**2007**

**11-13 Years**

**3rd Place**

**Sonia T. Nyathi**

**Age 12**

Peer pressure

What is peer pressure?

Firstly what is peer pressure? According to the English dictionary Peer pressure is a social pressure on somebody to adopt a particular type of behavior, dress or attitude. In order to be accepted to be part of a group.

Teenagers get into a lot of peer pressure although it’s a hard position to be in, you always have the opportunity to make your own choice and make the right choice. Some teenagers think it’s cool to do particular things such as taking drugs, cheating, stealing or even just skipping a class. They try to force someone or persuade someone into doing these things to be part of a group. The victim always feels under a lot of pressure and has a lot of things running in their mind. They

Usually say yes, when asked if they want to join in but later on they feel guilty about the choice they have made.

How does it affect the community?

According to the news England is the worst country for a child to grow up; one reason is because peer pressure is a very common thing. It leads to black on black crime. Police are now keeping a close eye on this kind of crime, and young people. Why should you be pressurized to kill other people? Peer pressure is now becoming very brutal now black people are joining gangs and forgetting what they’ve been taught. Families feel ashamed to see their children doing what they do. In Africa the whole village brings up a child, whereas a child in London has less advantage. When I visited my country people made me feel as though I was the lucky one although I felt that it was them who were lucky to have such a big community who cared about them.

Children usually go to their friends for advice. It is normal to listen and ask for things from people in your age group, when on the other hand you could go and ask from people with more experience like your parents, teachers or grown ups that you trust because after all grown ups also do get into peer pressure. Making decisions in life is not easy, when friends try to force you into doing things you know you are not allowed to be doing in your free time, it is quite hard to find a clear answer. They often try to make you feel small, and tell you what a good time you would have if you do what they ask; after all you wouldn’t want to spend your free time at home. Peer pressure affects people in many ways and there are many consequences of what can happen. People often want to be cool usually the things your friends do seem cool, still on the other hand seems wrong.

Why do people give in to peer pressure?

People give in to peer pressure because they just want to be liked, fit in or not have people laughing at them. They never seem to realize what they are getting themselves into, and don’t often know that peer pressure is happening to them.

Conclusion (how can peer pressure be stopped?)

There is not really that much that grown ups can do to help you besides giving you advice. There is a very simple way of getting yourself out of peer pressure simply just by saying “no”. It may seem hard but you have to have confidence in yourself. You should never do what your friends tell you to do, you should do what you think is best for you. At the end of the day you would be proud of the fact that you stood up for yourself. Then you’d be seen as an independent person. You are less stressed out and don’t have to worry about bad things happening in the future. There are other things that you could do in your free time that won’t result in bad endings. Believe in yourself and you would not rely on bad peer pressure.