

Consent is Everything:

Understanding Sexual Consent

Consent is crucial for healthy, respectful, and legal sexual activity. It's about ensuring everyone is a willing participant.



WHAT IS CONSENT?

- Voluntary, enthusiastic, clear agreement.
- An enthusiastic "yes," not just the absence of "no."
- Ongoing, can be withdrawn anytime.
- Without consent, it's sexual assault/rape.

WHAT CONSENT IS NOT:

- Dating/flirting.
- Past consent for future activity.
- Automatic in relationships/marriage.
- Silence.
- Consent when under an influence (alcohol).
- Consent when asleep/unconscious.

WHY IS CONSENT VITAL?

Consent forms the foundation of mutual respect and trust in any sexual relationship, ensuring everyone feels safe and in control. Without it, sexual activity becomes an act of violence, leaving lasting scars. The sole responsibility for obtaining consent lies with the initiator, and it must be explicit, informed, and freely given every single time, regardless of past behaviours or relationships.

HOW TO ENSURE CONSENT:

- Ask directly ("Are you okay?").
- Observe body language (stop if hesitant).
- Respect boundaries (stop if "no" is said).
- Check in regularly (consent can change).
- Enthusiastic "yes" required.

CHALLENGING MISCONCEPTIONS:

A recent survey of 18-24-year-olds revealed troubling gaps in understanding and urgent needs for education!

- **Only 53%** realised it can still be rape if the victim doesn't resist.
- **Only 42%** understood that being in a relationship doesn't mean automatic consent.
- **Only 46%** knew that being drunk / on drugs doesn't excuse rape.
- **Only 28%** recognized that agreeing to meet up for sex online doesn't obligate someone to follow through.

THE LAW & CONSEQUENCES:

- Sexual activity without freely given consent is illegal (rape).
- Severe penalties: immediate arrest, lengthy imprisonment, sex offender registration.
- Withdrawal of consent at any point means continuing is rape.



CONSENT IN REAL LIFE:

Real-life situations can be complex, especially when words aren't spoken or pressure exists. **Open communication** about boundaries and desires is key. If unsure, ask; if something feels off, stop. Consent is about creating a safe, respectful experience, not just avoiding legal issues.



FINAL THOUGHTS:

Consent forms the foundation of **mutual respect and trust** in any sexual relationship, ensuring everyone feels safe and in control. Without it, sexual activity becomes an act of violence, leaving lasting scars. The sole responsibility for obtaining consent lies with the initiator, and it must be explicit, informed, and freely given **every single time**, regardless of past behaviours or relationships.