



TAKING DOWN TOBACCO

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WAYS TO ESCAPE THE VAPE GROUP ACTIVITY

Below are some activities to help teens think about the reasons they don't vape or want to stop vaping, and help them practice what they can say or do if they ever feel pressured to vape.

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the activities by saying the following:

If you're not into smoking or vaping, or want to stop vaping, that's awesome, and it's important to find ways you are comfortable with to let people know your status! Each person is different and what works for one person may not work for you. That's why it's important to practice what you would say or do if you're in a situation where you are feeling pressured to vape or smoke. We are going to do some activities to help you think about the reasons you don't vape, or want to stop, and what you would say or do if you ever feel pressured to smoke or vape. It's important that we don't share names and that we are all comfortable with what we do share. Only share what you feel comfortable sharing.

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

- Ask the participants to think of a time they made an excuse to get out of doing something they really didn't want to do like chores, homework, or work.
- Designate one area of the room as "That's me!" and a second area as "Maybe once or twice...", and third area as "I would never!" Have all participants stand up.
- Read the following situations and have the participants walk to the area room that represents their response to the situation. They can stay where they are while the next situation is read.
- Say, *have you ever made an excuse to NOT doing to the following?*
 1. Clean your room
 2. Do your homework
 3. Stay out late
 4. Argue with a family member
 5. Text someone back
 6. Get out of bed
- Say, *we've all made an excuse or had a reason for not doing something we didn't feel like or want to do. And, that ability to stand up for ourselves and our choices can also help us when we are in uncomfortable or pressure situations with friends or peers.*

🔄 Modification: If there are participants that are not physically able to participate in this activity, have everyone raise a hand for each response.

UNDER PRESSURE

- Ask the participants to think about a time they felt uncomfortable or pressured to do something they really didn't want to do, and how they responded, or what they did in that situation.
- Have participants form pairs or triads and share the following (if comfortable):
 1. What was the pressure situation?
 2. How did they respond?
 3. How would they respond differently if they are in that situation again? (if applicable)
- Ask if anyone feels comfortable sharing their pressure situation and how they responded.
- Say, *when you're in a difficult situation, it's important to find a way you are comfortable responding. That could be saying no or no thanks, giving a reason, changing the subject, making a joke, walking away, staying quiet, or something else.*
And, sometimes we go along with something not because we want to but because we don't know how to respond. We may be afraid of losing a friend, or being left out, or looking uncool. Maybe we are even worried we'll get made fun of or people will think we are different. We all feel that way sometimes. But we can always choose a different way to respond next time.

I DON'T VAPE BECAUSE...

- Ask participants to think about some reasons people may choose to not vape.
- Ask for volunteers to share some of the reasons.
- Write the responses on a board or flipchart so everyone can see.
- Ask participants to think about all the reasons THEY don't vape or want to stop vaping. Ask them to review the list the group created for inspiration.
- Ask participants to think about the **most important** reason they don't vape, or want to stop vaping.
- Ask participants to write on a piece of paper or text themselves a message (if allowed) and complete this sentence, **"I don't vape because..."**
- Ask volunteers that feel comfortable, to share their "I don't vape because..." statement.
- Say, *whatever your reason, it matters, it's important, and you deserve for people to honor it! Take a screen shot or picture of your "I don't vape because..." statement and pull it up when you need the reminder!*

REFUSE, EXPLAIN, LEAVE, OR SOMETHING ELSE

- Say, *it's super important to plan ahead for pressure situations so you aren't tempted to do something you really don't want to do. Here's a few tips to remember for any pressure situation:*
 - **REFUSE** – say *no, nah, or no thanks*
 - **EXPLAIN** – give a reason or excuse (like your “*I don't vape because...*” statement)
 - **LEAVE** – walk away or find a way to exit the situation
- Have all participants stand up. Designate one area of the room as “Refuse,” a second area as “Explain,” a third area as “Leave,” and a fourth area as “Something Else.”
- Read some or all the situations listed below and have the participants walk to the area of the room that represents how they would feel most comfortable responding. They can stay where they are while the next situation is read. After each situation, ask the volunteers from the “Something Else” group to share how they would respond.
 1. Kids are vaping in the bathroom at school and offer you a hit.
 2. You're texting with a friend and they suggest you try JUULing together.
 3. You're in a car with fiends, and they want to hotbox with a vape.
 4. Someone passes you a JUUL in class.
 5. After practice, a teammate passes around a vape.
 6. Someone you're crushing on wants to vape with you.
 7. You're super stressed and heard JUULing can help.
 8. Ask participants to share other pressure situations they have experienced or witnessed.

WRAPPING UP

Say, thank you for participating in this activity and thinking about why you don't vape, or want to stop, and some ways you can handle pressure situations. Here's the thing, this is YOUR decision! Think about your "I don't vape because" statement. Consider practicing situations and responses with a trusted friend or family member. Set and respect your boundaries, and ask other people to do so as well. You deserve to live your very best life! And, if you've decided that's a nicotine-free life, be proud and let your actions reflect that decision!

- Print out and share with the participants the **Ways to Escape the Vape Resources** document which includes:
 - Ways to take action
 - Help with quitting vaping and smoking
 - Healthy stress management resources