Refusal Skills

This publication was made possible by Grant Number TP1AH000081-01-01 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health; its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Department of Health and Human Services.
What is Peer/Partner Pressure?

• Sometimes, our friends or the person we are dating may pressure us to do things of which we feel unsure.

• What are some examples of things our friends might pressure us about?

• What are some examples of things our dating partner might pressure us about?
Refusal Skills

• If you are in a situation where someone pressures you to do something that you do not want to do, how might you respond?
• It is important that we have a plan for how we want to respond in high-pressure situations.
• Refusal skills take practice!
• The next few slides will help us better understand how we can respond.
Stop and Say “No!”

• **STOP** – It’s a good idea to **STOP** when you start to feel uncomfortable. If you **STOP**, you have time to take a deep breath and think clearly about what is happening.

• **STOPPING** is a good first step towards an effective conversation.

• **SAY NO** – Don’t assume your partner can read your mind. You need to say NO and say it like you *mean* it. Don’t laugh, send mixed signals (by continuing to be sexual while saying NO) or pretend like it’s “no big deal”.

• Your partner should respect you as soon as you **STOP** and **SAY NO**. If they continues to pressure you, you have every right to leave.
Give a Reason Why

• **WHY** – After you say NO you can be prepared to give your partner a reason **WHY**. Some examples might be:
  • I’m just not ready.
  • I’m not ready to be a parent.
  • I don’t want to worry about STDs.
  • Our relationship is fine without sex.
  • I want to wait.

REMEMBER – It’s always ok to just simply say, “I don’t want to!” That is enough of a reason and your partner should respect it!
Give a Reason Why . . . You Want to Wait

• **WAIT** – If you’ve decided it is best for you to **WAIT**, this is a decision you must stick to, and your partner must respect.

• You might discuss how long you plan to stay abstinent and what your boundaries are. *(Ex. “I don’t mind kissing, but I’m waiting to have sex until I’m older, and more ready. I hope you can respect that.”)*
Avoid the Situation

• **AVOID** – If possible, it is best to **AVOID** situations where you might be tempted to have sex (ex: high pressure times like being alone with your partner or drinking/using drugs, which can lower your inhibitions).

• By **AVOIDING** risky situations, you are less likely to end up doing something you’ll regret.
Offer Alternatives

• **ALTERNATIVES** – to show your partner you care about them suggest some **ALTERNATIVES** to having sex. Some examples might be:

- Let’s go to the movies.
- Let’s have some friends over.
- Let’s go play video games.
- Let’s go for a walk.
Get Out of an Unsafe Situation

• **GET OUT** – If you find that the situation you are in is becoming unsafe be prepared to leave.

• If your partner is not respecting your feelings, continues to pressure you or is becoming angry or violent, you should **GET OUT** as quickly and safely as possible. Call for help if you need to. Your boundaries should ALWAYS be respected.
Go Do Something Fun

• **GO** do something fun – If your partner is being respectful of your boundaries you could end the conversation by doing something you both enjoy to strengthen your relationship.

• This conversation can be awkward! Doing something fun can lighten the mood! You could go out to eat, see a funny movie or just go on a walk together.
S - Stop and Say No

W - Give a reason Why you want to Wait

A - Avoid the situation and offer Alternatives

G - Get out of an unsafe situation or Go do something fun
If you get into a high pressure situation, just remember
Using **SWAG** in non-sexual situations

Remember – you can use **SWAG** to negotiate out of any high pressure/risky scenario, not just sex.

You can use **SWAG** to say no to drinking, drugs, smoking, skipping school or anything!
SWAG Examples

Stop and Say No
-No, I don’t want to have sex!
-No, I want to wait!
-No, I mean it. I do not want to do this!
-Stop pressuring me, I said no!

Why You Want to Wait
-I’m not ready to handle the adult responsibility that comes with sex.
-I don’t want to be a parent.
-I just don’t want to have sex.

Avoid the Situation
-I don’t want to be in the bedroom with the door closed.
-Can we hang out in a group so we aren’t tempted?

Offer Alternatives
-Let’s go to a movie.
-Let’s get something to eat.

Get Out (unsafe/pressure continues)
-I’m leaving because you aren’t respecting my decision.
-If you don’t stop pressuring me I’m going to break up with you!

Go do something Fun! (safe/respectful)
-Thank you for respecting me. I love you! Do you want to go out?
-I know this conversation was hard. Let’s go to the mall and hang out for awhile.