



OFFICE FOR  
**SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
RESPONSE, SUPPORT  
and EDUCATION**

Consent is an **affirmative** decision to engage in **mutually** agreed upon activity and is given by **clear words** and/or **actions**. It is an **active process**.

### Consent is:

- ✓ **Mutual:** everyone wants what is happening.
- ✓ **Continuous:** it is a process and can be withdrawn at any time; consent to one form of activity does not imply consent to other forms of sexual activity.
- ✓ **Clear:** it is clear what activity a person is consenting to.
- ✓ **Voluntary:** it is given freely, not under pressure, threats or coercion.

### Consent is Not:

- ✗ **Assumed:** it cannot be implied from silence, passivity, or lack of physical resistance.
- ✗ **Automatic:** the existence of a current or previous dating, marital or sexual relationship does not constitute consent to additional sexual activity, it has to be negotiated each time.
- ✗ **Impaired:** it cannot be gained if the individual(s) is incapacitated by alcohol, drugs, and/or prescription medication, or is unconscious or asleep.
- ✗ **Coerced:** it cannot be gained through intimidation, manipulation, blackmail, force, or the abuse of a position of trust, power, or authority.

The best way to know if consent is present is to **ASK**. After asking, it is imperative to **LISTEN** to the response of the person(s) and **RESPECT** their choice.

# Ask. Listen. Respect.

## Substances, Medication and Consent:

Many people engage in sexual activity when they have used alcohol and/or drugs. These substances and certain medications can change the way a person makes decisions and will affect their ability to **ASK, LISTEN and RESPECT**. A person is still responsible for gaining consent, even when intoxicated. Sex without consent is sexual assault.

It is the responsibility of anyone initiating an action to gain the consent of the other(s) involved before moving forward (even when substances have been used).

## Non-Verbal Cues:

Generally known as body language this includes facial expressions, gestures, posture and body movements.

If a person is verbally saying "Yes," but their body language is indicating "No," or discomfort, it is imperative to **STOP** and **CHECK IN** with them.

## Communication is empowering and helps build trust.

- "I'd really like \_\_\_\_, how does that sound?"
- "Do you want to?"
- "Are you okay with this?"
- "Would you like to keep going?"
- "What would you like to experience with me?"

## Consent is more than just a "Yes" or "No"



YES



NO

### verbal

- "Yes! Keep going"
- "I like that"
- "That feels good"
- "I want to keep going"
- "That sounds good"
- "I'm not ready"
- "I'm tired"
- "It's too late"
- "I have work to do"
- "I'm not sure"

### nonverbal

- Leaning closer
- Relaxed body
- Smiling
- Laughing
- Pulling away
- Freezing up
- Avoiding eye contact
- Silence



McGill

Tel: 514.398.3954  
Email [osvrse@mcgill.ca](mailto:osvrse@mcgill.ca)  
Website: [mcgill.ca/osvrse](http://mcgill.ca/osvrse)

