

Say “YES” to a Healthy Lifestyle



Discovery
EDUCATION



GRADE
RANGE
4–6

A LAB-BASED EXPERIENCE | EDUCATOR GUIDE

ASK, LISTEN, LEARN: BUILDING THE SKILLS TO SAY “NO”

Objectives

- Analyze the impact of goal setting, peer pressure, and decision-making strategies on ability to refuse underage drinking.
- Evaluate how brain development during adolescence can influence decision-making.
- Interpret data to identify which factors most effectively support healthy decision-making.
- Share recommendations for peers on how to make safe choices regarding alcohol, based on analysis of behavioral variables.

Introduction

What factors help kids say “NO” to underage drinking when they feel peer pressure? Are there reasons to explain why some kids struggle more than others in the same situation?

In this Virtual Lab, students step into the role of a school counselor developing advice for students on how to say “NO” to alcohol in situations when peers suggest it. Using a simulated survey, students will investigate the factors that influence the likelihood of refusing alcohol versus engaging in underage drinking as they work to understand which behaviors help kids say “NO” to underage drinking.

National Health Education Standards

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.
 - 1.8.3 Analyze behaviors that reduce or prevent illnesses and injuries.
- Standard 2: Analyze influences that affect health and well-being of self and others.
 - 2.8.1 Analyze the interrelationships between various influences on health and well-being.
- Standard 5: Decision-Making - Use a decision-making process to support health and well-being of self and others.
 - 5.8.5 Identify supports and barriers that affect decision making at individual, interpersonal, community, societal, and environmental levels.

- Standard 6: Goal-Setting - Use a goal-setting process to support health and well-being of self and others.
 - 6.8.6 Examine the goal-setting process and outcomes on health and well-being.
- Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors - Demonstrate practices and behaviors to support health and well-being of self and others.
 - 7.8.2 Analyze practices and behaviors that support personal and community health and well-being.

Next Generation Science Standards

- MS-LS1-8: Gather and synthesize information that sensory receptors respond to stimuli by sending messages to the brain for immediate behavior or storage as memories.

Prepare for the Virtual Lab

Discussion

Before launching the Virtual Lab, host a discussion with students to help them engage with the topic. Choose one of these discussion questions or create your own.

Intro Questions

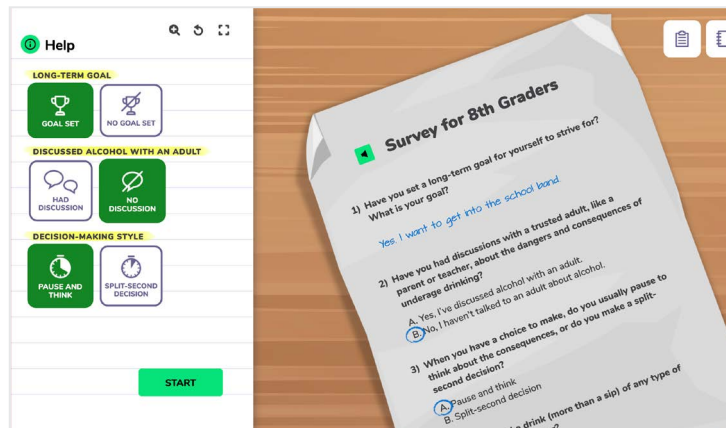
- What is likely to influence you to say “NO” to underage drinking?
- What are some reasons you think kids may engage in underage drinking?
- What is peer pressure?
- Based on what you know about peer pressure, what do you think positive peer pressure is?
Negative peer pressure?

Student Worksheet

The [student worksheet](#) includes questions to check understanding and a section for recording data. Present the student worksheet prior to the activity so that students can focus on the intended learning outcomes and investigate with a purpose. Students can answer the questions during or after the Virtual Lab.

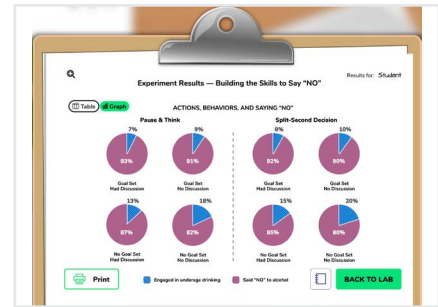
Complete the Experiment

- Whether students complete the lab independently or you present it to them, encourage students to choose variables thoughtfully and to hypothesize the results. To gain insights, students should adjust a single variable at a time for a set of trials.



In the lab, you can:

- Select variables
- Observe an animation for each trial
- View and analyze results through tables and graphs on the Clipboard
- Gain key understandings and think critically through questions in the Lab Notes
- Read a helpful hint in the Help section



Troubleshooting

If students need help while performing the lab, try these tips:

- Talk through each variable and what it means.
- Read the Help section.
- Look at a Results pop up together (appears after each trial) and talk about what the results mean.
- Remind students to toggle from table to graph in the Clipboard.
- Ask them to reference the Lab Notes if they get stuck: the questions could help guide them.

Lab Notes: Things I Know [PREVIOUS] [NEXT]

3. Peer pressure is when people your age try to influence you to act a certain way or make certain choices. Peer pressure can be positive or negative. It plays a big role in decision-making for kids and teens.

Scenario: Some friends are at a party. A few people in the group are encouraging others to drink alcohol even though everyone is underage. Drag and drop the friend responses below to sort them.

Positive Peer Pressure

- "Let's stick to soda—we don't need alcohol to have fun."

Negative Peer Pressure

- "If you don't drink, we're not hanging out with you anymore."
- "It's illegal. It's not worth getting in trouble for one drink."
- "People are drinking, let's take off."
- "It's just one drink—you won't get caught."
- "Drinking is cool! Just try it!"

[Print] [BACK TO LAB]

After the Experiment

Ask students to share what they discovered about the behaviors that help kids say "NO" to underage drinking.

Results

Students will discover:

- Having a long-term goal helps kids say "NO" to underage drinking.
- Having discussions with adults helps kids say "NO" to underage drinking.
- Learning to pause and think before making a decision can help kids say "NO" to underage drinking.
- The more of these recommendations a student follows, the more likely they are to say "NO" to underage drinking.

Lab Notes

- The Things I Know questions nudge students toward key takeaways of the lab. The My Thoughts section promotes critical thinking. Consider discussing the questions from the Lab Notes as a class or in small groups. Expand the conversation using the facts and prompts below.

Things I Know

1. If you were a school counselor, what advice would you give your students to help them say "NO" to underage drinking? Use evidence from the survey data to determine your advice. Drag all of your advice to the list.

Correct answers:

- Make a long-term goal.
- Pause and think about the consequences of your decisions.
- Discuss the risks of underage drinking with an adult you trust.

Facts:

- Making long-term goals can help guide you toward good decisions and support you in making responsible choices.
- Pausing and thinking about the consequences of your decisions can help you make decisions you feel good about.
- Discussing the risks of underage drinking with a trusted adult can help you feel empowered and consider the decision in a safe space.

2. A person’s pre-frontal cortex is still developing until their mid-twenties! That means kids may need extra help with pre-frontal cortex tasks, including decision-making, planning, and navigating social situations. In the data, how does having a discussion with a trusted adult prepare the students to make a real-time decision when alcohol is offered?
- A. It doesn’t impact whether a student says “NO” to underage drinking.
 - B. It makes a student more likely to say “NO” to underage drinking.
 - C. It makes a student less likely to say “NO” to underage drinking.

Correct answers:

- B. It makes a student more likely to say “NO” to underage drinking.

Facts:

- Preparing ahead of time can reduce anxiety and can help kids have confidence to say “NO.”

3. Peer pressure is when people your age try to influence you to act a certain way or make certain choices. Peer pressure can be positive or negative, and it plays a big role in decision-making for kids and teens.

Scenario: Some friends are at a party. A few people in the group are encouraging others to drink alcohol even though everyone is underage. Drag and drop the friend responses below to sort them.

Correct answers:

- “Let’s stick to soda—we don’t need alcohol to have fun.” Positive Peer Pressure
- “If you don’t drink, we’re not hanging out with you anymore.” Negative Peer Pressure
- “It’s illegal. It’s not worth getting in trouble for one drink.” Positive Peer Pressure
- “It’s just one drink—you won’t get caught.” Negative Peer Pressure
- “Drinking is cool! Just try it!” Negative Peer Pressure
- “People are drinking, let’s take off.” Positive Peer Pressure

Facts:

- Positive peer pressure encourages healthy choices like saying “NO” to underage drinking.
- Negative peer pressure encourages kids to make unsafe and risky choices, like drinking alcohol.

- There are so many ways to say “NO” to underage drinking. Thinking of things to say beforehand and practicing them can help you make the safe choice if you’re offered a drink.

Look at these possible responses to an offer of alcohol. Choose the three that you are most likely to use.

Correct answer: Student answers may vary. There are no correct or incorrect answers.

My Thoughts

- Why do you think having a goal can help kids say “NO” to underage drinking? What goal (or goals) do you have?

Possible answer: Having a goal can help kids say “NO” to underage drinking because it gives them a clear reason to make healthy choices and avoid behaviors that could interfere with their future. A goal that I have is... [insert goal here].

Extension: Can you think of a time when you said “NO” to something because of a goal you had or a commitment you made? Were you glad you said “NO?” Was it worth it?

- What can you do to remind yourself to pause and think when you’re in a tricky situation?

Possible answer: I can remind myself to pause and think by taking a deep breath before making a decision.

Extension: In what types of situations do you find it most difficult to pause and think?

- What questions do you have about alcohol that you can discuss with a trusted adult?

Possible answer: Accept any relevant questions.

Extension: How can talking with a trusted adult help you respond to peer pressure?

Student Worksheet Answers

1. What is peer pressure, and how can it influence a kid's choices about alcohol?

Answer: Peer pressure is when people your age try to influence you to act or make choices in a certain way. It can influence a kid to drink alcohol if they feel pressured to fit in.

2. What is the difference between positive peer pressure and negative peer pressure?

Answer: Positive peer pressure encourages healthy and safe choices, like saying "NO" to alcohol. Negative peer pressure pushes someone to make unsafe choices, such as drinking alcohol even when they know it is not a good idea.

3. In this Virtual Lab, you used survey data to see what helps kids say “NO” to underage drinking. Which factors were most helpful?

Answer: The most helpful factors were having long-term goals, pausing and thinking before making a decision, and talking with a trusted adult about the risks of alcohol.

4. The prefrontal cortex helps with decision-making, planning, and self-control. This region of the brain is still developing in kids. How does this affect how kids respond to peer pressure?

Answer: Because the prefrontal cortex is still developing, kids may find it harder to pause, think about the future, and resist pressure in the moment. This means they may need extra support and strategies to help them make safe decisions.

5. Based on your results, how can having a plan or practicing what to say ahead of time help a kid in a real-life situation involving alcohol?

Answer: Having a plan or practicing what to say ahead of time can help kids feel more prepared and more confident. This may make it easier to say “NO” quickly and make a safe choice when faced with peer pressure.

Additional Resources

For digital classroom resources and videos that build kids' confidence for making responsible choices like saying “NO” to underage drinking and underage marijuana use, while learning about peer pressure, decision-making, and goal setting, visit <https://asklistenlearn.org/teachers/discovery-ed/>.