Goals:

- Understanding the impact of peer pressure
- Building community within a classroom of learners

OBJECTIVES:

- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health and goal setting
- Students will reflect on pressure from peers and their home situation
- Students will learn to identify strategies to cope with peer pressure and learn what’s important to their future success.
- Students will communicate through written and visual language to express

NATIONAL STANDARDS:

- Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.
- Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
- Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information

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RESOURCES:

This lesson was inspired by the lesson that Kyle Schwartz used to understand her students by asking them to complete the sentence: I wish my teacher knew...


ADDITIONAL WEBSITES AND INFORMATION:

Confidence in Your skin = Confidence to Withstand Peer Pressure:

http://asklistenlearn.org/confidence-in-your-skin-confidence-to-withstand-peer-pressure/

How to help kids deal with peer pressure:

http://asklistenlearn.org/how-to-help-kids-deal-with-peer-pressure/

Peer Pressure from National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism:

http://www.thecoolsport.gov/pressures.aspx
MATERIALS:
Books to prompt class discussion or as an extension:
- *The Berenstain Bears and the In-Crowd* by Stan Berenstain (While this book is young for class reading, it can be used to show short examples)
- *Blubber* by Judy Blume
- *Fourth Grade Rats* by Jerry Spinelli
- *Crash* by Jerry Spinelli
- *Stargirl* by Jerry Spinelli
- *Bully* by Patricia Polacco
- *The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier
- *Confessions of a Former Bully*, by Trudy Ludwig and Beth Adams

TEACHER GUIDE:
Lead a classroom discussion about peer pressure with these questions for the whole group:
- How would you define peer pressure in your own words?
- Why do you think people are easily swayed by the influence of friends or classmates?
- Why is it hard to stand up to friends?
- What advice would you give a friend who is dealing with peer pressure?
- Are there any examples you can think of where peer pressure could have a positive effect?

Introduce the idea of mentors and trusted adults as a strategy to cope with difficult situations.

Define what a mentor is and ask students if they feel as if they have anyone in their lives they consider to be a mentor or someone who they look up to as a role model. Teachers can share an anecdote about how having a mentor has helped them during a difficult time or to make a choice. Alternatively, you can read a book (or excerpt) that features a student facing peer pressure.

Ask students to reflect on their own lives – at school and at home. Are there times where they felt influenced to make decisions that were not healthy or responsible? What happened? Was there anything they would do differently now?

*(Or: Ask students to reflect on times that they have observed peer pressure in school. What happened?)*

Provide an index card to each student. They should write the phrase: I wish my teacher knew...and then complete the sentence. *(Discuss the fact that these cards will be kept confidential unless the student would like to share their reflection.)* Depending on the students, teachers may want to show examples from the original lesson by Kyle Schwartz as models.

NOTES: