

Talk about it...

Tips for ADULTS talking to youth about consent.

Youth benefit from the opportunity to talk to trusted adults, like parents, coaches and teachers, about healthy sexuality and relationships. **Your student is currently learning in school about the concept and law regarding sexual consent.** We encourage you to use the “*Got Consent*” handout and talking tips below to start a valuable dialogue with the youth in your life about the values that are important to you.

Whether you feel confident and comfortable having planned conversations, or using spontaneous teachable moments, any and all opportunities are valuable.

Remember: Talk early and often

Be open and non-judgmental, listen and respond appropriately from your experience. Send a clear message that you are open to talking and listening about sexuality and healthy relationships. Acknowledge that it can be uncomfortable and awkward, and that’s okay. Consent is all about communication.

Here are some conversation starters:

- **Is there equality in the relationship?**

- *Equality in relationships describes a situation in which **neither** partner has a clear power over the other. A sufficient balance of power is important in a relationship so that each person has as much say over what happens as the other.*

Examples where there is NOT equal power:

- 💡 one person is a teacher, coach or caregiver of the other person;
- 💡 one person is significantly older (example, a 20 year old person should not date a 15 year old person);
- 💡 one person lacks the ability to understand what is happening or the potential consequences due to developmental differences or lack of access to information;
- 💡 one person lacks the ability to say no (e.g. is intoxicated) or is too afraid to.

- **Sexual activity and consent questions:**

- How do you tell that you are ready for sexual activity?
- How do you know that your partner is ready for sexual activity?
- How would you ask if your partner is ready for sexual activity?
- Why do you think it is important to ask?
- If you feel pressured, manipulated, or like someone is tricking you, what do you do? What do you say?
- What do you do if you feel like you want to kiss someone but you aren't sure yet?
- What if you decide to kiss your partner, and he or she wants more?
- What if it feels good and you want to do more but your partner says "no"?
- Does it feel o.k. to say no when you're not ready? Why or Why not?
- Do you know what to do and who to call if you feel scared or like you need help?

- **Consent law:**

- Why do you think there is a consent law?
- How old do you have to be to give consent for sexual activity?
- If someone has been drinking or getting high, can they give consent?

- **Bystander situations:**

- What would do if your friend told you she was being pressured to have sex and didn't feel ready?
- What if your friend is boasting about how he is going to get this girl he knows high or drunk and have sex with her?
- What would you do if you see someone bullying or harassing someone in a sexual way?
- Do you know how to get help if one of your friends has been hurt or is hurting someone?

It may be awkward, but giving kids the chance to think and talk about consent and safe sexual activity BEFORE they need to put these skills into action will help them make safe choices when the time comes.

For more information, see the documents your students received titled: "Consent: Got it?" and "Are You Ready?"