

## AVOIDING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL



You know that tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs are harmful to your health and that they're illegal. You may be dead set against them, but you're worried about how to handle the pressure from friends who might offer you drugs. It can be tough – even though you don't like what they're doing at that moment, you might really like the people. You don't want to lose friends, or look uncool, but you don't want to use. What do you do?

## NOT EVERYONE IS USING.

If you're offered drugs or alcohol, it may feel like you'll be the odd one out if you say no. The truth is that most teens don't use these substances. The number of young people using tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs has been steadily dropping. About 80% of high school students don't use marijuana or smoke cigarettes; over 70% don't drink alcohol, and over 95% stay away from illegal drugs like ecstasy, inhalants, and cocaine.

Don't be afraid to say no - you're in good company when you do.

A lot of times a simple "No, thanks" will end the discussion. If you say "no" politely, the person offering will probably just leave you alone. If someone is putting the pressure on, leaving the situation altogether is the best thing to do. You could be in danger just by being there.

If you're close friends with the people offering you drugs, you may feel that saying no isn't enough. You care about your friends and want them to live a healthy life. Remember, you don't have to reject the person, just what the person is doing. Follow up your "no, thanks," by encouraging them to quit using.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Go to [www.intheknowzone.com](http://www.intheknowzone.com) for more information on substance abuse. Increase your knowledge using the information, statistics, images, and links. Test your understanding with a quick quiz.

**Don't stay in the dark.  
Get In the Know!**

## IN THE KNOW: What to Say when you Want to



**SAY  
NO**

**in the know**

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## You Can.....

### BE DIRECT - GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.



"One of my boys kept trying to get me to smoke weed with him. I finally came out and said, 'Listen, we're friends. You've got to understand that I don't get high.'"

Darrell-Houston, Texas

"You should have seen my ex-boyfriend's face when I said, 'You know I'm not smoking that with you, right?' He just put it away."

Lakecia-San Mateo, California

### PLAY IT OFF - MAKE IT INTO A JOKE.

"I've got a reputation for being kind of crazy. I can just be like, 'If you think I'm crazy now, you definitely don't want to see me high!'"

Max-Kansas City, Missouri

"A bunch of the girls in my school smoke cigarettes. I just try to make a joke of it, like, 'This body is a temple!'"

Joelle-Aurora, Illinois

### CHANGE THE SUBJECT - THEY'LL FORGET THEY OFFERED YOU DRUGS.

"My friend's boyfriend offered a bunch of us beers. I acted like I didn't hear him and started talking about the prom. A few of them had beers, but no one even noticed that I didn't."

Amy-Sandy, Utah

"A couple of my friends offered me Ecstasy at a dance, but I said, 'Wait a sec, is my hair a mess in the back?' They fixed my hair, and then we just started dancing again. I don't think they realized that I didn't take any."

Tiffany-Baton Rouge, Louisiana

### BODY LANGUAGE - ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS.

"I was at this party where people started passing a joint around. When it came my way, I just leaned back out of the circle and let it go by me. No one even said anything."

Todd-New Rochelle, New York



"A guy at a dance was trying to give me some X (Ecstasy). I just pretended I didn't hear him and turned to talk to my friend instead."

Angie-Alexandria, Virginia

### EXCUSES, EXCUSES - SOME PEOPLE CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH.

"One time some of my friends were doing acid (LSD). It was already late at night, so I just said I had to work in the morning. Not too long after that, I went home."

Juan-Phoenix, Arizona

"I say I have asthma. No one ever gives me a hard time for not smoking cigarettes or pot. I don't even really have asthma!"

Edward-Fayetteville, North Carolina

### BE LOW KEY - IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE AN ATTENTION-GETTER.



"I'm kind of mellow. So if I get offered junk, I just act surprised or confused and say, 'No, thanks,' like it's no big deal. I don't like to be around that scene, so I usually take off."

Josh-Portland, Oregon

"The first time someone offered me pot, I got upset and they made fun of me for it. When it happened another time, I was laid back and said, 'I'm not into that.' They moved on."

Ana-Plano, Texas

### USE THE ANCESTORS - YOUR PARENTS ARE HAPPY TO HELP.

"I was with some kids and this girl started cutting up lines of coke. I said, 'Dudes, count me out. My folks random drug test me ever since I got suspended.' A total lie."

Brian-San Diego, California



"When kids are drinking at parties, I go, 'I can't! My mom checks me out the minute I walk in the door!' I act all disappointed. It works."

Natalie-Tampa, Florida

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### VOTE WITH YOUR FEET - DON'T STICK AROUND.

"We were at a school football game when this girl started passing out white pills. I grabbed my best friend's arm and said, 'Oh, there's Jessica! Let's go say hi.' We left and spent the rest of the game somewhere else."

Hannah-Bloomington, Minnesota

"This guy tried to pass me a joint at a party. I told him, 'I need a soda. See you in a bit.' He left me alone. I don't care what he thinks anyway."

Trevor-Waltham, Massachusetts

## ... Choose to Refuse!