



TEEN

How to Talk to Your Teen About Peer Pressure: A Step-by-Step Guide

Peer pressure conversations don't have to be awkward. Use these scripts and strategies to talk with your teen, not at them, in a way that actually sticks.

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Talking about peer pressure with your teen doesn't have to feel like a lecture. This guide gives you the words and steps to make it a real conversation, one they'll actually listen to.

Start the conversation casually, not confrontationally

- **Car rides.** Bring it up when you're side by side, not face to face.
- **TV or movies.** Use a scene about peer pressure as a natural opener.
- **Current events.** Ask 'What would you do?' about a news story involving teens.

What to say (and what not to say)

- ☐ Tell them you trust their judgment, and say why.
- ☐ Role-play scenarios: 'What would you say if someone said ____?'
- ☐ Avoid 'When I was your age...' (they'll tune out instantly).
- ☐ Name the pressure: 'That sounds like X kind of pressure, how does it feel to you?'
- ☐ Give them an exit script: 'You can always text me X and I'll call with an excuse.'
- ☐ Admit you don't have all the answers (it builds credibility).
- ☐ End with: 'What's one thing I can do to help you with this?'

Watch for these openings, they look like closed doors

Teens often test the waters with vague comments. When they say things like 'This kid at school...' or 'I heard about someone who...', they're usually talking about themselves or their circle.

THE TWO-QUESTION RULE

When your teen shares anything about peer pressure, ask exactly two open-ended questions before offering advice. Example: 'How did that make you feel?' followed by 'What do you think you'll do next?' This keeps them talking instead of shutting down.

When to step in (and when to step back)

- ☐ Step in if friends pressure them into illegal/dangerous acts.
- ☐ Step back if it's about harmless style choices (clothes, music).
- ☐ Step in if they seem anxious or withdrawn after time with certain friends.
- ☐ Step back if they handle a situation well, and tell them you noticed.

You won't get this perfect every time, and neither will they. What matters is keeping the door open, so they walk through it when it really counts.