



ERIK'S CAUSE

*Kids like Erik are dying every week –
YOU CAN HELP!*

Help Stop the Choking Game

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CHOKING GAME DISCUSSION POINTS

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Along with the Educational Video, *Help Stop the Choking Game*, you may use this Guide as a parent talking with your child at home or as a teacher with your students in class. It is very important that the atmosphere feel open, nonjudgmental and safe. Make sure the kids understand they won't be in trouble for anything they share or any questions they ask.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Get their first and general reaction to the video.
2. What did they think and feel about what they just saw and heard?
3. Do they have questions or want any clarifications about the video?
4. Have they heard about the Choking Game before today? If yes, what did they hear about the Choking Game? Where? From whom?
5. Why do they think kids would want to do this?

TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

1. **What is positive peer pressure?**

Peer pressure is the influence to go along with the beliefs and actions of one's peers. Peer pressure may be positive when it inspires a person to do something worthwhile. Positive peer pressure uses encouraging words and expressions.

Friends who are a positive influence can use peer pressure to get a preteen to study more, join in on an extracurricular activity or sports team, or run for student office. It's even possible that peer pressure can encourage a teen to be more responsible or polite to others.

It is how we choose to react to peer pressure that defines who we are as individuals. Are we a leader or a follower?

2. **What is negative peer pressure?**

Negative peer pressure tries to get a person to do something harmful. It may involve threats, bribes, teasing and name-calling.

Ask if friends have already applied pressure to get the preteen/teen to do something he/she didn't want to do, e.g., like smoking, being mean to another child at school or dare them into something like the choking game.

Ask them how they handled the situation or if he/she has questions about dealing with peer pressure.

MORE QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think we allow ourselves to be influenced by our friends?
2. Sometimes our friends influence us to do things that may be right ... or may be wrong. How do you know how to tell right from wrong? Who defines this for you (your parents, the law, the media, your friends, your school)?
3. What could the results be if we said "No" to our friends who are trying to influence us to do wrong?
4. What qualities do you look for in a friend?
5. Are friends who try to pressure us really treating us like friends?
6. Can we have an impact on those around us? (Of course.) How can you be a better influence on your friends?
7. Are you a follower or a leader in your groups of friends? What makes you one?
8. How can we create situations of positive peer pressure?

WRAP UP

Peer pressure is hard. Just saying NO is sometimes harder when you are in the situation. And that is the key. Sometimes the answer is not getting in the situation in the first place. Many of us get ourselves into tough situations and we don't know what to do.

Refusal skills are communication strategies that help a person say "No" effectively:

1. **State Reasons** – you don't have to apologize or defend your position, but if you wish to, state your reasons clearly.
2. **Don't Agree to Meet the Other Person Halfway** – giving in a little is still giving in, and it leaves you open to continued pressure.
3. **Use Strong Body Language** – look the person in the eye when you are speaking to show that you are serious.
4. **Suggest Alternatives** – try to interest the other person in doing something else that's more comfortable for you.
5. **Walk Away** – if all else fails, leave the situation.

Plan Ahead:

1. Talk to someone you trust about people who pressure you.
2. Trusted adults can help you avoid these situations in the future

Contact us at www.erikscause.org for more information