



Peer Pressure Online

A guide for Staff



About *Be Strong Online*

Peer Pressure Online is part of the Be Strong Online Ambassadors Programme from The Diana Award and Vodafone. This peer-led programme aims to empower young people to teach their peers about digital skills and online safety, with modules exploring topics such as cyberbullying, selfies and self-esteem, digital footprint, gaming and coding. For more information on the programme, visit bestrongonline.antibullyingpro.com.

Peer Pressure Online

As young people are developing their identity online they also are facing new social pressures to cope with in the digital world. From cyberbullying and 'sexting' – the sharing of sexually explicit photos online or via mobile- to taking part in online dares or feeling pressured to fit in with activities broadcast on social media, it is crucial that young people develop the critical thinking skills and confidence to cope with these situations when they arise.

The aim of this module is to encourage discussion amongst students about the pressures they face online and to help them to develop strategies to cope in these situations. The Be Strong Online Ambassadors first introduce the topic with a discussion about how online peer pressure could be defined, examples that could be given and the ways in which it differs to peer pressure offline. Then different aspects of the topic are explored in the four activity choices: a debate activity, Forum Theatre activity, Bystanders vs Upstanders activity and an activity exploring 'risky behaviours' online and offline.

How it works

This programme uses a peer-to-peer format, which is based on the highly successful approach used by The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Ambassador Programme.

The first steps to running this module successfully are recruiting a small team of Be Strong Online Ambassadors, a group of students who are responsible for delivering a 20-30 minute session on *Peer Pressure Online* with a group of younger students. We recommend choosing Be Strong Online Ambassadors from Years 8 and above, who then deliver to a group of Year 7s/8s.

Training the Be Strong Online Ambassadors

You should run a training session with your team to do the following:

- Explore their role as a Be Strong Online Ambassador
- Examine the Lesson Plan in depth
- Divide the activity choices between the group and give pairs time to prepare and practice their activity. Ambassadors then come together to demonstrate their activity to the rest of the group

Options for the Be Strong Online Ambassadors' session with younger students

- Once your group feel confident enough after their training, arrange for them to deliver to a group of younger students
- They might like to do this as a team or in pairs
- They could extend the session to a full hour and run all four activity choices, perhaps in pairs in a carousel style around the room

Training the Be Strong Online Ambassadors

This training session is designed to take approximately 2 hours. If you feel that the Be Strong Online Ambassadors need more time before delivering their session, you may like to explore the topic further in another training session before they deliver.

Activity	Description	Approx. timings	Links to other resources
Introductions	Run an ice breaker activity if the students don't know each other; explain their task and role as Be Strong Online Ambassadors.	10 minutes	
Peer Pressure Online Intro	Discuss: what kind of pressure do you face online? Why is it important to explore with younger students?	10 minutes	
Examine Lesson Plan	Hand out Lesson Plan, look through it for general overview; discuss learning objectives	10 minutes	<i>Peer Pressure Online</i> Lesson Plan; Learning Objectives PowerPoint slide
Things to bear in mind	Go over ground rules the team need to explain students at start of session	5 minutes	P.6 of Lesson Plan; Ground Rules PowerPoint slide
Activity Selection	Practice running the intro activities. Divide the 4 activity choices between the group to prepare and present to the rest of the group; feedback and selection of activity	45 minutes	P. 7-24 of Lesson Plan; Activity sheets in appendix; Activity slides
Follow-up Activities	Discuss the follow-up activity; look at Student/Parent Info sheets they should hand out to everyone	10 minutes	Lesson Plan Appendix; Info Sheets
Feedback	How Ambassadors might like to get feedback from students	5 minutes	P.25 of Lesson Plan
Wrap-up	Addressing any concerns from the team; check for understanding; next steps	15 minutes	<i>Peer Pressure Online</i> nfo sheet & Parent Info Sheet

For more info please visit bestrongonline.antibullyingpro.com.

Activity Grades



Moderately challenging activity which may need some extra time to practice and research

A straightforward, structured activity to use if you want the students to understand this issue quickly



If you have more time and feel the students are more advanced in this area, use this activity

Key Considerations

Peer Pressure Online is designed to follow the same format as the rest of the *Be Strong Online* modules and to be delivered as a standalone session by the Be Strong Online Ambassadors.

However the topic lends itself to areas of **PSHE** and you may wish to consider incorporating the lesson plan into a wider PSHE programme of study. For more information on PSHE curriculum links, please visit our website: bestrongonline.antibullyingpro.com.

It is important to note that the content of this module is written to be delivered by the Be Strong Online Ambassadors. The purpose is for them to engage younger students in a conversation about the topic and help them develop the resilience they need to cope with peer pressure they encounter online.

Topics such as online grooming, extremism, and coercion in relationships are not covered in this module. These topics do have links with online peer pressure but should be delivered by a trained staff member with more time than the 20-30 minutes allocated for this session.

Activities 2 and 4 in this module do include discussions about sending and receiving sexually suggestive images, or 'sexting'. This topic is an important part of peer pressure online: one study found that more than a third of under 18s in the UK have received an offensive or distressing sexual image via their mobile or computer (<http://www.vodafone.com/content/parents/advice/sexting.html>).

In-depth advice on this topic is available for students and parents in the Information Sheets which should be given to all students at the end of the session. However, Be Strong Online Ambassadors should be given the freedom to leave this out of their sessions if they don't feel comfortable discussing it with younger students. Sexting is an optional discussion point in both activities and can be taken out if necessary. Remember that a staff member should always be on hand in case of any behavioural issues in the session and Be Strong Online Ambassadors may benefit from extra staff support during these discussions.

Bullying is touched upon in this module in relation to feeling pressured to take part in cyberbullying, as is the concept of 'bystander' vs 'upstander'. If you would like to explore bullying in more detail, you can download the *Cyberbullying* module for free from our website: bestrongonline.antibullyingpro.com.

If you have any concerns about cyberbullying, sexting or any other online safety issue, you can contact the Professionals Online Safety Helpline from the UK Safer Internet Centre:

