

Climbing Out

16. *Would You Like a Cookie?*

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Object lesson

Grades: 1-12

Group Size: 3 or more

Time: 5-10 minutes

Introduction: Friends can sometimes influence us to participate in negative activities before we think about the risks. This activity will demonstrate the importance of considering the possible consequences before allowing ourselves to be influenced by peer pressure.

Materials:

- 1 container with a lid, filled with 1 package of Double Stuf Oreos

Activity:

To set up this activity, take one of the Oreos in the container and mark it by scraping off some of the markings. For example, you could scrape the word "Oreo" off the cookie so it's easily recognizable. Make sure you can tell which one you have marked, and don't let the participants see you mark it. The Oreo you marked should be on top when you open the cookie jar and show the students.

Open the container in front of the group. Remove the Oreo you marked and slide off one of the cookies to reveal the frosting. Hold the cookie up to show the frosting, then quickly lick it, put it back together, and return it to the cookie jar. Put the lid on and gently shake it to mix up the cookies. Open the container and walk around the room, offering cookies to individuals in the group. For obvious reasons, they will be reluctant to take a cookie. If no one takes one, try to persuade someone to take one. If someone does take one, tell him or her not to eat it yet. (After the processing questions, make sure the cookie they took is not the one you marked.)

Processing the Experience:

- Has anyone ever done something with a group of friends that you would not have done if you were by yourself? What was it?

If someone took a cookie, ask:

- Why did you take a cookie?
- What were the risks?
- What if you got the one that I licked?
- What if I had a deadly disease that was transmitted by body fluids?
- Why do we sometimes make choices before we consider the consequences?

If no one took a cookie, ask:

- Why didn't any of you take a cookie?
- What if everyone in the room took a cookie? What kind of pressure would you feel?
- I only licked it – what is the worst that could happen?
- Do we always consider the risks when a friend suggests doing something that could get us in trouble?
- Why do we follow along?
- Why is peer pressure so hard?