

Consent is another way of saying, 'I give permission'. Consent is an important concept to teach all children. Teaching children the basic premise of consent from an early age can make the transition to talking to older children and teenagers about sexual consent a smoother one.

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CONSENT

Parents and carers can easily demonstrate the concept of consent to young children in everyday situations such as:

- Asking a friend if you can give them a hug.
- Giving your child the choice to greet people in a way that makes them feel safe (for example, not forcing your child to receive a hug from a family member if they don't feel comfortable doing so).
- Politely but firmly asserting your boundaries and respecting the boundaries of others.
- Asking permission before taking a person's photo and/or sharing it online.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES TO HELP START CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CONSENT

Bravehearts recommends the following websites and resources to help you start and maintain conversations with your older children and young people about consent.

- childsafty.gov.au/resources (National Office for Child Safety) has resources about teaching young children and teens consent.
- raisingchildren.net.au has an excellent page about how to talk to your children about consent, broken down into advice by age-group.
- teachconsent.org has information and advice, with a section dedicated to parents, including a short video to watch with your pre-teens and teens to help start conversation.
- Life Education's podcast episode '[Let's Talk About Consent](#)' discusses how to introduce consent concepts to younger children.
- esafety.gov.au has a vast resource section for parents and carers, which includes information about online consent issues such as sexting and sending nudes, sextortion, online sexual harassment and image-based abuse.

- bodysafetyaustralia.com.au has a **continuum of consent poster** available to download, which may be a useful when introducing consent to older children.

SEXUAL CONSENT

At its core, consent is when someone agrees to an activity (either online or in-person), however, consent is about more than just saying 'yes' or 'no'.

In the context of sexual activity, consent is when someone explicitly agrees to a sexual activity (either online or in-person).

Consent IS:



- 'Yes' or enthusiastic agreement.
- Free of pressure or guilt.
- Given before and is ongoing during every sexual activity.
- Able to be retracted or changed at any time.

Consent IS NOT:



- 'I'm not sure', 'I guess so', 'no' or silence.
- Convincing, pressuring or threatening someone.
- A one-off. Do not presume that a 'yes' to one activity means 'yes' to every activity.
- Communicated by clothing or appearance.
- Valid if someone is intoxicated with drugs, alcohol or any other kind of substance, asleep, under the age of consent or unable to understand what they are consenting to.



DOWNLOAD OUR FREE GUIDE FOR PARENTS & CARERS - PROTECTING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE FROM SEXUAL ABUSE