

**T**hink about every decision you make. If you can think of reasons not to try drugs and alcohol, then don't. There are many ways to say no.

### Saying No!

- "Not tonight, I'm studying."
- "No, thanks. I'm in training."
- "No, it's not for me."
- "No way!"
- "Thanks, but no thanks."
- "No, I'm fine."

**I**f you have to, come up with an excuse to leave a situation where you may be pressured into making a quick decision. You can say, "No, I need to get home and mow the lawn."

### Be Yourself!

**R**emember, you don't need drugs and alcohol. You are fine just being you. Your friends will respect you for doing what is best for you and maybe you'll help them do what's best for them.

**B**y making informed decisions, you can have control over your life and you can make sure you make decisions that lead to positive consequences.

**Y**ou have talents, skills, and a personality that make you different from anybody else. That's why you are important.

### Your Assignment...

**W**e've only discussed a few of the consequences and side effects of today's drugs. Do a little research on the web or at the public library on the side effects of different types of drugs. Read about club drugs and the effects they have on your brain. Then educate your friends. Turn negative peer pressure into positive peer pressure.

### Getting Help...

**W**hat if you're already into drugs? How can you get out? Tell someone you trust about the problem. This could be a parent, teacher, church leader, or friend. They can help you find help. Salt Lake County has a program specifically for teenagers, the Adolescent Substance Abuse Project. You can reach them at 468-2009. Get help!



## PEER PRESSURE & CHOICES

# Peer Pressure, Choices, & You



SALT LAKE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

**Sheriff James M. Winder**

[www.slsheriff.org](http://www.slsheriff.org)

743-7000

**W**e all make decisions every day. We decide what to wear, what to eat, what kind of mood to be in, and whether or not to even get up in the morning. Many of these decisions are easy. Some are not. This pamphlet will help you figure out what's right for you in making choices about **drugs** and **alcohol**.

We'll talk about peer pressure and how you can say "no" in a way that gets heard and respected.

Why do people do drugs anyway? Some people do it to relax, to forget their problems, or to have fun. Many people do it because they think everybody else is doing it and they don't want to feel like they don't **fit in**.

Most people get into drugs because someone they know uses drugs. This is called **peer pressure**.

Why do so many kids look, dress, and act alike? They want to fit in. We **all** want to fit in. You need to make choices for yourself.

**Along with choices come consequences!** Why does society make such a big deal about drugs and alcohol? Because of the effects or consequences of using them. Drugs and alcohol aren't good or bad. They are chemicals. Whether they're good or bad depends on how they're used. If you correctly use medication prescribed by your doctor to treat strep throat, your strep throat will go away.

However, since drugs are chemicals they have chemical reactions. If you put them into your body they have internal effects upon your body. Even though some drug effects feel cool for a while, they always wear off. Then you have to deal with the **consequences**.

What are the consequences of doing drugs and drinking alcohol? There are plenty of obvious consequences like failing in school, getting arrested, and hangovers. But what about the chemical reactions occurring in your brain? Drugs can make you psychotic, sick, addicted,

and can even kill you. Many drugs stay in your system long after you quit taking them.

Anything that powerful and any decision that important should be treated with respect and taken a lot more seriously than some people take the choice to drink or do drugs.

So now you know more about drugs, alcohol and their effects. A little knowledge helps you make **informed decisions**. You don't want to make spur-of-the-moment decisions that may not be the best decision for you. You need to look into the consequences before making any decisions.

But how do you decide what you **really** want? There are five parts to every decision:

1. Identify the problem.
2. Think of possible solutions or alternatives.
3. Evaluate possible solutions.
4. Decide and act on a solution.
5. Learn from your experience.

