

# Refusal Skills Brainstorm

**Recommended Age: 12+**

## Goal

- To discuss ways to refuse substances and resist pressure from others.

## Have Ready

- Flipchart paper or whiteboard and markers.

## Instructions

- Have youth think about a situation where someone is using more often than they want to, so they've decided to cut down. **"If someone wanted to cut down on drinking (for example), would going to a party where other people are drinking be easy?"** A lot of times there can be pressure for people to join in. Let's list a few ways people can respond if others are trying to pressure them to use a substance.

## Sample Flipchart

### Ways to say no

- **No thanks, I'm driving**
- **I've got a big test/game tomorrow**
- **I just don't want to**
- **No, I'm good**
- **Nah, I'm cutting down, thanks though**
- Someone needs to stay sober to watch out for you
- I'm hungover from yesterday
- I'm working/babysitting tomorrow
- I'll get in trouble/grounded

## Debrief

- Validate the responses youth provide, and add that sometimes it can be easier to actually appear to be drinking when you're not. Some suggestions for this would be to walk around with a beer bottle filled with water, or drink pop but tell people that it's mixed with alcohol.
- Ask youth, **"Who could you talk to if you were concerned about your usage?"** AFM (24-hour phone line and youth programs, see resource pages at the end of this chapter), guidance counsellor, addiction worker, teacher, family member, Elder or Knowledge Keeper; essentially, someone you trust who can be supportive. Talking with people who have accurate information about drugs and alcohol can be helpful, whether it's concerns we may have about the impact of using, looking into why we use, or learning more about particular effects. Just knowing who we can talk to if we have concerns can be helpful.

## Additional Activities

Ideally, this activity can be followed by:

- Abstinence Activities Scenario Cards & Brainstorm
- Partying Safer Brainstorm
- Decisional Balancing Reflection
- Identifying Strengths Reflection Activity