

Name _____

Peer Pressure and Its Impact on Substance Abuse

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Peer pressure is the influence that friends or peers can have on an individual's behavior. Positive peer pressure encourages healthy behaviors, such as exercising or studying, while negative peer pressure can lead to risky or harmful behaviors, like experimenting with drugs or alcohol. Examples of positive peer pressure include friends encouraging someone to join a sports team, while negative peer pressure could involve friends urging someone to try smoking or drinking.
2. Negative peer pressure can lead to substance abuse by influencing individuals to experiment with drugs or alcohol, continue using them regularly, engage in risky behavior (e.g., driving under the influence), and even develop dependency or addiction. For example, if a group of friends consistently uses drugs, an individual may feel pressured to join them to maintain their friendships or avoid feeling left out.
3. Resisting negative peer pressure related to substance abuse is essential. To do so, individuals can:
 - Stand up for their values and say "no" to risky behaviors.
 - Seek support from positive influences, such as family members or trusted friends.
 - Make informed decisions by understanding the risks and consequences of substance abuse.
 - Create a plan for how to respond to peer pressure in advance.
 - Choose friends who value their well-being and support their choices.
4. Seeking support from positive influences and making informed decisions when facing peer pressure is crucial because it can protect individuals from substance abuse. Positive influences provide encouragement to make healthy choices, while informed decisions are based on knowledge and understanding of the risks associated with substance abuse. These actions help individuals resist negative peer pressure and make choices that promote their health and well-being.

