

Peer pressure essay sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Peer pressure is an influence when a peer group, or individual encourages another person to change their values, or behaviors to suit other peoples convenience include membership groups, in which individuals are “formally” members (such as political parties and trade unions), or social cliques in which membership is not clearly defined. They may also recognize dissociative groups with which they would not wish to associate, and thus they behave adversely, in ways concerning that group’s behaviors. In general, peer pressure is a form of social pressure by a group for one to take action in order to be accepted. Peers become an important influence on behaviour during adolescence, and peer pressure has been called a hallmark of an adolescent experience. Peer conformity in young people is most pronounced with respect to style, taste, appearance, ideology, and values. Peer pressure is commonly associated with episodes of adolescent risk taking (such as delinquency, drug abuse, sexual behaviours, and reckless driving) because these activities commonly occur in the company of peers. Affiliation with friends who engage in risk behaviors has been shown to be a strong predictor of an adolescent’s own behavior.

Peer pressure can also have positive effects when youth are pressured by their peers toward positive behaviour, such as volunteering for charity or excelling in academics. The importance of peers declines upon entering adulthood. While socially accepted kids often have the most opportunities and the most positive experiences, research shows that being in the popular crowd may also be a risk factor for mild to moderate deviant behaviour. Popular adolescents are the most socialized into their peer groups and thus are vulnerable to peer pressures, such as behaviours usually reserved for

those of a greater maturity and understanding. Socially accepted kids are often accepted for the sheer fact that they conform well to the norms of teen culture, good and bad aspects included. Popular adolescents are more strongly associated with their peer groups' likes such as alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Some studies also show that many popular students also make lower grades than less socially accepted kids.

This is possibly due to the fact that popular students may spend more time worrying about their social life rather than studying. Although there are a few risk factors correlated with popularity, deviant behaviour is often only mild to moderate. Regardless, social acceptance provides more overall protective factors than risk factor. When you were a little kid, your parents usually chose your friends, putting you in playgroups or arranging playdates with certain children they knew and liked. Now that you're older, you decide who your friends are and what groups you spend time with. Your friends — your peers — are people your age or close to it who have experiences and interests similar to yours. You and your friends make dozens of decisions every day, and you influence each other's choices and behaviors. This is often positive — it's human nature to listen to and learn from other people in your age group. As you become more independent, your peers naturally play a greater role in your life.

As school and other activities take you away from home, you may spend more time with peers than you do with your parents and siblings. You'll probably develop close friendships with some of your peers, and you may feel so connected to them that they are like an extended family. Besides

close friends, your peers include other kids you know who are the same age — like people in your grade, church, sports team, or community. These peers also influence you by the way they dress and act, things they're involved in, and the attitudes they show. It's natural for people to identify with and compare themselves to their peers as they consider how they wish to be (or think they should be), or what they want to achieve. People are influenced by peers because they want to fit in, be like peers they admire, do what others are doing, or have what others have. Peer Influence Isn't All Bad You already know that the teen years can be tough. You're figuring out who you are, what you believe, what you're good at, what your responsibilities are, and what your place in the world is going to be. It's comforting to face those challenges with friends who are into the same things that you are.

But you probably hear adults — parents, teachers, guidance counselors, etc. — talk about peer pressure more than the benefits of belonging to a peer group. You might not hear a lot about it, but peers have a profoundly positive influence on each other and play important roles in each other's lives: Friendship. Among peers you can find friendship and acceptance, and share experiences that can build lasting bonds. Positive examples. Peers set plenty of good examples for each other. Having peers who are committed to doing well in school or to doing their best in a sport can influence you to be more goal-oriented, too. Peers who are kind and loyal influence you to build these qualities in yourself. Even peers you've never met can be role models! For example, watching someone your age compete in the Olympics, give a piano concert, or spearhead a community project might inspire you to go after a dream of your own. Feedback and advice. Your friends listen and give

you feedback as you try out new ideas, explore belief, and discuss problems. Peers can help you make decisions, too: what courses to take; whether to get your hair cut, let it grow, or dye it; how to handle a family argument.

Peers often give each other good advice. Your friends will be quick to tell you when they think you're making a mistake or doing something risky.

Socializing. Your peer group gives you opportunities to try out new social skills. Getting to know lots of different people — such as classmates or teammates — gives you a chance to learn how to expand your circle of friends, build relationships, and work out differences. You may have peers you agree or disagree with, compete with, or team with, peers you admire, and peers you don't want to be like. Encouragement. Peers encourage you to work hard to get the solo in the concert, help you study, listen and support you when you're upset or troubled, and empathize with you when they've experienced similar difficulties. New experiences. Your peers might get you involved in clubs, sports, or religious groups. Your world would be far less rich without peers to encourage you try sushi for the first time, listen to a CD you've never heard before, or to offer moral support when you audition for the school play.

When the Pressure's On Sometimes, though, the stresses in your life can actually come from your peers. They may pressure you into doing something you're uncomfortable with, such as shoplifting, doing drugs or drinking, taking dangerous risks when driving a car, or having sex before you feel ready. This pressure may be expressed openly (“ Oh, come on — it's just one beer, and everyone else is having one”) or more indirectly — simply making

beer available at a party, for instance. Most peer pressure is less easy to define. Sometimes a group can make subtle signals without saying anything at all — letting you know that you must dress or talk a certain way or adopt particular attitudes toward school, other students, parents, and teachers in order to win acceptance and approval. The pressure to conform (to do what others are doing) can be powerful and hard to resist. A person might feel pressure to do something just because others are doing it (or say they are). Peer pressure can influence a person to do something that is relatively harmless — or something that has more serious consequences. Giving in to the pressure to dress a certain way is one thing — going along with the crowd to drink or smoke is another.

People may feel pressure to conform so they fit in or are accepted, or so they don't feel awkward or uncomfortable. When people are unsure of what to do in a social situation, they naturally look to others for cues about what is and isn't acceptable. The people who are most easily influenced will follow someone else's lead first. Then others may go along, too — so it can be easy to think, “ It must be OK. Everyone else is doing it. They must know what they're doing.” Before you know it, many people are going along with the crowd — perhaps on something they might not otherwise do. Responding to peer pressure is part of human nature — but some people are more likely to give in, and others are better able to resist and stand their ground. People who are low on confidence and those who tend to follow rather than lead could be more likely to seek their peers' approval by giving in to a risky challenge or suggestion. People who are unsure of themselves, new to the group, or inexperienced with peer pressure may also be more likely to give

in. Using alcohol or drugs increases anyone's chances of giving in to peer pressure. Substance use impairs judgment and interferes with the ability to make good decisions.

Pressure Pointers Nearly everyone ends up in a sticky peer pressure situation at some point. No matter how wisely you choose your friends, or how well you think you know them, sooner or later you'll have to make decisions that are difficult and could be unpopular. It may be something as simple as resisting the pressure to spend your hard-earned babysitting money on the latest MP3 player that "everybody" has. Or it may mean deciding to take a stand that makes you look uncool to your group. But these situations can be opportunities to figure out what is right for you. There's no magic to standing up to peer pressure, but it does take courage — yours: Listen to your gut. If you feel uncomfortable, even if your friends seem to be OK with what's going on, it means that something about the situation is wrong for you. This kind of decision-making is part of becoming self-reliant and learning more about who you are. Plan for possible pressure situations. If you'd like to go to a party but you believe you may be offered alcohol or drugs there, think ahead about how you'll handle this challenge.

Decide ahead of time — and even rehearse — what you'll say and do. Learn a few tricks. If you're holding a bottle of water or a can of soda, for instance, you're less likely to be offered a drink you don't want. Arrange a "bail-out" code phrase you can use with your parents without losing face with your peers. You might call home from a party at which you're feeling pressured to drink alcohol and say, for instance, "Can you come and drive me home? I

have a terrible earache.” Learn to feel comfortable saying “ no.” With good friends you should never have to offer an explanation or apology. But if you feel you need an excuse for, say, turning down a drink or smoke, think up a few lines you can use casually. You can always say, “ No, thanks, I’ve got a belt test in karate next week and I’m in training,” or “ No way — my uncle just died of cirrhosis and I’m not even looking at any booze.” Hang with people who feel the same way you do. Choose friends who will speak up with you when you’re in need of moral support, and be quick to speak up for a friend in the same way.

If you’re hearing that little voice telling you a situation’s not right, chances are others hear it, too. Just having one other person stand with you against peer pressure makes it much easier for both people to resist. Blame your parents: “ Are you kidding? If my mom found out, she’d kill me, and her spies are everywhere.” If a situation seems dangerous, don’t hesitate to get an adult’s help. It’s not always easy to resist negative peer pressure, but when you do, it is easy to feel good about it afterward. And you may even be a positive influence on your peers who feel the same way — often it just takes one person to speak out or take a different action to change a situation. Your friends may follow if you have the courage to do something different or refuse to go along with the group. Consider yourself a leader, and know that you have the potential to make a difference. Peers play a large role in the social and emotional development of children and adolescents. Their influence begins at an early age and increases through the teenage years. It is natural, healthy and important for children to have and rely on friends as they grow and mature. Peers can be positive and supportive.

They can help each other develop new skills, or stimulate interest in books, music or extracurricular activities. However, peers can also have a negative influence. They can encourage each other to skip classes, steal, cheat, use drugs or alcohol, or become involve in other risky behaviors. The majority of teens with substance abuse problems began using drugs or alcohol as a result of peer pressure. Kids often give in to peer pressure because they want to fit in. They want to be liked and they worry that they may be left out or made fun of if they don't go along with the group. The following are some tips to help kids deal with peer pressure: Stay away from peers who pressure you to do things that seem wrong or dangerous. Learn how to say " no," and practice how to avoid or get out of situations which feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Spend time with other kids who resist peer pressure. It helps to have at least one friend who is also willing to say " no." If you have problems with peer pressure, talk to a grown up you trust, like a parent, teacher or school counselor. Defining Peer Pressure Peers influence your life, even if you don't realize it, just by spending time with you. You learn from them, and they learn from you. It's only human nature to listen to and learn from other people in your age group.

Peers can have a positive influence on each other. Maybe another student in your science class taught you an easy way to remember the planets in the solar system or someone on the soccer team taught you a cool trick with the ball. You might admire a friend who is always a good sport and try to be more like him or her. Maybe you got others excited about your new favorite book, and now everyone's reading it. These are examples of how peers positively influence each other every day. Sometimes peers influence each

other in negative ways. For example, a few kids in school might try to get you to cut class with them, your soccer friend might try to convince you to be mean to another player and never pass her the ball, or a kid in the neighborhood might want you to shoplift with him. Why Do People Give in to Peer Pressure? Some kids give in to peer pressure because they want to be liked, to fit in, or because they worry that other kids might make fun of them if they don't go along with the group. Others go along because they are curious to try something new that others are doing. The idea that “everyone's doing it” can influence some kids to leave their better judgment, or their common sense, behind.

Walking Away From Peer Pressure It is tough to be the only one who says “no” to peer pressure, but you can do it. Paying attention to your own feelings and beliefs about what is right and wrong can help you know the right thing to do. Inner strength and self-confidence can help you stand firm, walk away, and resist doing something when you know better. It can really help to have at least one other peer, or friend, who is willing to say “no,” too. This takes a lot of the power out of peer pressure and makes it much easier to resist. It's great to have friends with values similar to yours who will back you up when you don't want to do something. You've probably had a parent or teacher advise you to “choose your friends wisely.” Peer pressure is a big reason why they say this. If you choose friends who don't use drugs, cut class, smoke cigarettes, or lie to their parents, then you probably won't do these things either, even if other kids do. Try to help a friend who's having trouble resisting peer pressure. It can be powerful for one kid to join another by simply saying, “I'm with you — let's go.” Even if you're faced with peer

pressure while you're alone, there are still things you can do. You can simply stay away from peers who pressure you to do stuff you know is wrong. You can tell them “ no” and walk away.

Better yet, find other friends and classmates to pal around with. If you continue to face peer pressure and you're finding it difficult to handle, talk to someone you trust. Don't feel guilty if you've made a mistake or two. Talking to a parent, teacher, or school counselor can help you feel much better and prepare you for the next time you face peer pressure. Powerful, Positive Peer Pressure Peer pressure is not always a bad thing. For example, positive peer pressure can be used to pressure bullies into acting better toward other kids. If enough kids get together, peers can pressure each other into doing what's right! Peers are people who are part of the same social group, so the term “ peer pressure” refers to the influence that peers can have on each other.

Although peer pressure does not necessarily have to be negative, the term “ pressure” implies that the process influences people to do things that may be resistant to, or might not otherwise choose to do. So usually the term peer pressure refers to socially undesirable behaviors, such as experimentation with alcohol and drug use, rather than socially desirable behaviors, such as academic success, although it could be applied to either, and either could be a positive or a negative experience for the individual. Peer pressure is the phenomenon wherein we tend to get influenced by the lifestyles and the ways of thinking of our peers. Peer pressure can prove beneficial but it is most often observed to have negative effects on society.

What is negative peer pressure? What is positive peer pressure? How does it affect the teenagers? The thoughts, behavior and tastes of fashion, music, television and other walks of life of the masses are often seen having a deep impact on the living of the society. We tend to get influenced by the lifestyles of our peer group. The changing ways of life of our peers often force us to change our ways of looking at life and leading it. It's a human tendency to do what the crowd does. Few have the courage to resist the peer pressure and be their own selves rather than being one among the lot. Peer pressure is bound to affect most of us, both, positively and negatively. The distinction between positive and negative peer pressure lies in a thoughtful analysis of the views of the masses. Following your peers blindly leaves a negative impact on your life while an analytical approach of looking at peer behavior can act positively. Let us look at the positive and negative effects of peer pressure.

Negative Effects of Peer Pressure

When you do not like a particular idea or when you have no inclination towards a particular field, it is obvious that you won't like to go by it. For sure, you won't like to go that way.

But it is you peer group, which may compel you on doing something you hate. In such cases, there are chances that you won't do well in those things. Things you do not enjoy doing cannot fetch you success. You cannot emerge successful in something you have never liked doing. So, it is important that you do not lose happiness of your life by succumbing to peer pressure. Many a time, it so happens, that we are forced to lead a certain kind of lifestyle due to peer pressure. You may not like partying on every weekend, you may not like night outs with friends, you may hate drinking or smoking, but peer

pressure may make you do all that you had never wished to. There are many teenagers who experience great pressure from their peer group that forces them to take to drinking. You may take to something as grave as drug use, and that too, only because of peer pressure. In such cases, being overly pressurized by your peers can be detrimental to your living. Some teenagers literally spoil their lives by giving in to peer pressure. Peer pressure can lead to a loss of individuality. Extreme peer pressure may lead you to follow what your peers feel right. Their pressure may compel you to go by everything they think right. You tend to blindly imitate the masses; you adopt their tastes of fashion, clothing, hair, music and general living.

Peer pressure can actually lead you to lose your tastes of life and force yourself to begin liking what they like. Peer pressure is the human tendency to join the bandwagon, in which, the person loses his/her original way of looking at life. Positive Effects of Peer Pressure Peer pressure is not always bad. It can help you analyze yourself and contemplate on your ways of life. Some of the practices that the masses follow may actually teach you the way of living. You may be able to change yourself for the better. Looking at what others do, can help you bring about a positive change in your way of thinking. If you can pick selectively, peer pressure can actually result in a positive change in your way of life. Knowing what the masses follow exposes you to the world outside your home. You understand the things going on around you. You are exposed to a wide variety in human behavior. Exposure to peer pressure gives you an opportunity to think about their tastes and their outlooks towards life. It gives you a chance to choose the best from

what the masses do. If you are fortunate to get a good peer group, your peers can play a vital role in the shaping of your personality.

Their way of looking at life may influence you to change for betterment.

Some of your peers are your close friends, who do not pressurize you to do things but rather inspire you to change yourself. Your peer group may actually persuade you to bring about a constructive change in your personality. Peer pressure can lead you to make the right choices in life.

Teenage Peer Pressure Teenage is that phase of life when you are exposed to the world outside. These are the years when you spend most of your time with your friends. Teenage is the phase of beginning to become independent in life; the years of forming your ideals and principles, the years that shape your personality and the years that introduce you to your own self.

Adolescents often spend most of their daily time with friends and owing to this vulnerable age, they tend to imitate their friends. The people around you are bound to influence you. However, the effect of the influences of the masses is greater during your teen years. Parents have a vital role to play during this phase of a person's life. Parents and teachers need to be careful while dealing with teenagers, as they are most susceptible to succumb to peer pressure during these years of their life. Teenage individuals need to be taught to distinguish between the good and the bad, the right and the wrong and should be taught to be thoughtful in life.

A strong support from family, an ability to differentiate between the positive and the negative and a skill to choose friends from the peers – this three-pronged strategy is the best way to keep away from negative peer pressure.

Pros of peer pressure Teenagers tend to follow the crowd. If they are caught in the act of smoking or drinking they cite peer pressure as the main influence behind their actions. It's a continuous struggle for parents to figure out how to help teenagers deal with peer pressure, especially when they aren't always around to supervise their activities. What parents fail to understand is that in some instances peer pressure in the right environment can work for the benefit of their child. When a teen makes the right choice under peer pressure doesn't that count as a plus point? According to research, if properly harnessed, the same pressure can motivate individuals to stay focused and work hard towards achieving their goals. Positive effects of peer pressure on teenagers are also evident by the example of a student who is motivated to get good grades because his friends are getting good grades – an action that can be attributed to positive peer pressure.

Adopting Good Habits Positive peer pressure can help you reflect on your actions and amend your ways to become a better individual. Observing others working hard to achieve their goals will definitely encourage you to step up your game and strive towards something positive. When a teen knows that his teammates are practicing hard to become better basketball players then it will directly affect his own performance. He will put in twice the time and energy to raise the level of his game and ensure he has a place on the team. Similarly a kid who knows that his best friend aces English because he regularly reads storybooks will feel compelled to read as well. Having a group that exerts positive peer pressure can also help you give up bad habits and pick up healthy ones that can shape both your personality and your future. A change in perspective about life and motivation to do well

because of pressure from your peers can actually become inspiration in that instance. What is peer pressure? Peer pressure is the influence you feel from a person or group of people to do something you might not otherwise consider doing. It's not uncommon to want to be part of a group and feel like you belong in a community, especially if you are new or less experienced than the people around you.

Peer pressure often happens because you don't want to be alone or left out. So you go with what other people think in order for them to include you. A peer can be anyone around the same age-as you, like a friend, classmate, or even someone you seen on TV and admire. You might try to live up to people's expectations, but it's important to be mindful to not have other people's expectations cloud what you want. If you're dealing with peer pressure, you're not alone. How does peer pressure affect us? Peer pressure isn't always a negative thing. It can be a positive influence and help challenge or motivate you to do your best. However, it's helpful to recognize that peer pressure can also be negative. It can result in you doing something that doesn't fit with your sense of right and wrong. Peer pressure might influence you in a number of ways, including: Fashion choices Alcohol and drug use Decision to have a boyfriend or girlfriend Choice of who your friends are Academic performance ... Where does peer pressure come from? Peer pressure can be present at school or within a broader community. It can affect people of all ages and backgrounds. Peer pressure can affect you in a number of different ways: Directly. Peer pressure can be as simple and direct as someone telling you what to do.

It might be a good idea to talk to someone you trust if you feel threatened, or if you are being hurt or pressured into something you don't want to do. You could talk to a family member, friend, teacher or counselor. Check out the Get Help section for more information about how they can help.

Indirectly. Peer pressure might not always be obvious to you. It's not uncommon for a group of friends to have particular habits or activities that they do together. But when you're with a different group of friends, it might be unlikely that you do those same things. For example, you might only smoke when you are with certain friends, or you might be more likely to study when you are with other friends. Individually. Sometimes the pressure comes from you. Feeling different from a group can be hard. Sometimes this happens when people move to a new city or start a new school or job.

This often means having to make new friends and fit into a new environment. To avoid feeling out of place, you might do things to make sure you feel like the rest of the group. When people feel unsure about themselves, they might be more likely to feel the effects of peer pressure.

What can you do about peer pressure? Being an individual means making decisions based on what is best for you. It means taking ownership and responsibility for what you do and how you think. But being an individual also means that you can be a valued part of a comfortable and welcoming group. It might be hard to resist peer pressure and stay an individual. Here are some suggestions that can help you manage peer pressure better. Value common interests. Hanging out with people who like doing similar stuff may help you avoid a situation where you feel pressured into things you don't want to do. Remember that being seen hanging out in the "cool crowd"

might not be as much fun as it looks if you're not comfortable with the decisions that crowd is making.

Say no. Having the strength to say no can be hard, but it can also make you feel good to stick with what you believe in. Explain to people in a calm way why you don't want to be part of something, and you might earn respect from others and gain confidence in yourself. Try not to judge others. If possible, try not to place judgments on other people's choices. Respecting someone else's choice may help them to respect yours. Remember that you don't have to agree with their actions. Focusing on the reasons why you don't feel happy with the choice might help you to not judge them. Take action. Taking action against negative peer pressure can be easier when you're more comfortable in your environment. Standing up for yourself and others can be a way to gain that comfort. Both of these are ways in which you might be able to create a positive atmosphere within a group.