

# What Is Consent?

## Preventing Sexual Assault



If you want to have sex with someone, you must get consent. Ask: Do you want to have sex? If you do not hear a clear “Yes,” and you continue, it could be sexual assault.

### What is sexual assault?

From kissing to touching to having sex – if you have sexual contact with someone who has not given consent, it could be sexual assault or rape.

Even if:

- You think she or he wants it.
- You are dating, in a relationship or married.
- You have had sex before.
- The person is dressed in sexy clothes.
- The person said yes the last time.



### What is consent?

Consent is when both people say “Yes” to sex.

### How do you get consent?

You ask and you listen.

**Ask.**

- Do you want to? Do you like this?
- Do you want to stop?

**Listen to the answer.**

- Did you hear a clear and unmistakable “Yes, I want to”?
- Remember, a person has the right to change their mind at any point. If they do, then you must stop.

**If the answer was not a clear “Yes,” stop.**

- Don’t try to talk your partner into having sex.

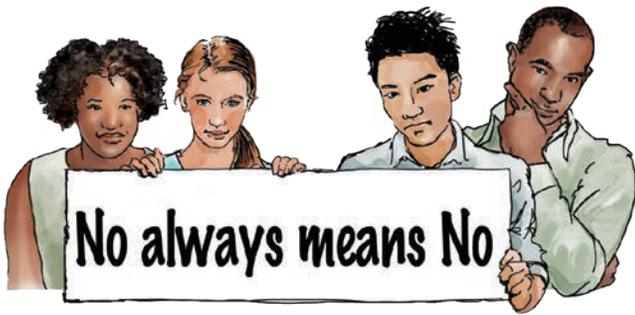
### Does consent always have to be verbal?

Consent can be in words or actions. But actions are easily misunderstood. To be sure, it is best for both people to say “Yes.”

**These are not consent:**

- “Maybe” is not consent.
- “I’m scared” is not consent.
- “I’m not sure” is not consent.





## Silence is not consent.

If the person you are with doesn't give you a clear "Yes," then you do not have consent.

- The person may be afraid to say no.
- The person may not know how to say no.
- The person may be overwhelmed or too drunk or high to say no.

## No always means no.

When someone says "No" it does not mean keep trying. It also does not mean that he or she is playing hard to get. Always respect "No" or you may be committing assault.

## Some people can't consent.

If a person is underage, she or he cannot legally give consent. Even if the person says "Yes," it is considered rape.

If a person is not mentally able, they cannot give their consent.

## What if someone is drunk or high?

When people are drunk or high, they may not be able to think clearly – they may not be able to give consent. If someone has sex with a person who is passed out, or too intoxicated to know what is happening – it is rape.

## Are there other things you can do to help prevent sexual assault?

When it comes to sex, always show respect to the people you are with.

Step in and say something if you see or hear others being disrespectful.

If you see someone who might be in trouble or the possible victim of an assault – step up and do something!

- Get friends to help too.
- Call 911.

Are you worried you might be wrong? In this case, it is better to be wrong than to do nothing and later learn that you could have prevented an assault.



If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, you can get help by contacting National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (4673).



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