

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

- This document is a guide for educators to help them support their students in learning about consent and boundaries within their relationships.
- Learning Objectives
 - » What consent is and what consent isn't
 - » What the different types of boundaries are



CONSENT

Generally, consent is a mutual verbal, physical, and emotional agreement that happens without manipulation, threats, or coercion.

CONSENT IS:

- Mutual (both parties clearly agree)
- Enthusiastic (there is a desire and excitement)
- Ongoing (it can be retracted at any time; it is a process, and it must be confirmed every step of the way)
- Specific (it is clear what activity a person is consenting to)
- Voluntary (it is given freely, not under pressure, and the person involved is the one consenting)
- Sober (the parties involved are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs)

CONSENT IS NOT:

- Automatic (it must be negotiated each time, even in the context of a relationship)
- A grey area (only voluntary, sober, enthusiastic, mutual, and honest yes means yes. If there is no yes, there is no consent)

MAKING CONSENT DISCUSSIONS RELEVANT AT DIFFERENT AGES

- Classroom discussions that directly address sexual activity may not be appropriate with students under a certain age. In these cases, it is still possible for educators to help students develop the communication and boundary-setting skills they will need to create healthy intimate relationships at a later stage.
- One approach is that teachers can facilitate activities or discussions that explore boundaries and consent in non-sexual contexts. For example, a teacher could guide classroom discussions about how people need to ask permission to use other people's belongings and how to set boundaries around sharing possessions, holding hands, or hugging.
- Teachers can also talk to their students about digital boundaries.
- Helping students develop the habit of asking for permission and respecting the answer to the request is crucial; such habits will help them develop healthy relationships and will prevent teen dating violence.

RESOURCE: CONSENT – IT'S SIMPLE AS TEA VIDEO

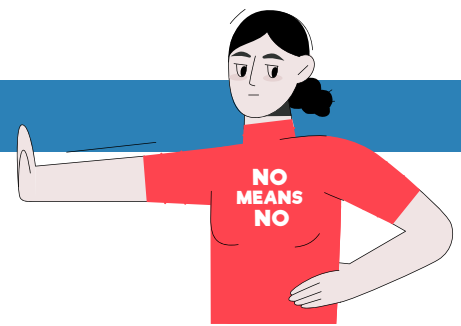
This is a video you can share with students to highlight what consent is and is not.

- Full version: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8>
- Clean version: <https://vimeo.com/128105683>



CONSENT AND BOUNDARIES

Talking about boundaries is an important way to ensure that each person's needs are being met and that each person feels safe in the relationship.



TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

- **Emotional Boundaries**
 - » The L word - help your students to understand that saying "I love you" can happen for different people at different times and that they shouldn't feel bad for not feeling ready to say the L word.
 - » Time apart - as great as it is to want to spend a lot of time with their partner, remember that it's important to have some time away from each other too. Both partners should be free to hang out with friends or family without getting permission. It's also healthy to spend alone time.
- **Physical Boundaries**
 - » Take your time - let students know that they can take their time. Don't rush if they're not ready. Getting physical with a partner doesn't have to happen all at once.
 - » Sex isn't a currency - Teens don't owe their partner anything. Just because a partner buys gifts or says "I love you" doesn't mean the student owes them anything in response.
- **Digital Boundaries**
 - » Emphasize that it can be hard to know where the line between healthy and unhealthy is once a relationship goes online. Before you talk about your online relationship, tell students to check in with themselves to see what makes them feel comfortable.
 - » Examples of questions to ask:
 - "Is it okay to tag or check in?"
 - "Do we post our relationship status?"
 - "Is it okay to friend or follow my friends?"
 - "Is it okay to use each other's devices?"
 - "Is it okay to post, tweet or comment about our relationship?"

ACTIVITY: THAT'S NOT COOL VIDEO (SOURCE: EXPECT RESPECT PROGRAM)

- Start by showing the following video to your class: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLvcSVgNqpk>
- Now, facilitate a discussion with the class and ask some or all of the following:
 - » What were some of the things that the boyfriend harassed the girlfriend about?
 - » What boundary/boundaries were compromised (or violated)?
 - » The final slide in the video says, "When does caring become controlling?"
 - At what point do you think the boyfriend's texts went from caring to controlling?
 - When it comes to over-texting, what puts it over the edge - the number of texts or what the texts are saying? Or both?
 - Where would you draw the line?
 - What do you think the girlfriend in the video should do about this situation?
 - » Explain: "The video that we just watched demonstrates how cell phones can be used to monitor, control, pressure, and overwhelm another person and violate their boundaries. Cell phones, the internet, and on-line sites like Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat can all be used as tools to bully, threaten, and harass others. For example, they can be used to spread rumors; spy on others; share people's personal pictures, videos, and information without their consent."

RESOURCES:

- www.LovelsRespect.org

