

Unit 2 >>> Deal with peer pressure

Aim: To teach students to deal with peer pressure and know when to ignore it.

1 Lead-in

- Start the lesson by asking students some or all of the questions below. Ask the questions quickly so that they don't have too much time to consider their answers. Encourage them to write down one-word answers.

- Which famous person would you like to look like?
- Which are the best headphones on the market?
- Which is the coolest band at the moment?
- What style of jeans is fashionable?
- What brand of trainers do you like best?
- What digital gadget would you most like to have?
- What's your favourite lesson?
- What's the best social networking site?

When students have answered the questions, encourage them to compare their answers in small groups or with a partner. Find out from students the kinds of answers they have and see how many of them have similar or the same answers as their peers.

- Now write the following two lists in two columns on each side of the board:

parents	social networking
uncles or aunts	fashion
friends and peers	music
cousins	school work
grandparents	your friendships
teachers	life choices

Ask students to match the people on the left to the subjects on the right. Who would give the best or worst advice? Why?/Why not?

- Elicit students' answers and draw some lines from person/people to subject. Discuss as a class how the advice from the different groups of people might differ. (*The older generation might give more sensible advice, whereas the younger generation will be more concerned with conforming and looking cool.*)
- Lastly, get students to identify who would give the best advice of all about each area and to explain why.

2 Choose a scenario

- Ask students to work in pairs and choose one of the three scenarios, A–C.
- First, encourage students to discuss these questions:
 - What is the problem/issue?
 - What would be the consequences of following each opinion?
 - Which advice/opinion should students listen to? Which should they ignore?
 - Who is making each statement?
 Ask students to draw a small pie chart showing the level of influence from each person (refer to Student's Book page 22 for an example).

- Explain to students that they should list the consequences of listening to each person and decide whose advice or opinion is best. They should then decide how the pie chart should look.
- Encourage students to refer to the Reflection point.

3 Reflection point

- Point out to students that although their peers are important because they spend a lot of time with them, it is important to be able to identify when they are giving good advice and when the advice is not so good. Make clear to students that in most cases it is parents, older relatives or teachers who actually care the most about them, not their peers. Explain that being accepted in a peer group is important, but they should never feel pressure to do things that will have negative consequences.

4 Class discussion

- Put each pair with another pair that chose the same scenario. Ask them to compare their pie charts and exchange ideas about how the pie chart should look. Ask students: *Have you ever given or received similar advice from your peers? How would you feel if your peers gave you this kind of advice?*
- Discuss the following questions with students:
 - Why do you think we are influenced by our peers?
 - How important is it for you to feel like part of a group?
 - Do your peers ever give you good, sensible advice?
 - How easy is it to resist peer pressure?
 - Do you think peer pressure can ever be a good thing? Why?/Why not?

5 Work alone

- Ask students to choose a second scenario from A–C and approach the problem on their own. Encourage them to follow the steps they used in section 2.
- When students have finished, invite individuals to stand up and show their pie chart and explain how it should be and why.

6 Extend

- Explain to students that one way to learn to cope with peer pressure is to accept and respect differences. Ask students to work with a partner. They should try to find six things that they don't have in common. For example, an actor or film that one of them likes but the other really doesn't. Suggest students use the following categories: fashions, songs or music, places, pictures, possible job choices in the future, free-time activities, sports, attitude to studies. Encourage students to present their reasons for liking or disliking the things without trying to persuade their partner. Find out from students the following week if any friends changed their minds about the likes and dislikes they shared.