

- Break students into small groups. Ask groups of students to role-play the moment Megan is asked to accompany the girls to the pharmacy to shoplift cosmetics, and the moment Megan realizes the girls are putting the cosmetics in her bag. Ask each group to think of what options Megan has to avoid getting into trouble in these situations, and to share them with the class.
- Statistics indicate that over 30% of young people have shoplifted at one time. Ask students to create a list of reasons why they think young people shoplift. Ask students to discuss if shoplifting is a criminal or a mental health issue. Do students think shoplifting can lead toward much more serious criminal activity?

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/peer\\_pressure.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/peer_pressure.html)  
Kids Health offers students advice on how to deal with peer pressure.
- [www.hooah4health.com/4life/peerpressure.htm](http://www.hooah4health.com/4life/peerpressure.htm)  
HOOAH 4 Health, sponsored by the U.S. Army, offers a comprehensive definition of peer pressure, and gives teachers and adults information on parent, adolescent and peer relationships.
- [www.smith.edu/ourhealthourfutures/socialpress.html](http://www.smith.edu/ourhealthourfutures/socialpress.html)  
This Smith College site features students writing about the various social pressures they face in their daily lives, including peer pressure.

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#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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#### Titles in this series include:

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| • BULLYING                | • PEER CONFLICT            |
| • CONFLICT WITH AUTHORITY | • PEER PRESSURE            |
| • CRISIS INTERVENTION     | • SEXUAL HARASSMENT        |
| • HARASSMENT              | • STUDENT & ADULT CONFLICT |

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#### Also available:

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#### Conflict Resolution for Educators

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# CONFLICT Resolution for Students™

## Peer Pressure

### Grades 5–12

Conflict resolution can help young people develop critical communication and problem-solving skills. On any given day students are faced with many choices and find themselves in various situations that might easily lead to conflict. As such, it is important for students to learn the causes of conflict, how to recognize the signs of potential conflict, and to develop the skills necessary for dealing with conflict.

Each program in *Conflict Resolution for Students* contains two scenarios that depict students experiencing conflict in real world situations. Each scenario is followed by a discussion of how the situation could have been handled differently by the various parties involved. Programs may be shown in their entirety or stopped for discussion points. Teacher's Guides contain support material in the form of discussion questions, activities and Internet resources.



## Introduction

Peer pressure is one of the most significant factors affecting the behavior of young people. It is defined as the influence that people use to encourage others to make certain decisions or behave in certain ways. Peer pressure can be a positive influence, as when a student is encouraged by peers to improve a skill or do better academically. Unfortunately, more often than not peer pressure is applied in negative ways, such as to persuade a student to engage in risky behavior or commit a crime.

### Scenario 1

## Hacking, Cracking, Stealing

### Program Summary

Jeff, the school's star football player, is having trouble maintaining his grade point average. He persuades his classmate Joel to hack into his teacher's computer and steal a math test so Jeff will be able to pass and play in the championship game. Seeking to be popular with the cool kids, Joel agrees to use his computer skills and his privileged position as a support specialist to help Jeff.

### Pre-viewing Discussion

- Does your school have a minimum grade point average for participation in extra-curricular activities? Do students think this is a fair policy? Why or why not? How might students be affected if they were prevented from participating in their favorite activities because of low grades?
- In computer lingo, what is "hacking" or "cracking"? Is breaking into someone's computer comparable to other types of criminal activity? Should a hacker face consequences similar to other criminals?
- Ask students to imagine they are given a job in the main office of their school, and have access to teacher files, tests and records. Would students feel tempted to read this information? Ask students to discuss the privacy issues that go with dealing with confidential computer data.

### Follow-up Discussion

- Ask students to discuss why Don is amazed to see his friend Joel talking with Jeff. Why does Don say a conversation between Jeff and Joel "never happens"? Ask if students have similar divisions or cliques within their school. Do these cliques create a positive or negative social environment? Why?
- How are students who do well academically perceived in your school? Do students who receive excellent grades get recognition for their achievements? Are they well-respected and admired? Why or why not?
- If you were Ms. Simon, how would you react to discovering that your computer system had been hacked? What would you do to discipline Joel and Jeff? Should Don be disciplined as well?

### Follow-up Activities

- There are federal laws against computer hacking. Share with students the main ideas of legislation such as the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act and ask students to discuss its content. Ask students to discuss why computer hacking is considered such a severe crime. Invite an expert in the field of computer crime to your class to discuss legal issues and consequences.

*(Continued)*

- Ask one group of students to suggest other ways Joel could respond to this situation. Ask another group to think of what options Jeff has to avoid missing the championship game. Ask your class to debate the best choice for both students. Students may use role-play to help determine the best course of action.
- Ask students to write journal entries that describe how they can best deal with negative peer pressure. Students may also try to develop their own decision-making charts to help them analyze the pros and cons associated with various choices.

### Scenario 2

## With Friends Like These

### Program Summary

Amanda uses her popularity to influence Megan, who agrees to skip her sixth-period science class to accompany Amanda and her friends on a shoplifting excursion. Megan, a new student eager to make friends, succumbs to peer pressure and finds that her desire to be popular causes her major problems.

### Pre-viewing Discussion

- Have students ever moved to a new place or enrolled in a new school? Ask students to describe how they felt on their first day at their new school. Did students feel pressured to act differently in order to fit in with a new group or make new friends?
- What is a clique? Do cliques influence how students behave in school? How? How can students be more in control of their behavior and make their own decisions?

### Follow-up Discussion

- Megan has no friends at her new school. Ask students to think of the importance of friends in their lives. Do students have positive, healthy relationships with their friends, or do they have companions who are negative influences who bring them down? If a friend asks you to participate in an illegal activity, would you support that friend, or find a way to end the relationship?
- How do students think Megan will be affected by getting caught shoplifting? Do students think she will have a relationship with the other girls after the crisis is over? How might each girl change as a result of her experience?
- What are some of Amanda's personal characteristics? Why is Amanda considered the "leader" of her group? What are some of the ways Amanda puts pressure on Megan to skip her science class and go shoplifting? Why do Jennifer and the other girls go along with Amanda's plan?

### Follow-up Activities

- Invite a local police officer to come to your class to discuss the dangers of shoplifting. Ask students to prepare a list of questions about shoplifting to pose to the officer. Ask students to write journal entries reflecting what they learned about the consequences of shoplifting.

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