



## Lesson 11 STANDING UP TO PEER PRESSURE

### Learning Goals

1. Have a greater understanding of peer pressure.
2. Explore and discuss various areas where people succumb to peer pressure.
3. Learn a Girls on the Run strategy that will help us stand up to peer pressure.

### Materials

- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Blank paper
- ✓ **I Choose to Run the Right Pace for Me** handout for every girl

**Coping Skill being provided:** Learning the mechanics of the “stop, breathe, listen, and respond” sequence when we are put into difficult peer situations.

**New Terms/Concepts:** Peer Pressure, SBLR strategy

### Introduction

*“Today we will be discussing a tough subject. To introduce it, I want to ask you a question.*

*Although we know that smoking cigarettes is not good for us, some girls choose to smoke anyway. Why do you think they do this?”*

Give the girls plenty of time to discuss. Eventually someone will bring up the notion that they smoke because they think it is ‘cool’.

*“Thinking something is cool because other people do or doing something because other people do it is called giving into peer pressure. A peer is someone your age and pressure is what you feel when you aren’t sure about something but you feel like should do it anyway.”*



### Getting on Board

Split the girls into four or five even groups. Hand each group a piece of paper and a marker.

*“I’d like each group to come up with two or three different areas where girls can feel peer pressure. Have one girl in your group write them down. If you have trouble with this, think about times you have felt pressure from a friend to do something, but you just weren’t quite sure about doing it. This could be something as simple as staying up too late or participating in something that you really did not want to do.”*

If the girls need help, feel free to give them a few hints. Areas where this age group feels peer pressure are gossiping, bullying, dieting, weight, and doing or wearing certain things to be part of the group.

**Coaches Note:** This group may be aware of pressure older siblings have faced to use drugs, tobacco, or alcohol or to engage in sexual activity before they are ready. It is not likely that this age group will have direct experience with these issues, but the tools they learn today will be beneficial for their future!

### Processing the Getting on Board

*“I’d like each group to share their peer pressure list with the rest of the group.”*

√ *“Why do you think girls pressure other girls to say or do certain things?”*

**Coaches Note:** It is very normal for girls, particularly those in fifth grade, to begin to relate more to their peers than adults. Peer pressure occurs in a developmental stage where children are

separating from adults and moving toward stronger peer relations. The key to making this transition in a healthy way is helping our girls understand the importance of choosing peers who lift them up, support them, and encourage them to be the best they can be!

### STRETCH and STRENGTHENING EXERCISES:

*Format Two (outlined in introduction to curriculum.)*

### Warm-Up

*“At Girls on the Run we have a great strategy we use whenever we are feeling pressured to do something and we aren’t sure whether we want to do it or not.*

*It’s called the ‘Stop, Breathe, Listen and Respond’ or ‘SBLR’ method.”*

*“Here is how it works. If you are feeling pressure to do something you STOP, take five deep BREATHS, LISTEN to that voice that you have on the inside that tells you when something is good for you or not and then RESPOND.”*

*“Let’s try it!”*

**Coaches Note:** Practice this role play with your assistant coach before the lesson.

Have your assistant ask you to ‘try this cigarette’. You will model the SBLR method for the group. Stop, breathe, take a moment to ‘listen’ to what your ‘gut’ is telling you on the inside and say “You know, I am just not interested in smoking. Talk to you later!” Walk away from your assistant coach.

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*“Did this make sense to everyone? Repeat the strategy with me - STOP; BREATHE; LISTEN; RESPOND!”*

**Coaches Note:** Like the previous lesson, the girls have not fully developed the specific strategies or mechanics on HOW TO RESPOND to certain situations yet. We are providing them with a ‘prologue’ to using strategies that will be reinforced later in the curriculum.

Have the girls divide into pairs. One way to do this is whisper a letter from the alphabet in each girl’s ear. They have to pair up with someone who has a letter that is directly next to theirs in the alphabet song.

*“Now we are going to play a game. All of you will line up with your partner on this imaginary line. I am going to stand about thirty yards away. When I yell ‘GO’, each team will run to me.*

*I will then read a ‘peer pressure’ situation. You and your partner will run back to the starting line [mark the line by putting your assistant coach there] and take turns using the SBLR method to come up with a response for that kind of peer pressure. When you are done, I want both of you to clap for yourselves [this way you will know that they have finished the scenario] and wait until everyone is done.*

*We will do this several times. Does everyone understand? Something that is important to understand is that some of these situations may be something you’d LIKE to try. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember, you are listening to the voice inside of YOU and not being forced to*

*respond in any way other than what that voice tells you is okay.*

The Scenarios for this activity are as follows:

- “You’ll look good in this make-up! This color really accentuates your eyes.”
- “What’s the matter? Are you scared? Just try one puff off this cigarette.”
- “She is so mean – let’s hide her book bag so she can’t find it.”
- “We have our math test today and I didn’t get to study. Will you sit next to me so I can look at your paper? You are so smart!”
- “It’s not a big deal. Your mom will never know we watched an R movie. She isn’t even here.”
- “What’s the big deal? We are just taking a lip gloss. The salesperson won’t even see us. She is not even looking.”
- “You want to go to her birthday party? She’s so weird. You should skip it and come to the mall with me instead.”

Call the girls back over to form a circle.

### Processing the Warm-Up

- √ *How did it feel to do this activity?*
- √ *How would this have been different in a real-life situation if one of you was putting pressure on the other?*
- √ *Are there any situations in your life right now where you could use this strategy? What are they?*
- √ *What are peer pressure situations that might come up in your future where this strategy will come in handy?*
- √ *What are the four words in our SBLR strategy?*



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### Workout

*"Today we are going to demonstrate 'listening to our inner voice' by doing a GROUP run where it is important that you go your own pace and not try to run too fast."*

Hand each girl a copy of the "I Choose to run the right Pace for me!"

*"Here is how this games works. Everyone has just received a piece of paper with the words 'I choose to run the pace that is right for me'. Please notice that all of the vowels are underlined. Every time you complete a lap you will cross out a vowel.*

*Today's goal is to have EVERY vowel crossed off before our time runs out. The challenge is this - you have to run YOUR pace. This means that*

*some of you will be able to cross all the vowels off by yourself and some of you may not be able to accomplish this on your own. That is when you will need to help each other. If you have already crossed off all of your vowels, you can then start helping someone by crossing off THEIR vowels after you run a lap.*

*Before we start, I want each of you to set a goal for yourself on the number of laps you think YOU can do in the time we have remaining (state how much time is left). Use our SBLLR strategy to help figure out what that number is and write the number on the top of your page.*

*When you are ready, you can take off!"*

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### Processing the Workout

- ↓ How did it feel to run your own pace?
- ↓ Did having the pressure of marking off all the vowels on your sheet affect the pace that you ran?

**Coaches Note:** The girls may have felt pressure to mark off all of the vowels on their sheet, but this should not have changed the pace that they ran. Similar to peer pressure, the girls may feel pressured to do something, but they should still make their own decision about it.

- ↓ What does this workout have to do with feeling pressure to do something from other people?
- ↓ Is it always easy to figure out what to do when we others are pressuring us?
- ↓ Can someone state what the four words are in our 'how to resist peer pressure' strategy?  
**STOP, BREATHE, LISTEN, RESPOND!**

### Wrap-Up

As instructed in lessons 1, 2 and 3, use the remaining time to give energy awards, assemble for a closing cheer and enjoy a healthy snack.

Consider using the following as the closing cheer:  
**"Girls on the Run, STOP BREATHE LISTEN and RESPOND!"**



**I Choose to Run the Right Pace for Me**

Each girl will receive one strip of cardstock with this phrase written on it.

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**I Choose to run the right Pace for me!**  
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**I Choose to run the right Pace for me!**  
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**I Choose to run the right Pace for me!**  
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**I Choose to run the right Pace for me!**  
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**I Choose to run the right Pace for me!**  
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