

# Conformity in teens assignment

Psychology



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Many studies of young people show that if a person's friends engage in a behavior - everything from cigarette smoking to drinking alcohol to shoplifting to sexual activity - an adolescent is highly likely to conform to his or her friends' behaviors and try these activities. The alternative is for the youngness to seek different friends with values more in line with his own. Often, however, the desire to be part of a group and the fear of social isolationism's it more appealing to change behaviors than to seek other friends.

Attitudes toward conformity are of particular interest in community health, where conformity may influence the willingness of people to engage in activities such as rehabilitation programs. The tendency to conform to a group's values is of interest to outreach workers because social networks may provide a link to reaching and influencing a wide range of people involved in drug abuse and high-risk sexual activity.

If key members of a group accept messages about how to change behavior to reduce risky activities such as needle sharing, drinking and driving, and unsafe sexual behavior, other group members often follow their lead and interchange their behavior also. Although society tends to focus on teenagers' needs to conform and follow fads, and many parents worry about how the desire to conform will influence decisions their children must make, issues surrounding conformity continue into adult life.