



Student Wellbeing Resource

Sexual Consent

Sexual Consent

Overview

Sexual consent, just like consent for many other things (e.g. asking to borrow a pencil in class and your friend agreeing is consent), is an agreement between people to engage in sexual activity with each other. Consent doesn't have to be verbal, but verbally agreeing to different sexual activities can help both you and your partner respect each other's boundaries. It's important to understand that every time anyone wants to partake in any kind of sexual activity consent from all parties needs to be present. Additionally, people can withdraw their consent at any point of the sexual activity and carrying on would then not be consensual.

Consent should never just be 'assumed', people should always be certain that sexual activity is consented to. Below is a list of reasons that should not be considered as consent:

- **Body language, Appearance, or Non-Verbal Communication:** A person should never assume consent from the way a person dresses, smiles, looks or acts, that they want / agree to have sex with them.
- **Dating relationships or previous sexual activity:** Simply because two or more people are dating or have had sex in the past does not mean that they have consented to have sex again.
- **Marriage:** in marriage, a person should still not assume they have consent for sexual activity. Marital rape is as serious as any other sexual assault.
- **Previous Activity:** Consent to engage in one sexual activity at one time is not consent to engage in a different sexual activity or to engage in the same sexual activity on a later occasion.

- **Silence, Passivity, Lack of Resistance, or immobility:** A person's silence should not be considered consent. A person who does not respond to attempts to engage in sexual activity, even if they do not verbally say no or resist physically, is not clearly agreeing to sexual activity.
- **Incapacitation:** Alcohol consumption or use of other drugs can render a person incapable of giving consent. Alcohol is often used as a means of targeting individuals and is used by perpetrators to excuse their own actions.

The legal age for sex in the UK is 16 as this is when it's believed that people can make conscious decisions as to whether they will consent or not to sexual activity. Therefore, if someone over 16 is found to have had sex with someone under 16 this is classed as rape as the person under 16 does not have the capacity to consent. Additionally, people who may have a mental disorder or are affected by alcohol/drug may also not have the mental skills needed to make decisions as they may not understand the meaning, consequences or implications of their decisions. Sexual activity without consent is considered, by law, to be sexual assault or rape. If they are found guilty of partaking in sexual activity where consent wasn't present, the perpetrator can be sent to jail.

References

- ¹ Coy et al (London Met 2010) Non-consensual sex and teenage pregnancy
- ² ibid
- ³ Crime Survey of England and Wales, 2013
- ⁴ Barter et al (2015)
- ⁵ An Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales, January 2013.

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Key Facts

- 45.3% of girls and 38.5% of boys say they find it difficult to say no when pressured into having sex.¹
- 50% of boys and 62.4% of girls said that unwanted sex is common in young people's relationships.²
- 1 in 5 women in the UK have experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16.³
- 1 in 3 teenage girls have been pressured into doing something sexual by a partner.⁴
- Approximately 90% of those who are raped knew the perpetrator before the crime.⁵

Best Practice

Where possible, ensure that correct information about consent and the law is shared with children and young people.

Local Offers and Providers

Provider	What they offer	Cost	Contact details
The Chat	"Switching the Lights on" - Sexual consent work with young people, other sexual health work bespoke to need.	Per class £50, staff training contact for details	0114 250 9874 http://www.thechat.org.uk/

Resources

A resource for teaching sexual consent to key stages 3 and 4:
<http://www.rasasc.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Give-n-Get-Consent-A-resource-for-teaching-sexual-consent-to-key-stages-3-and-4.pdf>

A good video explaining consent:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjRLutSWwA0>

A cartoon video explaining consent with the use of tea. Makes it very easy to understand:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZwvrXVavnQ>

Information for teens including around being pressured into sex:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/friends-relationships-sex/sex-relationships/healthy-unhealthy-relationships/#2>

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Local Offers and Providers (cont)

Provider	What they offer	Cost	Contact details
Sheffield Futures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groupwork training for YPs. • One-to-one support for 16-18. • Free training for professionals. • Whole school staff/Safeguarding team. • Twilight sessions available. 	Free	0114 201 8572 http://www.sheffieldfutures.org.uk/
Talkabout	Sex and relationship education through groupwork and teacher training.	£100 per session or £250 for a day	talkaboutconsent.co.uk@gmail.com 07982 722 811
Golddigger Trust	<p>Golddigger Trust is a Sheffield based Charity, offering a variety of wellbeing projects, both within the school environment, and extra-curricular activities within the community, for young people aged 11-19.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <p>1:1 Mentoring – Bespoke, flexible programmes of mentoring for students addressing specific needs identified. Minimum 6 sessions (usual course approx. 8-14 sessions).</p> <p>Students accessing Golddigger Trust services via school can also access additional free services outside of school hours, including drop in youth clubs, sexual health clinic, sports and music sessions and online support.</p>	<p>Cost varies based on service and available charitable funding, contact for most up to date costings.</p> <p>Community based services are free, accessed by community referral (MAST, CAMHS, Self-referral etc). There is no charge to young people.</p>	0114 327 1191 Golddigger Trust Centre For Young People, 10 Psalter Lane, Sheffield, S11 8YN info@golddiggertrust.co.uk www.golddiggertrust.co.uk
YWHP Sexual Abuse Support Service (Young Women's Housing Project)	<p>Our "Protect Yourself" initiative includes group-work programmes and/or one to one sessions for girls and young women dealing with safe relationships & consent. Mixed gender sessions available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Escape the Trap" Teenage Relationship Abuse Programme. 8 sessions (ASDAN accredited). • "Friend or Foe" Relationships & Risk (CSE). 6 sessions. 	FREE Donations welcome	0114 268 0580 ywhp@ywhp.org.uk