

## Lesson 3: Dealing with Peer Pressure

### Concept

Giving and accepting an assertive refusal is an important personal safety skill.

**Language concepts:** peer, peer pressure

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Generate safe responses to potentially dangerous situations.
- Resist peer pressure.
- Use a problem-solving strategy.

### Materials

You will need the following:

- Posters: Calming Yourself Down, How to Solve Problems
- Poster paper and marker
- Handouts: Student Self-Report Homework, Parent Report

### Notes to the Teacher

Impulsive children may not stop and think about the safety or fairness of their behavior. This skill is important for resisting peer pressure. This is a lesson in both assertiveness and problem solving.

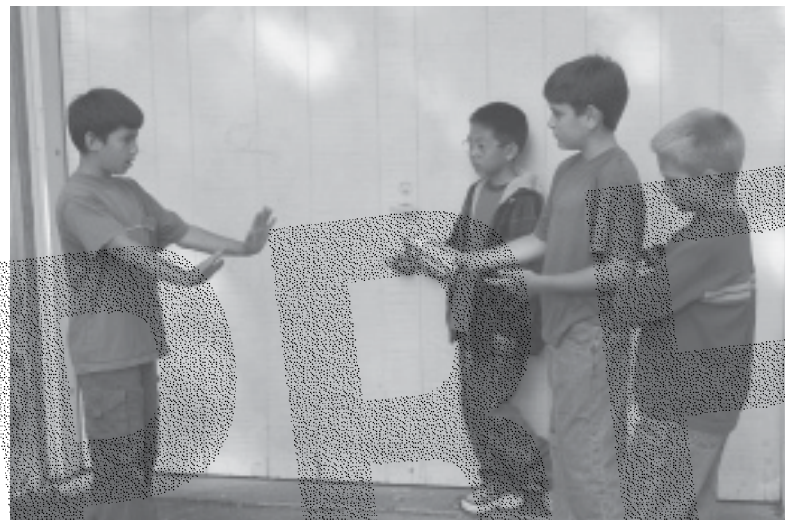
It can be difficult to say no to people we like. Children should learn that it is okay to say no and that when someone says no to them, they needn't be upset. Accepting an assertive refusal is also a skill. Beware that when students justify their reason(s) for saying no, peers may respond with added pressure to defend their reasons.

**Book link:**

*Blubber* by Judy Blume

### Story and Discussion

Today we will learn how to say "No" to peers. Peers are friends and other kids your age.



Raymond

Trahn Peter Louis

Show photo. This is Raymond. Raymond has been good friends with his neighbors Louis, Peter, and Trahn for a long time. Louis, Peter, and Trahn have decided they don't like a kid from another block. They want to spray paint the kid's garage door, and they want Raymond to help. If Raymond won't help, they say he can't be part of their group anymore.

1. **How do you think Raymond feels?** (Confused, angry, afraid of the consequences.)
2. **What is the problem?** (Raymond feels pressured to do something he doesn't want to do.) Refer to the How to Solve Problems poster when working through the following steps.
3. **Is it fair to pressure Raymond to do something he doesn't want to do?** (No.)

The first step in dealing with peer pressure is to decide whether what your friends want you to do is safe, against a rule or law, and something you want to do.

4. **What might happen if they spray paint the garage?** (They could get into trouble.)

Raymond remembers to stop, calm down, and think through the problem. He doesn't want to break the law, but he doesn't want to lose his friends either.

5. **What are some solutions Raymond could try?** (Tell them how he feels. Walk away. Go with them.)
6. **What might happen if . . . ?** Evaluate solutions by having students ask and answer the questions from How to Solve Problems step 3.
7. **What could Raymond say to his friends?** ("No" in an assertive way.) What if his friends keep pressuring him? (He could repeat his refusal. He could leave.)

**Let's write down some steps for dealing with peer pressure.** Guide students in generating their own skill steps. The following are possible steps: 1. Decide if what your friends want you to do is safe, against a law or rule, and something you want to do. 2. Stand tall, look directly at them, and say "No" like you mean it. 3. Think of something else to do.

### Role-Play

I'll role-play Raymond following our steps for resisting peer pressure. Then you will do some role-plays. Choose volunteers to play Raymond's friends.

Model for students. Play the role of Raymond using the steps generated by the students. Say to yourself: **This is against the law.** To students as Raymond's friends, say: **It's against the law. We could get into a lot of trouble. Maybe we should just go talk to this kid instead and tell him how we feel.**

After the model role-play, ask: **How did I do? Did I follow our steps for dealing with peer pressure?**

Have students practice. Assign students to partners. One partner should be the actor and the other should be the coach. The coach should help the actor remember the steps and provide support while the actor practices his/her responses. Select situations from the list below that best reflect your students' experiences. Feel free to adapt the situations or create your own as needed.

Pretend that some other kids want you to:

- Sneak things from your parents' closet.
- Help a friend cheat on a test.
- Make prank phone calls.
- Drink beer.
- Run across a frozen pond.
- Borrow your brother's new CD.
- Steal candy from the grocery store.

### Wrap-Up

Saying "No" to friends is hard. We learned that it's important to stand up to friends when they want you to do things that are illegal or that you don't want to do.

### Take-Home Reminder



Handouts: Student Self-Report Homework\*, Parent Report\*

\*List "Dealing with peer pressure" as the social skill and fill in the skill steps generated in class.

### Transfer of Learning

Help students use the skills from this lesson in everyday situations.

### Additional Activity Ideas

1. Have students investigate group instinct behavior in animals such as sheep, lemmings, and buffalo. Compare and contrast their behavior to peer pressure.
2. From *The Sneetches and Other Stories* by Dr. Seuss, read "The Sneetches" and discuss as a class how peer pressure affects the life of the Sneetches. What is the negative impact of peer pressure? What is the positive impact? What information from this *Second Step* lesson would have been useful to the Sneetches?



