



Let's Talk Consent Workbook

→ This **Let's Talk Consent Workbook** is designed to help you talk about, learn and understand what sexual consent really means.



Australian Government

Consent Can't Wait





A guide for adults

How to use the **Let's Talk Consent Workbook** to talk about sexual consent with the young people you guide and support every day.

As teachers, coaches, mentors, youth workers and community leaders, our role in shaping and guiding young people is powerful. We all want them to grow up strong, safe, respectful, and to make wise choices for their future.

Part of helping young people live happy and safe lives, and setting them up for healthy relationships, is teaching them about sexual consent. Research tells us young people want this too. They want the trusted adults in their lives to have these conversations, so they can better understand it.

But sometimes we as adults may find it hard to yarn about sexual consent. Our own upbringings, experiences, or cultural protocols can make the topic feel shame, taboo, or just awkward. Still, it's important we do. By talking about sexual consent with each other and our young people, we give them the tools to build safe, respectful, and healthy relationships.

This **Let's Talk Consent Workbook** has been designed to help you start conversations with the young people in your life about consent. Why not hold a **Let's Talk Consent** session or yarning circle that encourages young people (and their parents and caregivers) to talk more about consent? This Workbook contains information, conversation starters and exercises that can help get the yarn going. You can choose to use all the pages, or just some. Whatever helps to start the conversation. Because learning, understanding, and yarning about consent can't wait.

This Workbook and associated content has been developed for First Nations people. Consent, however, is universal and may be discussed with adults, children and young people of any cultural background. Use this Let's Talk Consent Workbook as a gentle prompt to help guide talks about sexual consent with the young people you support.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

This Workbook does not take into account the unique First Nations cultural and community protocols that may exist and vary in different communities.





Before you start...

Talking about consent, or even reading through this Workbook, may be triggering for some people. This includes those who have experienced, or are experiencing, sexual violence or other forms of trauma. Support is there for you.

- **13 Yarn Crisis Support**
Free Call 139276
w. 13yarn.org.au
- **Kids Helpline**
Free Call 1800 55 1800
w. kidshelpline.com.au
- **Family Domestic and Sexual Violence Information, Counselling & Support**
Free Call 1800RESPECT
or 1800 737 732
w. 1800respect.gov.au





A guide session outline

→ What a **Let's Talk Consent** session could look like.

1. Choose a date, time and venue for your **Let's Talk Consent** session. Check with your organisation if parental / caregiver consent is required to host the session. Maybe host it at your school, club or community hall?
2. Download the **Let's Talk Consent** posters and social tiles at consent.gov.au/first-nations-resources and promote the session to kids, as well as their parents and caregivers.
3. Print out copies of the **Let's Talk Consent Workbook** pages and exercises you'd like to yarn through based on the time you have and the topics you'd like to focus on.
4. Talking about sexual consent can be confronting. Familiarise yourself with the protocols on the next page to ensure you and all of the participants understand how to look after their wellbeing.
5. Play the hero **Consent Can't Wait** video (featuring either Joel Wenitong, Anita Heiss or both, depending on who is most appropriate for your audience) to get the conversation started.
6. Go through the different exercises you've chosen and encourage everyone to speak openly, ask questions amongst the group, and have their say. Feel free to play some of the small social animations throughout to spark conversation as well.
7. Remember, each session is simply to get the conversation started.

For more resources and information, visit:

Consent Can't Wait
w. consent.gov.au

E-Safety Commissioner
w. E-safety.gov.au





Running a safe session

Given the complex and sensitive nature of talking about consent, **Let's Talk Consent** sessions may result in disclosures from young people, or their parents and caregivers, relating to:

- Domestic and family violence incidents
- Sexual abuse, harassment or assault
- Child sexual abuse, including from adult victims and survivors of child sexual abuse
- Admissions about sexual abuse from perpetrators or potential perpetrators
- Sensitive personal experiences and wellbeing concerns, including the mental health impacts of child sexual abuse
- Child protection concerns
- Some level of criminal activity or offending behaviour

If there are immediate risks to the safety of a child, young person, or adult, call 000. Immediate risks may include an imminent danger or an immediate medical, mental or physical emergency.

Because of this, it's important to:

- Give clear warnings at the start of each session about the likely content of the session and the warning signs of re-traumatisation or other mental health impacts of that content
- Make it clear to participants that they can leave at any time
- Show empathy and avoid judgement or blame
- Point out the appropriate support services that are there to help in the front of this Workbook
- Refer participants to the full list of support services available at consent.gov.au/support-services





Why is sexual consent important?

→ Knowing about sexual consent helps you be prepared when you're ready for sex. It's about learning to have good, safe, and respectful relationships without anyone being mean, violent or controlling.





Let's Talk... what IS sexual consent?

→ So what IS consent?
Let's find out, with First Nations
ambassadors Anita Heiss and/
or Joel Wenitong.



Watch here
consent.gov.au/first-nations-resources

ACTIVITY – GROUP DISCUSSION:

What does consent mean to you?

What words or phrases do you think of when
you hear the word 'consent'?

In summary, sexual consent is:

A free, voluntary and informed agreement
shared between people each time they
take part in a sexual activity.

It means there is **only** sexual consent
if the people involved:

- Make the choice without pressure, guilt or shame (made freely)
- Show or say they want to take part in a clear and open way — so there is no doubt (they're keen)
- Everyone agrees (it's mutual)
- Understand what is happening (they're informed and able to give consent, for e.g. awake, conscious etc.)
- Keep agreeing to what's happening before and during sexual activity, not just once, but every time (it's ongoing)
- Haven't changed their mind or taken away sexual consent at any time (it's reversible)

Sexual consent relates to sexual activities, such as:

- Sexual intercourse
- Touching someone in a sexual way
- Sharing sexual images
- Online sexual activities



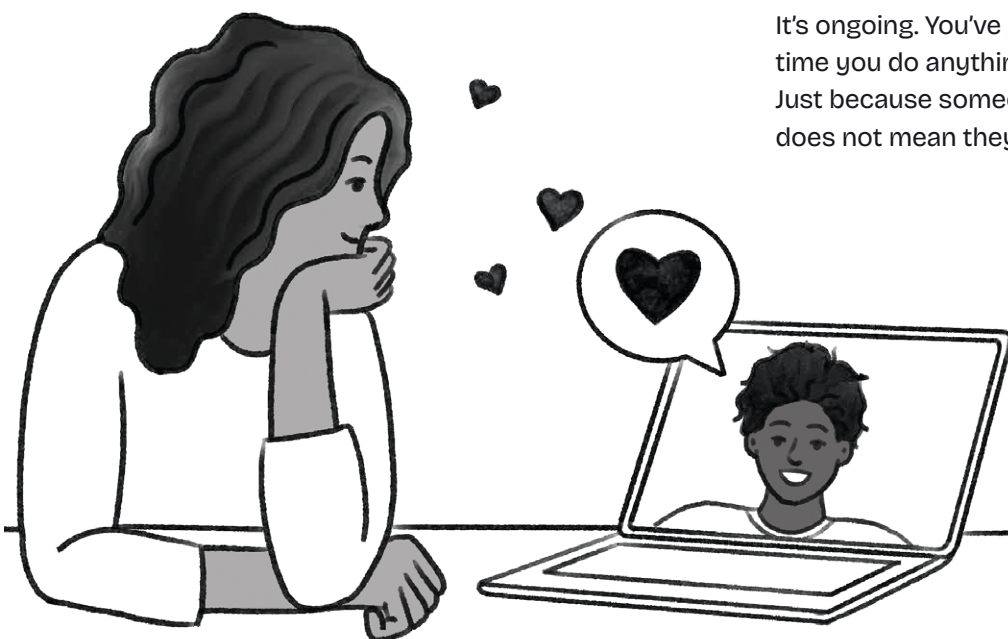
Let's Talk... how to show consent

→ To show consent, everyone involved has to agree to join in and genuinely want to do it. And you've got to talk about and agree how things will happen, like asking if they want to use condoms and other contraception. If one person agrees and the other doesn't, then there is no consent.

Just because someone doesn't speak up, say "no", or push back physically, it doesn't mean they're okay with having sex. Someone being quiet, not saying no or not resisting **does not** mean you have sexual consent.

- Consent also means people can decide to stop or change their minds at any time in the sexual activity, even if they agreed before.
- It's okay to say no at any point.

Sexual consent also applies to online stuff, like texting or messaging each other. And it's not a one-time thing. It's ongoing. You've got to check in every time you do anything sexual, not just once. Just because someone agreed in the past does not mean they'll agree next time.





Consent sounds like:

- I really like that...
- I'd like to...
- Is this ok?

ACTIVITY:

What are some other examples of how you can show, or ask for, consent?

Consent does NOT sound like:

- No. I don't want to.
- Let's stop.
- I've changed my mind.

ACTIVITY:

What are some other examples of how you can show, or recognise, that someone doesn't consent?



Let's Talk... when can't someone consent to sex?

→ People can't consent to sex if they are:

- Under the age of consent (either 16 or 17 depending on where you live in Australia)
- Drunk, high or affected by drugs or alcohol
- Unconscious — not awake and alert
- Not able to understand what is going on
- Being threatened, bullied, manipulated, vulnerable, or tricked



ACTIVITY:

Write down different situations where you **CAN** consent and when you **CAN'T** consent.
Discuss as a group.



Let's Talk... online consent

→ These days we spend lots of time in the digital world — either on computers or 'smartphones'. It's great for learning and staying connected, but there are also risks.

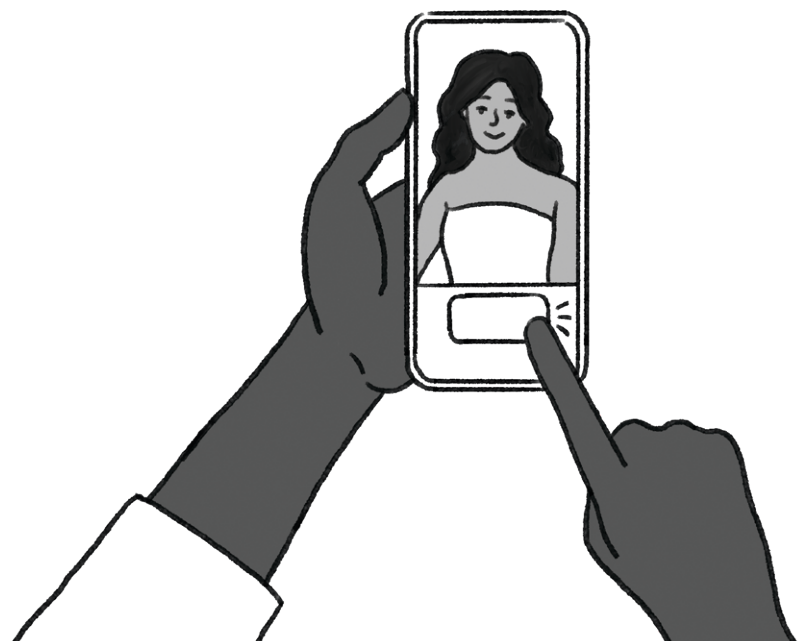
Pornography

It's really easy to find porn online. A lot of young people watch it early on, often before they've even started having sex. But here's the thing: porn isn't real. It's acting, and most of the time it doesn't show sex where consent is practised.

Watching porn can give the wrong idea about what sex and consent look like in real life. Some of what you see, like violent stuff, can make it seem "normal," or something everyone likes, but that's not reality. In real life, respect, safety and consent should always be part of healthy relationships.

Sexting — messages, photos and videos

Lots of young people send sexual messages, pics, or videos through phones and social media. Because it's not face to face, it can feel easier to hit send without really thinking about it. But even online, consent and respect matter.





Why being careful matters

→ It's never your fault if someone shares pics of you without your consent, but once something is sent or posted, you can lose control over where it goes.

Sexual pics and videos can get you in trouble with the law if the person in the post did not consent, or they are under 18 (this is called child sexual abuse material). This could make it hard for you to get a job in the years to come.

Before sharing anything sexual, you've got to:

- **Check consent.** Only share if both you and the other person fully agree.
- **Respect yourself and others.** If you feel pressured, that's not consent.
- **Think twice.** Is this something you'll still be okay with tomorrow, next week, or even years from now?

ACTIVITY:

Write down how you would feel if someone shared something you didn't want them to online. Let's discuss as a group.





One final note about... power and control

→ Sometimes, even if someone doesn't want to consent to sex, they might feel they are not able to say no because the other person has too much control or power over them. This is called a power imbalance. For example, someone can have more power and control over you because of:


- their age
- their relationship to you
- they have more information than you do
- they have more life experience than you do
- they have more money or resources than you do

When a person exploits a power imbalance, they may use it to control who you see, what you wear, or how you use your money.

Because of power and control imbalances, there are rules about who can't have sexual contact with young people who are under the age of consent (16 or 17 depending on where they live). It includes:

- Direct family members
- Anyone caring for young people e.g. carers, coaches, teachers, teacher's aides
- Medical professionals e.g. doctors, nurses, health workers, counsellors
- Legal professionals or law enforcement e.g. lawyers or police officers

: If this happened or is happening
: to you or someone you know and
: care about, it is important to talk to
: someone you trust, who can help.



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information, visit:

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w. consent.gov.au



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