

# Staying Safe in Risky Situations

## What to Know

Risky behaviors are choices you make that put you at risk for negative consequences, like poor health, injury, or even death.

Here are some examples of risky behavior:

- Any choice that contributes to unintentional injuries, harm, or violence
- Tobacco use, including vaping
- Alcohol use
- Illegal drug use or misuse of over the counter or prescription medication
- Sexual behaviors that lead to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections

## What to Do

As you grow up, you'll encounter a range of situations that might lead to risky behavior. Can you think of situations that you or your friends have been in that might have been risky? List them.

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Have you ever felt pressured to do something that you were uncomfortable with because it seemed risky? Explain.

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Are you comfortable talking to your parents or other trusted adults about situations that have made you uncomfortable? Why or why not?

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If you're in a risky or even dangerous situation, can you contact your parents or a trusted adult to help you? Why or why not?

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Read the following scenarios and answer the questions.

1. You are going to a party at your friend Matthew's house, and you heard his parents won't be home. You also heard there will be alcohol there.

Imagine the party, and what it would be like if it were a lot of fun.

Matthew's party might be one where everyone has a great time. Describe the party. What happened? Why was it so fun? What is important for a party to be fun?

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Now, imagine that the party wasn't fun. Everything went wrong! What happened? Why wasn't the party fun? Whose fault was it?

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2. You and four friends are at a sleepover. One friend pulls out a handle of vodka and some weed from her bag. You know that one of the others won't want to drink or smoke. But your other friends might. The friend who brought the stuff will want everyone to join in and, if they don't, will start calling them names and giving them a really hard time.

What are the risks in this situation?

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Does the friend who brought the alcohol and marijuana have any responsibility in this situation? Why or why not?

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What will you do?

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What can you tell your friend so she stops pressuring everyone to use alcohol and marijuana? Are you comfortable speaking your mind? Why or why not?

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3. You're at a wedding reception. There is lots of alcohol, and most of the adults seem drunk. A friend from school is there, and you see that your friend is being pressured by some older teens to drink. They're making fun of your friend, who clearly feels uncomfortable.

What are the risks in this situation?

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What can you do to help your friend?

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What would your friend want you to do?

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If your friend knows you're observing what's happening, and you do nothing, will it affect your friendship? Why or why not?

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If you were in your friend's situation, what would you want your friend to do?

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What can you say to the older teens? Or is it better to find a sober adult to intervene? Explain.

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4. You're at a party and your friend Chris comes over to you and says he's put something "good" in the orange beverage he's drinking. Chris is acting silly and is clearly affected by whatever he put in the drink.

What are the risks in this situation?

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As a friend, do you have any responsibility or is it up to Chris to look after himself?

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What can you do to help?

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Knowing that Chris could make a complete fool of himself or, worse, get into real trouble, what would he want you to do?

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What would a good friend do for you if you were in this situation?

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5. You and your friend Ahmed are on your way to the mall when you meet three other friends from school. They're with Kieran. You know this means trouble because Kieran is older, and he's got a bottle of tequila and is vaping. He keeps urging everyone to drink and vape. None of the kids look like they're enjoying themselves, but they're going along with Kieran. Ahmed clearly doesn't want to hang out, but it seems like he'd rather be "one of the cool kids" than get teased.

What are the risks in this situation?

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What should you do? What can you say? Explain.

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6. You've been dating your significant other for a few months, and you really like them. Your friends keep asking if you're having sex. You're uncomfortable answering their questions, but you don't want them to think you're a prude.

What are the risks in this situation?

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What can you say?

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Your significant other *is* pressuring you to do things you're uncomfortable with. What can you do? What should you say?

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You might be unsure of your answers in some (or all) of the above scenarios. Is there someone you can talk to, like a parent, coach, teacher, or counselor?

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