

Peer Pressure

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What is peer pressure?

Peer pressure is feeling like you have to do something just because all your friends are doing it. There's a lot of pressure to fit in, wear the same clothes as everyone else and do what they're doing. Peer pressure is not always doing what your friends at school do, it might also be wanting to copy what other kids your age do.

Will I be left out if I don't do what everyone else is doing?

Not necessarily. People should like you for who you are and respect your decisions. If they won't be friends with you because you don't want to join in, then they are not true friends.

It might seem like everyone else is doing things that you are not, but sometimes that's not the case. Some people like to talk about things that they get up to, like smoking or drinking, but they might be saying that to look cool.

How does peer pressure affect me?

If you are doing things because your mates are, or changing what you normally do to fit in, then you are being affected by peer pressure. Some of things you might feel pressure to do are:

- Wear the same clothes as your mates.
- Drink alcohol, smoke or take drugs.
- Change your friends because your other mates don't like them.
- Bunk off school.
- Have a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Start having sex.

What can I do about peer pressure?

If you don't want to do something that your mates want you to do, it can be hard to stand up to them. You shouldn't have to do anything that you don't want to do. If your mates are really your friends they should respect you and not make you do things that make you uncomfortable.

If you feel that you are being forced to do things that you don't want to, or are worried about not fitting in, you can talk to us and we can help you.

Extra links

Children First for Health (CFfH) is a child-centred health and hospital resource, supporting teenagers, children and their families. Visit www.childrenfirst.nhs.uk.