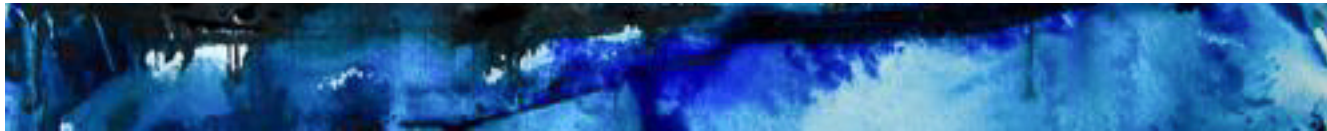


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Boys Only Toolkit



Enter the circle



**Peer Pressure**

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## Boys Only

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**Teen peer pressure** is the influence a teen's social group has on him or her. Peer pressure is a part of life for everyone, but it can be an especially strong influence during the teen years when peers are very important to a teen's identity. This means that teens need to learn to handle peer pressure, and to recognize when it is positive and when it is negative.

As adolescents enter the teen years, they usually begin to focus more on their peers or friends. The desire to fit in with peers can be a very strong influence on teens. Peers influence most aspects of a teen's life, including how teens dress, what music they listen to, and what kind of activities they are involved in. Peer pressure can be direct or indirect, but it is almost always present. Learning to handle peer pressure helps a teen mature and learn positive ways to get along with others.



1. Create a circle on the floor.
2. Have all participants stand on the outside of “the circle.”
3. Explain that you will read a question starting with, “Enter the circle if...” and that if it applies to them, they should step into the circle. Remind the students to be as honest as they are comfortable with and that the space is non-judgmental and safe. Explain there should be no talking during the game, except for the person asking the question and that there will be a discussion afterwards. Ask if there are any questions.
4. Begin the game. Read a question beginning with, “Enter the circle...(you have brown hair; you have blue eyes; you have a brother).” Participants step into the circle if it applies to them and remain on the starting side of the circle if it does not. Pause and ask the students to silently look around to see who is standing with them. Then ask them to go back to the starting side of the

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circle.

5. The following is a list of sample questions. The questions should be tailored to the needs of the age and populations you are working with.

6. Continue asking questions. Pause briefly before saying “next question.” After each question the students return to the starting side of the line.

7. After asking several questions, ask if anyone else has a question they would like to ask. Have volunteers ask their questions.

8. After several rounds of questions and entering the circle, have participants sit comfortably. Debrief/discuss. Ask the participants to share: How did it feel to cross the line? How did it feel when you didn't cross the line? What surprised you the most during this game? What did you learn? What lessons can you take away from this game?



## **“Enter the circle if...”**

- You have been in trouble for things friends made you do?
- You have been scared by a situation that a friend suggested?
- You find it hard to say No to a friend’s dare?
- You have talked a friend into doing things they did not want to do?
- You have done something illegal with a friend?
- Staying friends is more important than always obeying the rules?
- You have smoked or drank illegally at a friend’s house?
- You have lied to your parents to be out with friends?



## Sitting in a circle

- The stepping into the circle exercise may have generated an environment suited to exploring issues through discussion or reflection.
- The next step in exploring boys' attitudes to the topic being investigated is inviting them to share and explore their responses to the questions raised in the stepping into the circle session.
- First, you will need to create a safe space and some rules.
- The starting point may be to get all participants seated inside the circle. Use a length of hose or a long extension cord to create your circle.
- Reinforce the rules and invite boys to contribute any rules they feel will make the space safer and comfortable. The rules should reinforce the following qualities:

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- Warmth, closeness, connectedness, caring, respect for others, confidentiality, constructive feedback, cultural sensitivity, non-judgmental responses and inclusivity.

## Boys Only Circle Cards

- The pack of 173 Boys Only Cards and the pack of Boys Resilience Cards give you over 300 questions, statements and ideas to stimulate conversation. Use them as appropriate to get conversation started.

## Reflection

- The final activity of the Boys Only Circle can involve boys having the opportunity to reflect upon the session privately and to record their thoughts and experience. Boys are usually less interested in journaling than girls. You may prefer to use different terminology e.g. keeping a logbook.
- A sample Boys Only Circle Logbook is included in the toolkit.





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