

# We must help our children to resist peer pressure

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It is very disturbing that so many Americans insist on conforming. Individuality in America seems to be eroding under group pressure. Group pressure can lead to immorality and be against the health of the pressured victims.

For example, a recent "Bill Cosby Show" focused on peer pressure. One of his daughters went to a friend's home with a group of other girls. The girls were playing a game wherein each group member who missed a word would have to drink a glass of alcoholic beverage. Of course, Vanessa got high. However, she learned her lesson from the situation.

Parents assume that they have children of average intelligence. Most parents think, "Oh, our children would never do thing like that."



Falls

Think about the thousands of youth who have died in America playing Russian Roulette.

Peer pressure often accounts for a child's first bout with drinking and for experiments in sex and drugs. Worst of all peer pressure can crush a child's budding free will and drive the youngster into a stampede toward sameness.

Parents cannot stop the effects of peer pressure on their children, but they can offset the negative impact of peer pressure by doing the following things:

- Control the peer pressure in your own life. Stop setting bad examples for your children by saying such things as, "Oh, don't be silly, sweetheart. I can't wear that old thing. Can you imagine what people will say?" This emphasizes what others think -- not what you think.
- Don't promote competition with remarks such as, "You let your team down when you dropped the

## Area Scouts mark 25-percent increase in Good Turn event

Special to the Chronicle

People throughout Northwest North Carolina responded generously to the Scouting for Food Good Turn last week by giving more than 108,000 pounds of non-perishable foodstuffs for distribution to the hungry and needy of the area.

The food collected Saturday, Nov. 18, by Scouts of Old Hickory Council was almost 25 percent more than collected last year when residents contributed 80,000 pounds.

As part of the nationwide Scouting for Food Good Turn, the council's effort saw nearly 1,500 scouts, explorers and cubs participating. There were more than 500 scouts involved in the collection this year than last year, said Lucien Rice, the council's field executive.

"The response by people in our area was just overwhelming," Mr. Rice said. "It looks as though a natural disaster like the recent hurricane just caused them to want to respond. It really shows the character of people in the Northwest."

Mr. Rice also reported that food continues to come into the Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina, based in Winston-Salem, following Saturday's collection by the scouts. The amount collected by the scouts does not include additional food contributed through other United Way agencies, Mr. Rice said.

ball. I was so embarrassed when everybody saw you strike out."

Here the child gets the feeling that he must please other people. Instead, emphasize the fact that competition is good only if you enjoy it and it improves your per-

formance. Never compare yourself with what others are doing.

• Remember that parents ought to have some rules. No rules are just as harmful as too many rules.

• Stress individual differences. Teach children that being different

is not bad.

• If a child wants to start a new activity, tell the child to begin a new activity before he drops the old one.

• Supervise your children. Keep your eyes and ears open, and your words at a minimum.

Go outside your house and see how your children act when they are playing with others; look out the window, or stop by the bowling alley or skating rink.

• Coach your child to say no if peers pressure him or her to engage

in dangerous, illegal or inappropriate activity.

• Never overdo criticism of your child's friends. Ask the child's opinion. See what he thinks.

• Practice what you preach about resisting peer pressure.

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