

Friends
come with
all types of



TOPIC: Understanding Peer Pressure

Using a simple but very effective visual, you will help your students explore the concept of peer pressure. They will “see” how peer pressure plays a role in how people act and treat each other. They will discuss and/or write about ways to reduce the effects of peer pressure.

GRADE: 3

TIME: 30 minutes

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will understand the meaning of peer pressure and how it can make people feel and behave
- Students will be able to recognize peer pressure when it’s happening to them
- Students will discuss appropriate responses to peer pressure

MATERIALS:

Balloon, clear water bottle

PREPARATION:

When students are not around, draw a smiley face on the inflated balloon with a marker and deflate the balloon.

ACTIVITY:

- With students seated in a circle, ask them to give examples of things friends have said to them that make them feel good. Inflate the balloon a little more with each statement.
- Ask students to describe what’s happening to the balloon.
- Now give examples of negative things people might say and let some air out for each. Ask students to notice the balloon now.
- Have students stand up. Tell them to “be like the balloon”, inflate (get bigger, stand taller, etc.) when they hear nice things and deflate if it’s not nice. Repeat some of the statements from earlier or make up new ones. Include examples of peer pressure, such as “Nobody wears shoes like that anymore; they’re for babies” or “You shouldn’t play with him; he’s weird.”
- Ask students to describe how they feel when they hear nice things or unkind things.
- Place the deflated balloon into the clear water bottle, securing the neck of the balloon around the neck of the bottle (so you can still blow air into the balloon, even though it is inside the bottle.)
- Explain to students that sometimes our friends and peers try to tell us how to act, what to wear, who to be friends with, etc. This is called “peer pressure.”

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- Ask students for examples of statements peers have said to them to get them to do something they did not want to do (not play with someone, wear different clothes, etc.). Try to inflate the balloon each time.
- Ask students “What is happening to the balloon? Why can’t it get bigger? Do you think the balloon person feels good about themselves?”
- Take a few answers, then explain that being trapped in the bottle is like peer pressure—the balloon person can’t expand into who they really are and do what makes them happy because other people are pressuring them.
- Ask students: Do people with disabilities or differences ever get teased? How do you think peer pressure can lead to this happening?
- Break students into small groups (3-4) and have them discuss what to do if someone is using peer pressure on them. Take a suggestion from each group and write them on a large piece of paper; hang in room so students can see it.

EVALUATION:

Individual writing activity in which students use their new vocabulary... "peer pressure":
Peer pressure is.../What I learned about peer pressure.../How I feel about peer pressure...

AN IMPORTANT NOTE FROM THE CROMWELL CENTER

Dear Teacher or Guidance Counselor:

Your brief feedback on this or on any of our other lesson plans is very important. It will enable us to share results with our grant funders and help obtain future funding, and any suggestions for improvements will help us fine tune the activities to best meet your needs.

To provide this valuable feedback, please go to the form on the bottom of this page on our website:
<http://cromwellcenter.org/teacher-resources/>.

Or, if you prefer, you can e-mail your comments to sgreenwood@cromwellcenter.org.

Thank you!