



# How to Resist Peer Pressure



## THE CHALLENGE

“In middle school I was known as a social reject, and that hurt. So when I started high school, I changed my appearance and attitude—and not for the better. I was so desperate for friends that I gave in to peer pressure, just so my schoolmates would like me.”—Jennifer, 16.\*

Do you face peer pressure? If so, this article will help you to deal with it.

\* Some names in this article have been changed.



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

**Peer pressure can make good people do bad things.**

“Bad associations spoil useful habits.”—1 Corinthians 15:33.

*“It’s as if we know a certain course is wrong, but when confronted with the situation, our emotions take over and we become people pleasers!”—Dana.*

**Peer pressure is not just pressure put on you by peers.**

“When I wish to do what is right, what is bad is present with me.”—Romans 7:21.

*“The pressure that I feel often comes from me; really, I’m the one who desires the things that my peers are talking about and that they make seem so exciting.”—Diana.*

**Facing up to peer pressure is an accomplishment that you can be proud of.**

“Maintain a good conscience.”—1 Peter 3:16.

*“At one time it was very difficult for me to face up to peer pressure, but now I’m not afraid to be different and I’m firm in my decisions. Nothing beats going to sleep at night with a clean conscience.”—Carla.*

When you cave in to peer pressure, you become like a mindless robot because you allow other people to control you. Why let them have that kind of power?—Romans 6:16.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

When faced with peer pressure to do wrong, try the following:

**Weigh the consequences.** Ask yourself, ‘What if I give in to the pressure and then get caught? What will my parents think of me? What will I think of myself?’—*Bible principle: Galatians 6:7.*

*“My parents ask me questions such as, ‘If you were to give in, what might happen to you?’ They help me to see how peer pressure can lead me down the wrong road.”*  
—Olivia.

**Strengthen your convictions.** Ask yourself, ‘Why do I believe that this course is harmful, either to myself or to others?’—*Bible principle: Hebrews 5:14.*

*“When I was little, I would just say no or give a brief reply, but now I can give a good explanation of why I will or will not do something. I am firm in my beliefs regarding right and wrong. The answer comes from me—not anyone else.”*—Anita.

**Think about your identity.** Ask yourself, ‘What kind of person do I want to be?’ Then think about the pressure you are facing and ask, ‘What would that kind of person do in this situation?’—*Bible principle: 2 Corinthians 13:5.*

*“I’m content with who I am, so I don’t care as much what others think of me. Besides, most people like being with the real me.”*—Alicia.

**Think beyond the present.** If you are in school, in a few years—or even months—the very people you are trying to impress may not even be in your life.

*“I looked at a school photo, and I didn’t even remember some of my classmates’ names. But when I was in school with them, their opinion mattered to me more than staying true to my beliefs. How foolish!”*—Dawn, now 22.

**Prepare.** The Bible says: “Know how you should answer each person.”—Colossians 4:6.

*“My parents help my sister and me to think of scenarios, and then we act them out so that when we face a real-life situation, we’ll know what to do.”*—Christine. ■

## KEY SCRIPTURES

“Whatever a person is sowing, this he will also reap.”  
—Galatians 6:7.

“Mature people . . . have their powers of discernment trained to distinguish both right and wrong.”—Hebrews 5:14.

“Keep proving what you yourselves are.”—2 Corinthians 13:5.



JESSICA

“How you feel about yourself has a huge impact on how you deal with peer pressure. If you have self-confidence, you don’t care what others think about you—and peer pressure suddenly becomes unimportant.”



KAYLEY

“If you have low self-worth, you might strive to fit in with others just to feel good about yourself. But if you’re confident with who you are, it’s easier to recognize peer pressure for what it is and then ignore it.”