



## Sexual Consent

### Understanding sexual consent: what it is and what it isn't.

- Sexual consent is a clear and freely given agreement to willingly and respectfully engage in sexual activity with another person. Consent must be mutual and reflects that both you and your partner are comfortable in the moment with whatever you are doing together. Consent is an enthusiastic yes!
- Consent isn't open-ended. Having consent for one sexual activity does not mean you have consent for others. Just because your partner is happy kissing you does not mean they have agreed to sex.
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time. If this happens, you must stop what you are doing straight away. If you're ever unsure if someone is consenting, stop what's happening and check in with them.
- If consent hasn't been given by the person you are with, you do not have permission to engage in sexual activity with them. Non-consensual sexual activity is a form of *sexual violence* and a criminal offence.
- Under Victorian law, a person is unable to consent to engage in sexual activity with another person when they are asleep, unconscious or so affected by alcohol or other drugs that they are unable to freely agree. If you have consumed alcohol and other drugs, it does not remove your responsibility if you have sex with another person who does not or cannot provide their consent.

## Always ask; never assume.

- You may think that stopping a spontaneous sexual encounter to ask for your partner's consent might ruin the mood but ensuring that you are both comfortable with whatever you are doing will lead to better sex!
- Never assume that you have your partner's consent. The absence of 'no' does not mean 'yes'.
- Sexual consent is an active and ongoing process. Check in to ensure that your partner is enjoying what you are doing and make sure they agree before starting something new.
- Make sure you are specific and direct when asking for consent. Some ways of asking for consent are by saying:
  - *What do you want to do together?*
  - *Does this feel good for you?*
  - *Can I take that off? Should we get a condom?*
  - *Are you comfortable with me doing this?*

## It's okay to change your mind.

- You and your partner can withdraw your consent at any time during sexual activity. If your partner does so, it is your responsibility to stop what you are doing and *respect* your partner's needs.
- Consent may be withdrawn in non-verbal ways. Signs that your partner may no longer consent to what you are doing together include avoiding eye contact, not undressing, silence, lying motionless and crying.
- If you've started something together but no longer feel comfortable you have the right to ask your partner to stop.
- Some ways to let your partner know that you no longer consent to what you are doing are by saying:
  - *No, stop.*
  - *I'd rather not do this.*
  - *I'm not enjoying this.*
  - *Let's take a break.*
- If you ask your partner to stop doing what they are doing, but they continue anyway, it is important that you get to a safe place and seek help. **If you are in immediate danger, call Victoria Police on 000.**

## Heading out to party?

**We all know sexual encounters often happen spontaneously. By thinking and planning ahead, you are more likely to make decisions that you are comfortable with and won't regret the next day.**

- Decide on your boundaries when it comes to sex. Know what you enjoy and feel comfortable doing.
- No one should be pressured into making a decision about having sex. If a partner says 'no' or otherwise shows that they might not be into what's happening, you should stop immediately and check in with them.
- If you plan on drinking alcohol or taking other drugs and there's a chance you might end up having sex, always be prepared to practice *safer sex* - carry condoms or other barrier protection with you.
- Remember, if someone is asleep, unconscious or so affected by alcohol or other drugs that they are unable to freely agree, they cannot legally consent to sex.
- If you see a friend trying to 'pick up' someone who is affected by alcohol or other drugs, or you witness a sexual interaction where one person looks uncomfortable with what is happening, be an *active bystander* and intervene if it is safe for you to do so.
- If you or a friend or family member have experienced any form of sexual violence and would like to seek help, there
- is free and confidential support and advice available 24/7. Contact either:
  - [Sexual Assault Crisis Line](#) on 1800 806 292
  - [1800 RESPECT](#) on 1800 737 732.
- **If you are in immediate danger, call Victoria Police on 000.**