

TRUTH SPOTLIGHT

on peer refusal skills

Refusal skills are strategies for handling peer pressure and are ways for teens to say no to something they don't want to do.

WHY PEER REFUSAL SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT

It can be hard for youth to say “no” to their friends. Youth often don't have the words to make the choices they really want to make when faced with peer pressure. Help your kids have the words ahead of time. Practice peer refusal skills!

Peer refusal skills steps

1. Ask questions: What will be going on?
2. Name the problem: It sounds like...That's...
3. Tell what could happen: If you do that then...
4. Suggest another route: Why don't we ..., instead?
5. (Name), listen to me...
6. I'm going to_____, if you'd like to join me...

Scenarios to practice

- **At a party:** a group gets into the liquor cabinet and starts to pass around a bottle of vodka.
- **At school:** You walk into the bathroom during 4th period and see your friend and another student sharing a vape in a stall. Your friend asks if you want to try some.
- **Online:** A friend has access to online gambling and asks if you want to play some slots or place some bets on a sports game.
- **In relationships:** Your friends have been saying some mean things about another student. They want you to join in with saying these things.

Final tips to share with youth

- You always have the right to say "no". It's okay to blame me as your parent or guardian or another trusted adult for why you say no.
- Be assertive in your body language, words, and tone.
- If someone is not accepting "no" for an answer, it is okay to walk away.

