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### Friends & Peer Pressure

## Friends: The Good and the Bad

A 100-year-old woman was asked, “What do you think is the best thing about being 100?”

“No peer pressure,” she replied with a smile.

Peer pressure can be positive and negative. We often think of the negative—kids leading their friends to smoke, do drugs, cut class, bully others, cheat, lie, steal.

But it is also true that friends influence others to go to church, follow God, make good decisions, get involved in school activities, help others, achieve their goals, and more.

Why do kids give in to peer pressure? They want to belong and be connected. They don't want to lose friends or be talked about negatively. Kids fear being rejected if they don't go along with the group. Kids sometimes do things they wouldn't normally do just to fit in.

As Christians, we want to protect children from negative peer pressure and encourage them to be a positive influence on their friends. We do need to have contact with others so we can show them Christ's love. But our closest friends should be godly people who believe as we do and help us do God's will.

Our role as adults is to encourage kids to find friends who will support them and want the best for them.

Do what they know is right and stand up for their beliefs.

Be a positive influence on their friends.  
You can influence kids and teach them to influence others positively.

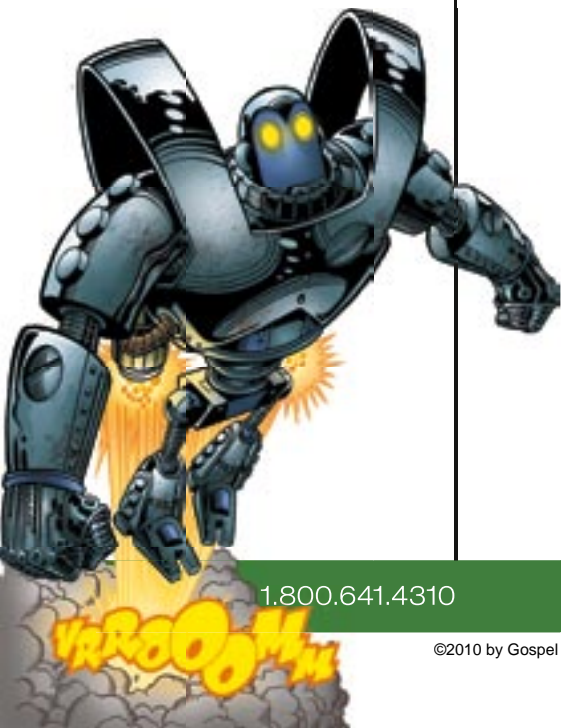


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## Holsom Comics Discussion Questions

After the kids have read [Holsom Comics Issue 4](#), ask these questions to spark discussions about friends and peer pressure.

- What kind of pressure did Jordan feel about going to the party? (she wanted to fit in with her friends)
- What did peer pressure cause her to do to her parents? (lie)
- What did Jordan's friend Noah do to try to help her? (tried to get her to not lie to begin with; tried to help her out of trouble).
- Has someone ever tried to get you to do something you knew was wrong? How did you handle it? (Answers to this and the following questions will vary.)
- What is your best friend like? Why do you like that person?
- How can you be a good friend?
- What advice would you give Jordan?
- How do you influence your friends to do good things?
- How do you keep people from influencing you to do wrong?



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## How To Be a Good Friend

A good friend shows interest in others, listens when others speak, and offers to help. A good friend also shows compassion and forgiveness. Give your kids a chance to think of other characteristics of good friends. Provide kids with index cards and let them write a word or phrase that describes a trait of a good friend, one idea per card.

Collect all the cards and secretly insert a few that are not traits of good friends, e.g., talk you into doing something wrong; talk about you behind your back; always wanting to do what they want; too busy to be with you. Draw a large circle on the board or a large sheet of paper. Label it "Good Friends." Read each card aloud. Tape the cards describing how to be a good friend inside the circle. Tape the other cards outside of the circle.

Some traits of good friends include:

- Listens
- Has a sense of humor
- Wants the best for you
- Supports you
- Encourages you
- Loves you
- Is honest
- Is trustworthy
- Is dependable
- Prays for you

Anyone can improve their friends' qualities. Ask your kids to think of ways to be better friends.

