

CONSENT

Remember: The inability to speak does not mean you can't express consent. It is important to explore how consent will be expressed and received, particularly with non-verbal replacements.

An important part of sexual wellbeing is having agency over sexual decisions and in sexual situations, which includes the ability to consent to sex, or to refuse it, or to withdraw consent at any point.

Consent is an agreement between two or more individuals to engage in any form of activity. Sexual consent, then, means actively agreeing to be sexual with someone. Without positive consent, any sexual activity is against the law and can be harmful.

Have you got consent?

Only 'YES' means YES! Silence or lack of resistance does not equal consent. Children and some individuals with intellectual disability cannot consent. Consent is needed for any kind of sexual activity, from sharing sexually explicit images or texts, to touching, to kissing, to intercourse. Consent needs to be clearly communicated and is reversible at any time.

Affirmative consent

- Consent is a conversation. It's everyone's responsibility to ensure that they have affirmative and informed consent.
- Consent should be communicated before any sexual activity begins, but it is important to keep this conversation going the entire time.

TIP: One way to ensure that you're constantly communicating consent is through dirty talk. Describe what you're going to do. If your partner doesn't seem into it, **stop**.

Note: The conversation about consent doesn't have to end when sex ends! It's always beneficial to discuss what you enjoyed and what can be improved.

Safe words

- Come up with a safe word with your partner/s. This is particularly helpful if you're not a vocal person during sexual activity.
- Ensure affirmative consent has been given and is still able to be communicated throughout.

TIP: Choose a safe word that is recognisable and easy to remember. That way it's easy to know when to stop. It's as easy as saying ... **pineapples!**



Withdrawing consent

You can withdraw consent at any time. It is everyone's right to be able to stop sexual activity whenever they want. If you disengage non-verbally from sex (such as pulling away or not seeming that into it), this is also a sign that consent has been withdrawn.