Dealing with Peer Pressure Lesson Plan

The aim of this lesson is for students to explore the skills needed to deal with peer pressure effectively with a focus on safe sex.

See our Teachers Information Pack for all the information you'll need to run this lesson with a focus on HIV and AIDS Transmission and Prevention.

Duration: 45 min

Target audience: Students aged 11–16 years

Curriculum areas:

England –
- Key Stage 3 / PSHE Personal Wellbeing / Decision Making and Managing Risk (2.2, 3d)
- Key Stage 4 / PSHE Personal Wellbeing / Decision Making and Managing Risk (2.2, 3d)

South Africa – Life Orientation

Learning outcomes:

- To understand what peer pressure is
- To explore how it feels to be put under pressure
- To think about how skills, values and knowledge that can help negotiate peer pressure
- To practice being assertive and resisting pressure
Lesson plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Explain to the class that everyone experiences pressure to do things we may not want to do and some of us will also have put pressure on others. Peer pressure can often cause people a lot of stress and anxiety and we all have to be careful about making decisions based on what others say because we might not make the right decisions for ourselves. Tell students they will learn to be assertive and increase their self esteem. Ask students:</td>
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<td>(5 min)</td>
<td>• When have you felt proud of yourself? What is self-esteem? How is self-esteem related to feeling proud? • When is it OK to make mistakes? If a friend makes a mistake, what would you say? • Have you ever done something because a friend did it, even though you knew it wasn’t right? • Have you ever tried to pressure a friend into doing something they didn’t want to do? • When you have choices to make, how do you decide if they’re good choices? Ask students to keep these experiences in mind while completing the following activities.</td>
<td>Read our Teachers’ Guide to Peer Pressure prior to class</td>
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<td>Group Activity 1</td>
<td>Divide participants into pairs and ask them to decide who will be #1 and who will be #2.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tell the #1’s they are going to put pressure on their partner. They must use any way they can to convince their partner to do what they ask. You can use either of the scenarios:</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Scenario A</strong> #1 must convince #2 to have unprotected sex.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Scenario B</strong> #1 must convince #2 to stick their tongue out. You can then discuss the issue of unprotected sex later in the lesson.</td>
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<td>Tell the #2’s they must find ways to resist and should not give in to the pressure under any circumstances.</td>
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<td>Give the groups 3-4 minutes to complete the role-play. Once you have stopped the activity ask each group how it felt to put pressure on their partner or to be under pressure.</td>
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<td>As the groups report back summarise their ideas on the board.</td>
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The following themes may come up:

- People with strong ideas about what they want can resist pressure more easily.
- People who feel good about themselves and their values can resist pressure more easily.
- People who have good information about the issue can use it to resist pressure.
- Cultural norms (such as gender roles in scenario A or not wanting to be rude in scenario B) can make resisting pressure difficult.

**Group Activity 2**  
*(10 min)*

Write the words *passive*, *assertive* and *aggressive* on the board. Ask students to give examples of each (verbal and non-verbal). Write these ideas under the corresponding word.

Ask the students which behaviour they think is the most constructive response to peer pressure and why. Write these ideas on the board.

Give out the quiz sheets and ask students to fill them in individually.

**Truce 2020 Quiz**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>(10 min)</th>
<th>Begin a whole class discussion by asking students what they think the advantages and disadvantages of being assertive, aggressive or passive are in response to peer pressure or pressure from a partner to have unprotected sex. Encourage students to think about what skills and information they would need to be assertive in this situation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condom Excuses  (5 min)</td>
<td>Hand out the worksheet and tell students to read through the answers to condom excuses before they leave the class.</td>
<td>No Glove No Love worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment for Learning/ Checking Understanding</td>
<td>Ask students to define the key terms Peer Pressure, Assertive, Aggressive and Passive.</td>
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<td>Suggested Homework Activities</td>
<td>Ask students to complete the activities on Peer Pressure on HIV360° on Rafi.ki</td>
<td><a href="http://www.v3.rafi.ki/resource/peer-pressure">www.v3.rafi.ki/resource/peer-pressure</a></td>
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<td>Differentiation</td>
<td>Support slower students by giving them more prompts during the group discussion. Why not stretch more advanced students by asking them to discuss the reasons why peers put each other under pressure to behave in a certain way.</td>
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Are you Passive, Assertive or Aggressive?

1. You get barged by someone in the queue, how do you respond?
   a) I let it go
   b) I address the person politely and try to get them to see my point of view
   c) I lose control and react aggressively

2. Someone steps on your trainers, what do you do?
   a) Nothing
   b) Inform the person and ask them to be mindful
   c) Start shouting and throw a punch

3. Someone comes into your room without asking, what do you do?
   a) Leave it and don’t complain
   b) Explain the importance of your own space and request that they ask before coming in next time
   c) Hurl abuse and complain loudly

4. A police officer stops and searches you. What do you do?
   a) Provide the information required and feel irritated but don’t say anything
   b) Co-operate politely but ask why am I being stopped
   c) Start mouthing off at the injustice

5. Someone eats your food. What do you do?
   a) Go hungry in silence
   b) Look for the person and ask them to give you money for what they ate
   c) Seek revenge, complain and eat everyone else’s food

6. You hear your mate has been talking about you behind your back. What do you do?
   a) I feel upset but continue as usual
   b) Put to your friend what you have heard
   c) Dislike the friend and tell them you can’t believe what they’ve done

7. You believe your teacher has marked you down. What do you do?
   a) Accept the grade and feel gutted
   b) Speak to the teacher. Ask them to go through the paper with you and explain why you got the mark you got
   c) Confront the teacher, demand why they are always giving you bad grades, ask them if they have a problem with you

8. There is someone playing their music too loud on the bus. What do you
do?

a) Leave it, it's not a big deal
b) Speak to the person, informing them it’s a public bus and ask them politely if they’d turn it down
c) Crank up the volume on your music

9. Two of your friends have a big argument and it has started to become physical – what do you do?

a) Nothing. Avoid it. Walk away
b) Decide whether you judge it safe to intervene. If you do intervene remain neutral and try to calm down both sides so they can talk about it rationally
c) Pick a side and egg on the fight

10. You hear that your friend is going to go fight – what do you do?

a) Worry quietly to myself and remain absent
b) Contact them and explore consequences with them
c) Spread the word…

If you answered mostly a) you are the silent one.
It’s good you stay out of trouble but you may be bottling things up and need to practice being assertive in some situations or your mates may start seeing you as a wet blanket who can be pushed around. Arguments and discussions aren’t always negative and handled the right way can lead to positive change.

If you answered mostly b) you are the sorter.
You are good at asserting yourself and helpful when it’s needed. Be careful not to be a ‘have a go hero’ in a conflict you are out of your depth in. Don’t be afraid to walk away if needs must.

If you answered mostly c) you are the shouter.
You’re certainly confident and confront situations head on. However these confrontations may be leading to more harmful consequences for yourself and others. Practice getting your point across without offending or hurting people.

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No Glove No Love: Responses to Condom Excuses

When you have sex, both you and your partner are responsible for your sexual health, which means protecting yourselves against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections including HIV. Some people may think it's OK to pressure their partner into having sex without a condom but it's not!

We might find it difficult to talk to our boyfriend or girlfriend about using a condom. We may feel embarrassed or scared about their response. So to help you, here’s a list of excuses and how you can answer to them.

**Excuse:** I'm healthy!

**Response:** It doesn’t matter how healthy and fit you are: if you have unprotected sex, you’re at risk of catching an STI including HIV & AIDS and having an unwanted pregnancy. It’s easy to think it won’t happen to you, but it can. You or your partner may not realise that you have an STI because many people have no noticeable symptoms. For example, 70% of women with Chlamydia and 50% of men with Chlamydia don’t have symptoms. You can’t tell whether someone’s got an infection by looking at them. Just because you can’t see any obvious symptoms, such as sores or warts, doesn’t mean you’re free from STIs.

**Excuse:** I like it natural

**Response:** Sex with a condom can feel natural. You may find that some condoms are more comfortable than others and may feel more ‘natural’. Some men find that using a condom can make their erections last longer. Having sex without a condom may seem natural, but it puts you and your partner(s) at risk of infection and pregnancy.

**Excuse:** I can't be bothered

**Response:** If you can't be bothered to use a condom then I can't be bothered to have sex with you. Using a condom is easier than having to visit a genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinic to treat an STI, which may have unpleasant symptoms.

**Excuse:** I don't like them

**Response:** Some people don't like condoms because they've had a bad experience with them in the past. Perhaps they couldn't keep an erection with a condom on, or they found them difficult to use. Other people are told that they shouldn't like condoms, so they never try them.
There are plenty of brands that offer a variety of condoms to suit your needs. You can both get involved in putting the condom on, so it becomes part of having sex together. There are textured, flavoured and coloured condoms, condoms that make you and your partner tingle or feel hot; condoms that make the penis look bigger or help you keep erect longer. All these condoms protect you from STIs and unwanted pregnancy.

**Excuse:** I lose sensitivity

**Response:** If condoms have made you lose sensitivity in the past, look for brands that sell light condoms. Some are very thin, and it barely feels as if you're wearing one.

Alternatively, you may want a textured condom to boost sensitivity for you and your partner. Some people prefer condoms that reduce sensitivity, which can be great if you're worried about coming too quickly.

**Excuse:** It affects my performance

**Response:** Some people find it hard to keep an erection with a condom on. This is often because the first time you try to use a condom is when you're just about to have sex. You find that your erection starts to go, you get worried about it, and then you lose your erection and associate it with the condom.

You're also anxious about what your sex partner might think. Practice putting on a condom when you're not about to have sex with someone. Learn to enjoy sex while wearing a condom. Try masturbating with a condom on to help you learn to stay hard and to have an orgasm. This way you'll feel confident about staying erect next time you have sex. Putting the condom on together can make it an enjoyable part of sex, rather than an interruption.

**Excuse:** It ruins the moment...

**Response:** Get used to putting on a condom and thinking about sex while you're doing it. Your partner could put it on for you, or you could watch your partner undress or masturbate as you're putting the condom on. This way, you'll stay aroused, and it will become part of sex, not an interruption.

**Excuse:** They hurt or 'they're too small'

**Response:** A condom that's too tight may feel uncomfortable. But condoms come in a range of sizes, so you can easily find one that fits properly. A condom can hold 14 pints of beer, or around 24 cans of soft drink, so it should fit around you or your partner's penis! Your GP, community contraceptive clinic or pharmacist can help you to find a brand that suits you.
Excuse: But I love you…

Response: Then you will help us to protect ourselves…

Excuse: 'I'm sterile or 'I've had a vasectomy'

Response: Only a small number of men under 30 are sterile, so if someone tells you that they are, they may not be telling the truth. Whether a man is sterile or not, he can still get and pass on STIs by having unprotected sex.

Excuse: I've got no change for the machine…

Response: Keep condoms at home and always carry them with you when you go out, so that you're always prepared. This way, if your partner hasn't got money to buy them you'll have some with you.

Excuse: I am on the pill, so we don't need to use one.

Response: I'd like to use it anyway. It will help to protect us from infections we may not realise we have.

Excuse: We've been seeing each other for a while…

Response: Many STIs, such as Chlamydia, don't have any noticeable symptoms and can lie undetected for a long time. Even though you may have been with your partner for a while, you still may not be risk free. Discuss your sexual history with your partner and get checked at a sexual health (GUM) clinic before you stop using condoms.

Excuse: I'm allergic to them…

Response: Only a very small number of people are allergic to condoms, so don't always trust someone who tells you that they are. An allergy is not a good excuse to have unprotected sex, because there are condoms that don't cause allergies.

People who are allergic to condoms may react to:
- latex that condoms are made from
- chemicals that are used to manufacture condoms
- spermicide that's added to most condoms to increase their effectiveness as a contraceptive. The spermicide is usually on the outside of the condom, so the person who reacts is not the person wearing it, but their partner
If you or your partner is allergic, you could try:

- non-latex condoms made from polyurethane or polyisoprene, which don't cause allergic reactions
- using condoms that have no added spermicide

**Excuse:** Don’t you trust me?

**Response:** Trust isn't the point. People can have infections without realising it.

**Excuse:** Just this once

**Response:** Once is all it takes.

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[http://www.avert.org/condom.htm](http://www.avert.org/condom.htm)
Teachers’ Guide to Peer Pressure

This teachers’ resource gives an overview of the key terms used in HIV360°’s Peer Pressure lesson plan. The resource includes a guide to having an effective confrontation as well as a students’ bill of rights. You may like to print these and put them up in your classroom.

Key Terms

**Peer pressure** refers to peers (people who are part of the same social group) having influence over other people in that group. When we use the term peer pressure we are usually talking about young people influencing their friends or class mates to do things they might not want to do. For example, experimenting with harmful drug use or having unprotected sex. Peer pressure can damage young people’s self esteem.

**Self esteem** is more than simply feeling happy. Self esteem means recognising your accomplishments (what you have done well) and your potential (what you can do in the future).

Young people respond to peer pressure and other conflicts in different ways. The three main behaviour types are described below.

**Characteristics of passive behaviour:**
- Don’t express feelings or opinions
- Apologise for things that aren’t their fault
- Don’t respect their own rights
- Avoid conflict, even if this makes them distressed

**Characteristics of aggressive behaviour:**
- Don’t respect other people’s feelings or opinions
- Don’t apologise even if they are in the wrong
- Don’t respect the rights of others
- Choose conflict over their own discomfort

**Characteristics of assertive behaviour:**
- Respect the feelings and opinions of others and themselves
- Apologise if they are in the wrong but allow others to take responsibility for their own actions as well
- Respect their own rights and the rights of others
- Deal with conflict healthily (see our guide to effective confrontation below)
How to Have an Effective Confrontation

1. Name your feeling

I feel frustrated/disappointed...

2. Identify the specific circumstances

If you don’t look at me when we talk...
When you let me down...

3. Say how the circumstances affect you

Because then I feel I’m not interesting enough...
Because it seems you don’t care about me...

4. If possible, say how you would like the situation to change
Students’ Bill of Rights

I have the right
To be me
To affection
To love
To support
To ask for help
To be depressed sometimes
To be nervous
To make mistakes
To be listened to
To say what I feel, want and need
To be silly sometimes
To show my feelings
To time on my own
To time with my friends
To time with my family
To make my own decisions
To my own values and opinions
To respect
To ask questions
To be angry
To be concerned about those I love
To time for school, work, sport and hobbies
To say NO