

Refusal Skills

So, what do you do when someone pressures you to try alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs?

It is important to note that each person is different and what works for one person may not work for you. You need to review this list and choose a few that you are comfortable using. Practice with your family to gain confidence!

Attention! With some changes, these skills can also be used to resist the pressure to be a part of bullying!



1. Say "NO THANKS."

It's simple, but some forget to try it. This often works when you are faced with friendly or teasing pressure.



2. Give a Reason, Fact, or Excuse.

The excuse needs to get you away from the person or situation. Practice an excuse so that you won't hesitate and will sound confident. Have a code word to use with your parents. Text them the word and have them call to say you need to come home.

"My mom just called. Sorry..I gotta go. Something's going on at home."

"My parents would ground me for life."

"I forgot that I have a doctor's appt. this afternoon."

"I already lost my phone privileges. If they find me doing this stuff, I won't be able to go anywhere for a month!"



3. Walk Away.

One of the most effective refusal skills is just to walk away.

You may feel obligated to stand and face "the enemy" but you need to just leave. Say no and walk away while saying it.



4. Change the Subject.

You can offer another alternative activity: "No. Let's go play ball instead," "Let's go get a snack at my house. I'm hungry," or "I wanted to play my Xbox this afternoon."



5. Use Humor.

"No thanks. This stuff stunts my growth. I want to be tall to play ball."

"Man, I need all the brain cells I can get. No thanks."

"Pot makes you stupid and gives you yellow teeth..I'll pass."



6. Broken Record or Repeated Refusal.

Keep saying "no" over and over again. It will buy you some time to use another refusal technique or be an annoyance.



7. Cold Shoulder or Ignore.

Avoid directly confronting the person. Turn your shoulder and talk to someone else or just ignore them like you don't hear them.



8. Avoid the Situation.

Common sense tells you the places and times where there may be problems with peer pressure. Avoid these situations.



9. Strength in numbers.

The truth is simple. If you surround yourself with friends that make good choices, then you will too. The opposite is true as well. One of the most important choices you can make is the choice of your friends. Choose to hang out with non-users.

Important Points to Remember:

Even at a young age, you can be a great example for other kids when you say 'no' to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Respect yourself and your family by not causing harm to your body. Your parents are relying on you to be responsible. Show them that they can trust you. Resist being with people that are making bad choices. Become active in things to meet new people and learn new skills. Don't be afraid to ask for help from someone you trust!