

Peer Pressure Happens Two Ways

There are many **kinds** of peer pressure - pressure to be cool, to have money, to fit in, etc. All the different kinds of peer pressure can come at us in two important **ways**:

DIRECT PEER PRESSURE

Direct Peer Pressure is right in the face. It's when peers openly try to force us to do things.

HIDDEN PEER PRESSURE

Hidden Peer Pressure is peer pressure that disguises itself. Advertising often uses hidden peer pressure - it tries to convince us that our peers will accept us only if we buy certain things. This way of forcing people is harder to spot but very powerful.

Hidden peer pressure also happens when we feel pressure to do something, even if our friends aren't openly trying to force us.

Peer Pressure Can Be Negative or Positive

Peer pressure isn't always a problem - it can also be a great support.

POSITIVE PEER PRESSURE

Positive peer pressure happens when a peer group **encourages** us to make **healthy decisions** for ourselves. If your peer group encourages you to avoid drugs, to get involved in fun, healthy activities, and to improve yourself as a person, that's positive peer pressure.

NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE

Negative peer pressure is a problem. It happens when a peer group **pressures** us to make **unhealthy decisions** for ourselves. If your peer group pressures you to try drugs, do crimes or be someone you really aren't, that's negative peer pressure. And that's a problem.

Questions to think about and discuss:

What can you do to deal with the problem of negative peer pressure?

Do you know any healthy ways to deal with problems?

What are Healthy Ways to Feel Good About Yourself?

activity adapted from Sense & Nonsense - AADAC Teacher's Resource

Peer pressure may convince you to make unhealthy decisions for yourself. Let's try to understand which decisions are healthy and which are unhealthy.

People like to feel good about themselves. Three important ways to feel good about yourself are:

- **Being friendly** - having friends and being a likable person.
- **Fitting in** - feeling comfortable with other people.
- **Being independent** - being able to do things for yourself.

It's good to be friendly, to fit in, and to be independent. The great challenge of life is to find healthy ways to feel good.

Try the *Healthy or Not?* exercise on the next page and decide what are healthy ways to feel good about yourself!