movie to push back or avoid peer pressure. If they can’t recall all three, help them out by writing the Pressure Push Back points on a flip chart or chalk board.

1. Know Your Rights
2. The Courage to Do What is Right
3. A Good Comeback Line

**Knowing Your Rights:** This means recognizing that you have the right to say “no” to peer pressure. The goals and values you want for your life are important. You also have the right to determine what’s good for you. Sometimes this may mean going along with the group and other times it may mean choosing a different path.

**The Courage to do what is right:** We all have an obligation to do the right thing as best we can determine, and sometimes this takes courage. Some examples:

- The Courage to be OK with others who think you’re not one of them.
- The Courage to risk being left out of a group, party or activity.
- The Courage to give up some short term pleasure because you know that it isn’t right for you (or for someone else) in the long run.

**A Good Comeback Line:** There are three different communication styles that go along with resisting pressure. Any of them can be used, but one is a lot more effective than the others. Distribute the *Pressure Pushback* worksheet to each student and go over the three styles for comebacks.

The Passive Style – This is also called the Doormat Style because it invites people to walk all over you. For example: “Uh, I’m not sure. Maybe some other time.” A passive style reveals a lack of confidence and leaves the door open for negative peer pressure.

The Aggressive Style – This style is attacking or hostile. For example: “What? You want me to drink and be as stupid as the rest of you? No thanks, loser.” This amount of force is really not necessary. You don’t want to make an enemy for life. You simply want to let the other person know that you don’t choose to behave in a negative way.

The Assertive Style – This is the communication style that works best. It’s both firm and friendly. For example: “No, I don’t want a beer. I’ll have a soda instead.” This approach enables you to stand up for yourself without insulting or injuring the other person. When using this approach, be confident.

Use the following as an example:

I’m having a sleepover and JP is bringing some beer. Want to come over?

Responses:

No, that’s stupid, you’re going to puke. – Aggressive

Uh, I’m not sure - I may have something else going on. – Passive

No, I don’t want to. Thanks anyway. - Assertive

Now, ask the students to take a look at the *Think About It* section. Ask the class for three volunteers. You want them to Push Back to the pressure by coming up with an assertive comeback line. Remember assertive means saying it with confidence.

1. You are studying for a test and you have to do well in order to pass the class. A friend sent a text and said that she has a cheat sheet for the test and that she’ll share it with you. What do you say?
2. You and your soccer team are getting ready for a game. The star forward asks you if you would like a pill that can make you run faster during the game. What do you say?
3. The park in your neighborhood closes at dark, but your friends say they are going to climb the fence and go inside after dark. Your best friend turns to you and says, “Come on, we’re all going in. You don’t want to be left out.”

Let’s Talk Pressure

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