

So, what is consent?

Consent is about choice, respect and feeling safe to say yes – or no.



Consent means freely and voluntarily agreeing to something.

It happens when everyone involved has the freedom, information and capacity to make their own choice - without pressure, fear, manipulation or coercion. Consent is important in sexual relationships, but it also matters when making decisions about your body, personal space, relationships, contraception, money, communication and everyday life.

→ **CONSENT SHOULD BE**

Freely given



A person should be able to choose without being pressured, threatened, intimidated, manipulated or made to feel guilty.

Clear



Consent should be communicated through words or actions that show a person genuinely wants to participate. Silence or simply not resisting does not automatically mean consent.

Informed



People need to understand what they are agreeing to. Agreeing to one thing does not mean agreeing to something else.

Ongoing



Consent is not given once and then assumed. It needs to continue throughout an interaction.

Reversible



Anyone can change their mind at any time - even if they agreed earlier or something has already started.

Specific



Saying yes to one activity does not mean saying yes to every activity.

→ CONSENT IS NOT

- ✗ Being too frightened to say no.
- ✗ Giving in because someone keeps asking or applying pressure.
- ✗ Agreeing because you are worried about what will happen if you refuse.
- ✗ Being guilted, manipulated, threatened or intimidated into something.
- ✗ Assuming someone agrees because they have consented before.
- ✗ Assuming consent because you are married, dating or in a relationship.
- ✗ Continuing after someone has changed their mind.
- ✗ Taking advantage of someone who does not have the capacity to consent.



→ CONSENT AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

In a healthy relationship, **you are allowed to have boundaries.**

A partner does not have the right to control or pressure you into sexual activity, decide what happens to your body, interfere with contraception, demand access to your phone or accounts, control your money, or punish you for saying no.

Sometimes coercion can be difficult to recognise because it may not involve physical violence. It can include repeated pressure, emotional manipulation, threats, humiliation, withdrawing money or support, threatening to leave, using children, or creating fear about what might happen if you do not agree.

Compliance is not always consent.

Someone may go along with something because they are frightened, trying to prevent an argument or violence, protecting their children, or trying to keep themselves safe.



→ WHAT DOES HEALTHY CONSENT SOUND LIKE?

- 💬 "Is this okay?"
- 💬 "Do you want to keep going?"
- 💬 "You don't have to if you don't want to."
- 💬 "It's okay if you've changed your mind."
- 💬 "What would you feel comfortable with?"

→ **AND IMPORTANTLY**

- 💬 "No."
- "No" is enough. You do not have to justify a boundary.

If something doesn't feel right

You deserve to have your choices and boundaries respected. If you are unsure whether something you have experienced involved consent, you can talk with someone you trust or seek confidential specialist support.



In an emergency or if there is immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000).

Emergency service

Triple Zero (000)
