

influence

Resources for Teens from Real Body Story

Positive Peer Influence

Teens are you aware of your influence? Most people think of peer influence in a negative way; peer pressure to try drugs or engage in deviant behaviors. We seldom talk about positive peer influence and how your relationships with friends can build each other up and protect each other. The purpose of **influence** is to educate teens and equip them with the tools to practice positive peer influence. Most scholars agree that body image dissatisfaction is influenced by parents, media and peers. **influence** gives you resources to understand and respond to your environment in a way that will have a lasting impact on your circle of friends.

Take the **influence** quiz and find out your **inIQ**. Answer True or False for the following questions:

1. Best friends have a greater ability to influence than casual friends.
2. Once a peer group influences friends, parents have no ability to influence.
3. During the teen years, peer relationships are important for healthy development.
4. Many girls believe that if they were thinner and more attractive they'd be popular.

5. Friends just talking about "not dieting" actually have the ability to prevent and reduce unhealthy dieting behaviors of their friends.

6. When my friends talk about weight it makes me uncomfortable so I don't say anything at all. My lack of participation in the conversation has no impact on my friends.

7. When friends in my clique talk about advertisements in fashion magazines we may unknowingly be communicating messages about body image.

8. The media is responsible for girls' body image dissatisfaction.

9. Very few girls talk to their friends about their weight, shape and dieting.

10. Peer influence peaks around age fourteen (14).

inIQ answers-

1. False. According to researchers, multiple friends exert equal levels of influence.

2. False. Friends rely on peers but they continue to be influenced by parents.

3. True

4. True

5. True

6. False. Conversations with friends may act as a protective factor against body image dissatisfaction.

7. True

8. False. Researchers believe the media, parents and peers equally contribute.



9. False. A 1992 study by Levine and Smolak found that 41.5% of girls talked to friends.

10. True



Selected References:

deGuzman, Maria. "Friendships, Peer Influence, and Peer Pressure During the Teen Years." August 2007. [NebGuide](http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/epublic/live/g1751/build/g1751.pdf). <<http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/epublic/live/g1751/build/g1751.pdf>>.

Gandara, Patricia. "Peer Group Influence." 2002. [Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence](http://crede.berkeley.edu/research/sfc/3.5es.html). <<http://crede.berkeley.edu/research/sfc/3.5es.html>>.

Hemal Shroff and J. Kevin Thompson. "Self-Esteem in Adolescents Peer Influences, Body-image Dissatisfaction, Eating Dysfunction and Self-esteem in Adolescent Girls." [Journal of Health Psychology](http://www.psychology.com) (2006): 533-551.

Maxwell, Kimberly Ann. "Do Friends Matter? The role of peer influence on adolescent risk behavior." Philadelphia: University Of Pennsylvania, 2000.

Try This: Open and honest communication is one way to secure trust between friends and build up your friend's self-esteem. When talking one-on-one or in a group of friends—Compliment a friend, Defend your friends, and Hold them accountable, speaking to them in a loving way they'll know you care about them.

Real Body Story

www.realbodystory.com