

Ways to Say No: Refusal Skill Strategies Among Urban Adolescents

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Objectives: To examine associations among adolescents' generated verbal strategies (ie, Simple No, Declarative Statements, Excuse, Alternatives) and underlying nonverbal assertiveness in 2 refusal situations: smoking and shoplifting. **Methods:** Sixth-grade urban minority students (N = 454) participated in videotaped role-play assessments of peer refusal skills. **Results:** Differences were found by situation with students demonstrating greater use of Simple No in

the smoking refusal and Alternatives in the shoplifting refusal. Nonverbal assertiveness was similar across situations and was associated with Declarative Statements, but only in the smoking refusal. **Conclusions:** Prevention programs should tailor refusal skills practice to cover multiple situations.

Key words: refusal skills, adolescents, assertiveness, problem behaviors, observational methodology

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