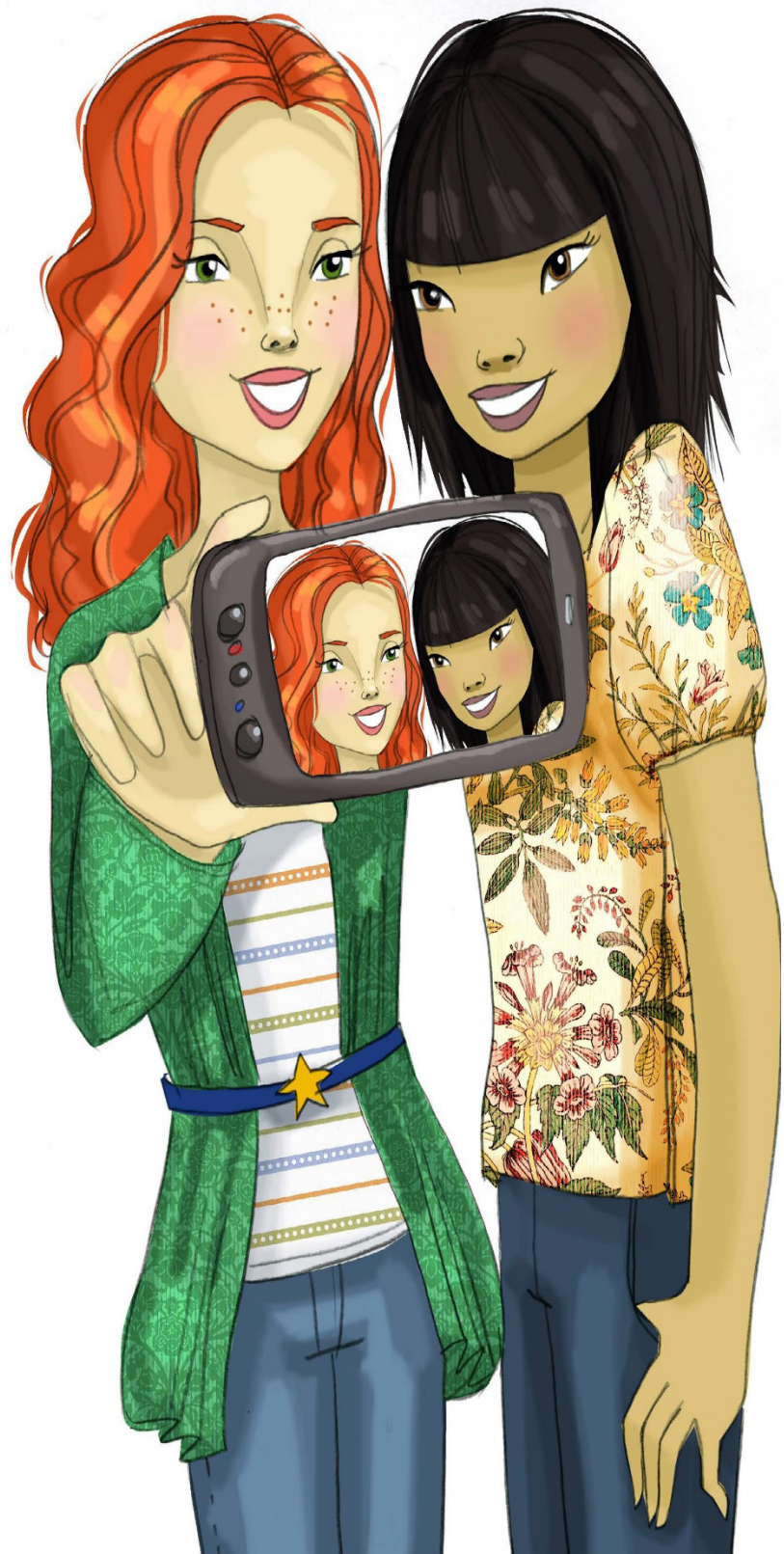


Lesson 9

Reviewing and Practicing Resistance Techniques



PROJECT
ALERT

Lesson Overview

Lesson Goals

1. Demonstrate how to resist social pressures to use substances
2. Practice resisting social pressures to use substances
3. Raise awareness of the benefits of not using drugs

Scope and Sequence with Pacing Guidance

1. Introduce Lesson (2 min.)
2. Review Pressures (4 min.)
3. Prepare Resistance Skits (10 min.)
4. Act Out Resistance Skits (10 min.)
5. Play the Benefits Game (16 min.)
6. Wrap-up (3 min.)

Brief Lesson Description

This lesson reinforces resistance practice. Instead of responding to a video, as in previous lessons, students produce original skits based on their own concerns and what they've learned in previous Project ALERT lessons.

After reviewing the visual about where pressures come from, students are instructed to prepare and then act out a skit that shows resistance to any type of drug or other common pressure. Teachers should encourage a wide variety of skits.

The benefits of not using alcohol and marijuana are linked in this lesson. The focus on benefits strikes a positive note and is a critical part of the learning and review process.

Background Knowledge: Pre-Reading

In helping students learn how to say “no”, Project ALERT:

- validates their feelings that it’s sometimes hard to resist the pressure to use drugs;
- demonstrates that students have the right to say “no;”
- helps them believe they can say “no” without suffering rejection or embarrassment; and
- gives them several ways of saying “no”.

Below are six different ways to say “no”, and example responses for each of those ways. Most of these are demonstrated in the videos and represented on the *Ways to Say No* poster.

1. Simply say “no”. Often the easiest of the six resistance strategies, simply saying “no” helps avoid arguments. Students frequently believe that such a brief reply won’t work, and they will continue to receive pressure. Thus, it’s very important to help them see the viability of this response.

- No, I’d rather not.
- No, thanks.
- Not today/tonight.

2. Give a reason. This technique uses “I” statements to emphasize your decision and making the decision for yourself. “I” statements are a neutral way to refuse a substance use offer, like saying “I don’t like the taste” rather than “How can you stand the way you smell?” Giving a reason may also include excuses, like “I’m getting picked up soon”.

- I don’t feel like it.
- I’ll get red eyes and my parents will find out.
- I’m an athlete so I don’t (vape, smoke, drink).

3. Give an alternative. The approach of giving an alternative can be particularly effective when the person offering is trying to make conversation, be friendly, or avoid excluding someone. The person extending an offer often don’t care if it is accepted or not. Others, particularly experimenters, may offer drugs to look cool. They may be relieved when the other person says “no.” The alternatives listed below make it clear that the drug is being rejected, not the person who offered it. Hence, the alternatives are less likely to generate hostility.

- No. Let’s go do something else.
- No, let’s get something to eat instead.
- No, I need to practice (sport/activity).

4. Stand up to pressure. Students’ concerns that a friend or acquaintance might really pressure them with taunts need to be validated. They also need help thinking about why a friend might be taunting them (e.g., insecurity). To deal with this kind of pressure, students need to know that they don’t have to give a reason if they don’t want to. They may just repeat “no”, or use any of the other saying “no” strategies.

- I already said no.
- I just don't feel like it.
- I really meant it.

5. Leave the scene. Sometimes the pressure is very difficult to resist. If so, it may be easier to leave the scene. This doesn't necessarily mean leaving something entirely, it might mean leaving a room or space. Other times it may be easier to get away from the whole scene even though it might feel lonely or isolating. It helps to know who to call or rely on if a leave the scene situation arises.

- I've got to go now.
- My ride will here soon.
- I need to be home in 15 minutes.

6. Avoid the scene. Sometimes the wisest strategy is to avoid situations in which resistance is likely to be needed. Young people almost always know which places to avoid (e.g., specific bathrooms, restaurants, alleys, parties, or online platforms). Avoiding such places or taking a break from social media interactions can save them from pressures. However, such a strategy could bring feelings of isolation that should be acknowledged. These negative feelings may be countered to some extent by reminding students that:

- resistance can make you feel good because you demonstrate internal strength;
- people who reject you because you don't use are not very good friends.

Tips for Class Activity Preparing and Acting Out Skits

Project ALERT uses role play skits to model and give students practice in ways to say "no." Lessons 5, 7, and 9 use this method, and the lesson plans give clear instructions on how to set up an effective role play. Here are a few extra tips when students are preparing and acting out skits.

Role play tips

- Float among groups during skit preparation to help groups focus, and listen to group discussion before intervening with help.
- Encourage those who do not like to participate by suggesting they play a non-speaking role at first.
- The same students should not always play the pressuring roles.
- Motivate any reluctant students with enthusiasm ("You'll be great," "I've seen some terrific skits in other classes, and I'm sure you can come up with some great ideas, too.").
- Simple speaking lines are fine! Skits are often very short; a simple "no thanks" may be the solution because students should be encouraged to be as realistic as possible.
- Remind students to put "themselves" (language, community) into skits.
- Consider choosing a group that will set a good example to act their skit first.

Critique tips

- The skit should be short and to the point. Its purpose is to highlight and reinforce the solution.

- If the solution is hostile, say, “You’re saying ‘no’ to a drug, not necessarily to a friend. Could you try another take that isn’t hostile to the person?”
- Using movie theme phrases can help keep it light. By saying “Take two!” teachers can ask the group to re-do a skit that had an inappropriate solution.
- Every skit should be generously praised, because even if it is simple, students need reinforcement and chances to build self-efficacy in resistance skills.




Materials and Supplies to Prepare

- **Visual** – *Ground Rules: Students* (saved from Lesson 1)
- **Visual** – *Where Does Pressure to Use Drugs Come From?* (saved from Lesson 4)
- **Visual** – Poster: *Ways to Say “No”*
- **Visual** – Poster: *Pressures Inside Yourself*
- **Visual** – Create a partial visual for the Benefits of Not Using Game, a three-column chart

| | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Nicotine | Marijuana | Alcohol |
|----------|-----------|---------|

Legend

We use the icons below to indicate what to say during the lesson, what to keep in mind as you facilitate the lesson, and what to display in the classroom throughout the lesson.

| What to say | What to keep in mind | What to display |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |

Lesson Plan

1. Introduce Lesson



Display visual created in Lesson 1: *Student Ground Rules*



Today we will be reviewing pressures to use drugs. Then, you will develop skits where you are offered substances and act out our own solutions to those pressure situations. After that, we will talk about the benefits and good outcomes we get from saying “no” to drugs.

2. Review Pressures



Display visual *Where Does Pressure to Use Drugs Come From?*



First, let's review where pressures come from.

Briefly review the pressures to use drugs on the visual. End with the “Yourself” category.

The pressures inside yourself can be hard to identify, but the internal pressures are important because, in the end, it all comes down to you and your choices. You make the decision to use drugs or not. Let's review how you can resist these internal pressures.



Display poster *Pressures from Inside Yourself*.



Let's review a few of these internal pressures and share ways to resist.

Can someone tell me what you could say, think, or do if you were feeling pressure to try marijuana from someone you like but you didn't want to use it?

Can someone tell me what you could say, think, or do if you were feeling bored but you didn't want to drink alcohol?

Can someone tell me what you could say, think, or do if you were feeling like vaping would make you seem older, but you didn't want to use it?

Can you tell me what you could say, think, or do if you were offered a prescription drug or a pill by someone by you didn't want to take it?



Elicit different responses and techniques for saying “no”.

3. Prepare Resistance Skits



Display Poster: *Ways to Say “No”*



We’ve been learning how to identify pressures and how to avoid using drugs by resisting these pressures. Today, we’ll get more practice resisting pressure. The more we practice, the easier it will be to say ‘no’ in a real situation.

To practice, we’ll be doing skits in which you make up the pressure situation and the solution.

Before we get started, let’s brainstorm, what are some situations in which you sometimes feel pressure from yourself or others to do something you’re not sure you want to do? And what could you do to resist?



Elicit a couple examples of pressures that are different than the examples in the previous activity. For example, a student feeling pressure to shoplift, cheat, or pressure to bully or cyberbully.

Reinforce students’ responses for ways to resist by referring to the poster: *Ways to Say No*.



I will divide the class into groups. Each group's job will be to come up with a pressure situation and a saying "no" solution. Groups will have about six minutes to create and rehearse their skit. Then, you'll act them out.

Remember that your skits can be about internal or external pressures. You may get ideas from the *Ways to Say "No"* poster and your own ideas to come up with a solution.

The solution with the resistance statement should be the focus of the skit. So that means the actors who say "no" are the main characters in the skit, so really emphasize their parts.

There are a few roles in your group:

- Director who will assign parts and be responsible for getting people to work together.
- Actors who will assume the roles of the characters in your skit. The resisters are the main characters.
- Recorder who will write the script and provide it for review.

Please make up realistic skits with situations that might really happen in school or in your neighborhood.

When you meet with your group, please take the appropriate script writing supplies with you.

Break students into groups.



Circulate as students work in groups. If a group is not making progress, suggest that they do the following:

- Assign parts
- Try out different solutions
- Decide on one solution and rehearse it



When students have been working for about 8 minutes, give them an alert about time.

You have two more minutes to prepare your skits.

After the next 2 minutes

Time is up – let's act out the skits.

4. Act Out Resistance Skits



Let's start with expectations for this activity:

1. Actors should speak up so that everyone can hear you.
2. Face the class while you are acting.

3. **Introduce characters. Director, this is your responsibility.**
4. **Attentive audience; quiet and focused on the actors. No more planning.**

Please emphasize the resistance part of each skit.

After each skit, there will be brief applause and praise students. As an audience, you will try to come up with a brief summary of the skit solution. (Optional: I'll write the solution for each skit for reference.)

Who will volunteer as the first group?



Praise students after each performance and, if necessary, lead applause.

Repeat the solution or ask the audience to repeat the solution.

Solutions can be displayed in whatever way is most convenient. The goal is for students to understand that solutions can be used in a variety of pressure situations – pressure to try or use any type of drug, and also non-drug pressures such as shoplifting, skipping school, cyberbullying, or cheating, if appropriate.

Let's do a quick share out of our solutions to the problem, or the ways that we said no.



Summarize common themes in how students said no; point out variation in solutions where appropriate.

Here's what I observed about how our actor's said "no" ...

Comment on how actors appeared when saying "no."

Give some examples of how there are many ways of saying no; for example, if no group offered an alternative, make sure to highlight that as an option and give an example.

Note the importance of body language and voice tone in communicating resistance.

Looking back at the Ways to Say "No" poster, I saw our groups...

Note how students' solutions align with the poster.

5. Play the Benefits Game



Today, we've talked about pressures and practiced resisting them. Now, let's talk about the benefits and good things you get from resisting pressures to use nicotine, marijuana, or alcohol.



We will play two rounds of a group game in which the goal of each round is to be the first group to come up with eight [or six benefits if short on time] benefits of not using a drug. Remember, not using drugs results in good things in terms of physical and mental health, how we feel about ourselves, what other people think of us, how we act, and what we don't have to worry about.

We will divide into groups [three or more]. Each group will need two sheets of paper and a writing utensil.

Each group will select a Recorder who will write the list of benefits that the group comes up with and will hold their writing utensil in the air when their group's list is complete. Do not start until I say "Go".

When you meet with your group, please take paper and writing utensils with you.

Break students into groups.

Remember to come up with ideas as a group and be supportive of the Recorder writing everything down. Please do not begin until I say "Go". The Recorder will hold their writing utensil in the air when their group's list is complete. The first round's category is the benefits of not using nicotine.

Ready, set, go.



Circulate the groups. Encourage varied benefits. Look for the first writing utensil to be raised into the air. Wait for all group to complete their lists.



Recorder of the first group to complete their list, please read aloud your group's list of benefits of not using nicotine.

After the Recorder reads the list, reinforce some of the group's good ideas.

Show of hands from the other group Recorders, did your group have any of the same benefits?

Reinforce students.

Did any group have a benefit that wasn't mentioned? Can you read it aloud?

Reinforce students.

Thank you.



Now for the second round. The second round's category is the benefits of not using marijuana. Ready, set, go.



Circulate the groups. Encourage varied benefits. Look for the first writing utensil to be raised into the air. Wait for all group to complete their lists.

Recorder of the first group to complete their list, please read aloud your group's list of benefits of not using marijuana.

After the Recorder reads the list, reinforce some of the group's good ideas.

Show of hands from the other group Recorders, did your group have any of the same benefits?

Reinforce students.

Did any group have a benefit that wasn't mentioned? Can you read it aloud?

Thank you.

Now for the third round. The second round's category is the benefits of not using alcohol. Ready, set, go.



Circulate the groups. Encourage varied benefits. Look for the first writing utensil to be raised into the air. Wait for all group to complete their lists.



Recorder of the first group to complete their list, please read aloud your group's list of benefits of not using alcohol.

After the Recorder reads the list, reinforce some of the group's good ideas.

Show of hands from the other group Recorders, did your group have any of the same benefits?

Did any group have a benefit that wasn't mentioned? Can you read it aloud?

So, when you resist pressures to use drugs, how do you feel about yourself?

Reinforce student engagement and praise their contributions.

6. Wrap-up Lesson



Today, we reviewed and practiced ways of resisting pressures to use drugs; we came up with real-life pressure situations and showed that we are capable of resisting those pressures; and we listed so many benefits of not using drugs.

In the next lesson, we'll be talking about ways to help people quit smoking.