



CONSENT CAMPAIGN guidebook

THIRD EDITION



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Classroom teaching tools, planning information,
and resource lists for **middle and high school educators**
teaching consent and sexual violence prevention.

THIRD EDITION

SPECIAL THANKS

The Vermont Consent Campaign was originally created through collaboration among the Vermont Sexual Violence Task Force, The Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, and the Vermont Approach: A Strategic Plan for Comprehensive, Collaborative Sexual Violence Prevention in Vermont. We would like to give a special thanks to the dedicated members of the 2010 Consent Campaign workgroup:

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Design & layout by Dana Dwinell-Yardley

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Welcome to Vermont's Consent Campaign!

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for helping us create opportunities for teens to learn more about consensual sexual activity. Through education, we can help end sexual violence and support youth as they develop safe sexual relationships.

The Consent Campaign is designed to be a part of more in-depth conversations and education about sexuality and sexual health. Teaching these middle and high school lesson plans will strengthen students' skills and encourage pro-social behaviors as well as support the social change needed to address sexual violence in our communities.

In this guidebook, we will address creating a consent campaign in your school. We'll also help you reach beyond the classroom to create opportunities for youth to hear the same messages outside school. The more times this information is repeated, the more likely it is to be heard, remembered, and most importantly, acted upon. Creating a campaign in your school community can help create clear and consistent messages for youth and end sexual violence.

For questions or technical assistance, contact:

Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
802-223-1302
www.vtnetwork.org

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE LIVES OF YOUTH

According to the 2017 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey¹

Vermont High School Students Sexual Activity:

- 40% had ever had sexual intercourse. Three percent had sex before age 13; 42% had oral sex during their lifetime.

Vermont High School Students Sexual Violence:

- 6% of students reported ever being physically forced to have sexual intercourse.
- LGBT students were more than three times as likely as heterosexual/cisgender students to have ever been forced to have sexual intercourse.
- Students of color were significantly more likely than white, non-Hispanic students to have ever been forced to have sexual intercourse.
- Female students were three times as likely as male students to be forced to have sexual intercourse.
- Younger students were significantly less likely than older students to report ever being forced to have sexual intercourse.

Vermont Middle School Students Sexual Activity:

- 5% of students had ever had sexual intercourse; 6% had oral sex.

Nationally

- Of all victims (of sexual abuse/assault) under 18, 2 out of 3 were ages 12-17.²
- 93% of juvenile sexual assault victims know their attacker.³
- Sexual violence continues to be one of the least reported crimes, with high estimates stating that 54% are ever reported.⁴

These statistics give a glimpse of the reality of sexual violence in the lives of youth, but these numbers are most likely low. The definition for sexual assault usually refers only to forcible rape and often leaves out experiences of being pressured or coerced into unwanted sexual activity. In addition, young people underreport sexual abuse and assault for a variety of reasons, including fear of being dismissed or not believed, being “outed” about their sexual orientation or gender identity, and being judged and mistreated. When we consider these factors, the numbers of likely sexual assaults become truly overwhelming.

Education about sexual consent will not end all sexual violence, but it will help.

We can create opportunities for youth to manage their relationships differently and avoid using coercive tactics. We can also help young people to identify coercive behaviors and seek safety and support if they experience them.

1. <http://bit.ly/2VN240h>.

2. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Sex Offenses and Offenders (1997)*.

3. U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. *2000 Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement (2000)*.

4. Justice Department, *National Crime Victimization Survey: 2006-2010*.

BACKGROUND

The Vermont Sexual Violence Prevention Task Force (SVPTF) surveyed schools and published a 2008 report of its findings, *A Snapshot of Sexual Violence Prevention in Vermont: Programs offered by K-12 schools and community-based agencies*. The survey revealed that most educators were not aware of the 2006 change in Vermont's consent law that shifted the age of consent away from a simple 16 and that **many schools were not adequately addressing sexual violence prevention through sexuality education**.

The Legislature responded to these findings in the 2009 passage of ACT 1, which, among other actions, changed the definition of "health education" in Vermont education law, 16 V.S.A. § 131 (11), to include the study of:

*"how to recognize and prevent sexual abuse and sexual violence, including **developmentally appropriate instruction about promoting healthy and respectful relationships**, developing and maintaining effective communication with trusted adults, recognizing sexually offending behaviors, and gaining awareness of available school and community resources."*

Sexual violence prevention educators know that when youth have access to age-appropriate information on sexuality and the opportunity to talk to safe adults, they are more likely to:

- make healthy sexual decisions,
- increase communication skills,
- develop respect for boundaries and differences, and
- know what to do if they or someone they know has been assaulted or abused.

Youth are also therefore less likely to become perpetrators of sexual violence, more likely to be active bystanders and address violence when they see it, and more likely to seek support if they are victimized.

In 2010, the SVPTF created the [Technical Assistance Resource Guide](https://bit.ly/2QFtSjw) (TARG) (bit.ly/2QFtSjw) to support schools in incorporating sexual violence prevention and healthy relationship skills into their health education across the K-12 spectrum.

In 2011, the SVPTF, in collaboration with the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, created the Consent Campaign and did two rounds of trainings, one in the spring and one in the fall. More than 125 youth and adults from more than 40 schools and agencies in Vermont were trained using campaign resources.

In 2012, the SVPTF surveyed schools again to see how things had shifted in response to Act 1. The findings included that:

- Respondents feel like they should be doing more sexual violence prevention, especially in the 7th-8th and 9th-12th grade ranges.
- Most schools completed 1-5 hours of sexual violence prevention education across preK-8th grades during the school year; however, in 9th through 12th grades, 32% of respondents reported no educational hours dedicated to prevention.

These findings encouraged us to create the Second Edition of the Vermont Consent Campaign, and to hit the road with another round of training throughout the state.

In 2019, given the consistent use of Consent Campaign materials across Vermont, a Third Edition including updated statistics, links, resources, and best practices was published.

Note about materials: Electronic materials and the most current handouts can be found on the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence website, vtnetwork.org, under “Publications.”

FITTING CONSENT INTO COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION

We encourage schools to move beyond the classroom to create multiple opportunities for youth to engage with the material and receive clear and consistent messages about consent. However, the classroom experience is a vital cornerstone of Consent Campaign work. There are a number of cross-curricular opportunities for presenting consent information. For example, in one unit, students might learn about affirmative consent in Health class while reading a book about healthy and unhealthy relationships (healthy/unhealthy) in English class. Students would learn functional knowledge about consent (in Health) alongside an example in action in English.

Lesson plans, concepts, and handouts in this guidebook are applicable and appropriate for use in planning health education activities for students in grades 7-12. These activities address many of the Vermont Health Education Graduation Proficiencies & Performance Indicators. We have highlighted a few of them below:

| Graduation Proficiencies | Performance Indicators Middle School | Performance Indicators High School |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. Core Concepts Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the relationship between healthy behaviors and personal health. (16 V.S.A. §131) Describe ways to reduce or prevent injuries and other adolescent health problems. (16 V.S.A. §131) Examine the likelihood of injury or illness if engaging in unhealthy behaviors. (16 V.S.A. §131) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose ways to reduce or prevent injuries and health problems. (16 V.S.A. §131) Demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors that will maintain or improve the health of self and others. (16 V.S.A. §131) |
| <p>2. Analyze Influences Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the influence of culture, peers and technology on health beliefs, practices, and behaviors. Explain the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze how the culture, peers, and technology support and challenge health beliefs, practices, and behaviors. Analyze the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors. |
| <p>3. Access Information Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the accessibility of products that enhance health. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the accessibility of products and services that enhance health. |

| Graduation Proficiencies | Performance Indicators Middle School | Performance Indicators High School |
|--|--|---|
| <p>4. Interpersonal Communication & Advocacy</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills and to advocate for personal, family and community health to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills to enhance health. • Demonstrate effective conflict management or resolution strategies. • Demonstrate how to ask for assistance to enhance the health of self and others. • Work cooperatively to advocate for healthy individuals, families, and schools. • Demonstrate how to influence and support others to make positive health choices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health. • Demonstrate strategies to prevent, manage, or resolve interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others. • Demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of self and others. • Work cooperatively as an advocate for improving personal, family, and community health. |
| <p>5. Decision-Making & Goal Setting</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills and goal setting to enhance health.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish between healthy and unhealthy alternatives to health-related issues or problems. • Choose healthy alternatives over unhealthy alternatives when making a decision. • Assess personal health practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate alternatives to health-related issues or problems. • Defend the healthy choice when making decisions. • Assess personal health practices and overall health status. |
| <p>6. Self-Management</p> <p>Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate behaviors that avoid or reduce health risks to self and others. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a variety of behaviors that avoid or reduce health risks to self and others. |

Consent Education is for EVERYONE

Learning about the elements of consent, making sure you aren't pressuring anyone or being pressured into sexual activity, and having open conversations about issues around sex and sexuality is for EVERYONE. All youth deserve open, honest, age-appropriate information about sexual activity. The more information we give our youth, the more chances they have to make safe choices. It is important to create inclusive and affirming education opportunities for ALL youth and the adults who support them — including people with a diversity of cultural backgrounds, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ people. Please see APPENDIX 3 for a list of important terms and definitions created by Outright Vermont that will enhance your understanding and work with LGBTQ+ youth. Transstudent.org has great graphics (transstudent.org/what-we-do/graphics) that help describe gender, pronoun usage, and issues facing queer and trans people.

Be an Askable Adult

Every day, young people ask adults to step up and become educated and askable. Being askable includes listening and being available. For trainers in the Consent Campaign, it also includes doing our

homework to fully understand the content well as challenge our own values and comfort levels when talking about consent and sexual activity. Send a clear message to youth that you are open to talking and listening about sexuality and healthy relationships. Acknowledge that discussions about sexuality can be uncomfortable and awkward. Consent is all about communication. For tips and conversation starters, see the handouts “Talk about it…” and “Are you READY to do it?,” a handout for youth about decision-making. These can be found in APPENDIX 3.

PLANNING A CONSENT CAMPAIGN

The following section provides a framework and ideas for developing and implementing a consent campaign for students and adults in your school community. A school- or community-wide campaign enhances classroom learning and creates a culture of safety. It is important for youth to have multiple opportunities in many different venues to hear the same messages.

Much of the sexual violence that occurs happens to youth before they reach adulthood and is committed by peers and/or someone the victim knows. In some situations, the perpetrator may ignore the fact that consent can't be given because of power or age differences or lack of sobriety. In other situations, coercion may occur: the perpetrator uses pressure and control to manipulate the other person into doing something sexual they don't want to do.

Additionally, youth are bombarded with societal influences about the value of sex. Media often suggests that “scoring” and attaining sex is necessary for male-identified people to fit in, no matter what the cost. For female-identified people, media perpetuates that their worth is defined by how sexually appealing and available they are and, at the same time, by their purity. People of color are often represented as violent and oversexualized. If LGBTQ+ youth and people with disabilities see themselves represented in the media at all, the messages often include harmful stereotypes (i.e. gay people are all promiscuous; people with disabilities aren't sexual).

It is vital that we offer healthy messages to youth and that they have information about respect, communication, sexuality, and relationships.

To learn more, check out this TED Talk by AL Vernacchio about needing a new metaphor for talking about sex: Pizza vs. Baseball (bit.ly/2Ch5P5q).

Below are some steps to help your school plan an effective Consent Campaign that reaches students and adults in the school community. This campaign provides a great opportunity to partner with students as advisors and leaders in planning.

Assistance is Available

The local, state, and national organizations listed in APPENDIX 4 of this guidebook provide key links for ongoing training and technical assistance.

Implementation Planning Checklist

Questions to get you started:

- Who needs to be on our planning team? Consider:**
 - Students/youth
 - School-diversity-focused club/group members and advisors (GSA, racial justice, etc.)
 - An advocate from your local Network member program
 - A school administrator
 - A community member/content expert/ally
 - Guidance/support staff

- What do we know or what can we find out about our school community's rates of sexual and relationship violence? Consider using:**
 - YRBS data
 - Annual school incidents report
 - Anecdotal information from students and staff

- What messages can we support? Consider:**
 - Respect for self and others
 - Informed choices
 - Ending sexual violence
 - Promoting healthy relationships

- What's a simple, first year, first step? Consider:**
 - One health class, one dialogue night
 - Poster campaign or tabling activity
 - Attach a Consent Day/Activity to existing "healthy relationship week" or other annual health and safety education program

- Should we start with one audience? Consider:**
 - First year student program
 - Parents/PTO
 - Middle school health class

- How will we evaluate how we're doing? Consider:**
 - Audience pre-survey/post-survey
 - Annual focus groups
 - Short survey

- What is important to have in place to support students and staff? Consider:**
 - Clear understanding of reporting policies and mandates
 - Protocols supporting students immediately and ongoing
 - Staff and student facilitator support

Step 1: Identify and Develop a Planning Team

Planning an education campaign about consent in your school or local community will be strongest and most effective when done collaboratively. Be sure to include both youth and adult leaders. Make sure to include multiple experiences and viewpoints on your team so that plans are inclusive and relevant. To be as expansive as possible, include LGBTQ+ people, people who are black and brown, people with disabilities, and people of various cultural backgrounds.

Connect with existing committees, work groups, or other school-wide programs which naturally align with this work — both in school and in the broader community. Planning can happen at your school or resources can be combined at the district level.

- Early on in your planning, **arrange a meeting with your school administrators** and provide information about your goals and ideas. Any school-based effort will need administrative support. Administrators will appreciate that initiating a consent campaign helps your school work toward fulfillment of Act 1 mandates.
- **Engaging students in the planning** will also help ensure that the message is getting out in the right way. Peers know best! Peer educators and other student groups can be energetic allies in the planning process.
- Other key partners are **youth-serving community organizations** like teen centers, scouting groups, reproductive health care organizations, LGBTQ+ support and other affinity organizations, and local domestic and sexual violence service providers.
- **Be ready to support both youth and adults.** It is common that as knowledge about sexual violence and prevention efforts increases in a community, more students and adults seek support about their own or their loved ones' experiences of sexual violence. For more information on how to best support people, see the Disclosures section on page 17.
- **Be sure to let your local Network member program** know when you are planning your program. This will help them be ready to support callers who might reach out once the campaign is launched. An interactive Vermont map of Network programs can be found at vtnetwork.org/get-help.

Step 2: Getting Started with Your Team

Whether you hold a single meeting, a series of meetings, or some focus groups, it's important to:

- **Frame the issue of consent**, (define the topic) and situate it contextually in your community.
- **Engage stakeholders in dialogue.**
- **Listen and share** ideas, concerns, and questions.
- Think about **what works best for your school**, considering capacity, sustainability, and what attitudes need to be addressed within your community.

There are many ways you can structure these sessions. Keep them simple, straightforward, and interactive. Schedule them at times convenient to both school and community participants. Serve refreshments!

Share responsibility:

Involve a broad range of stakeholders.

Invite key members:

Send out a letter about the campaign initiative to potential partners.

Engage: Talk to potential partners to find ways to connect the campaign to their experience and find out what meeting times work best for them.

Step 3: Audience(s) and Activities

- **Define the school and community audiences** for your consent campaign. Who will you be reaching out to? Who is the information for? What do they need to know? What change do you hope to see in each audience group?
- **Be explicit in your language, so that all people feel invited to participate**, including all gender identities and partnerships, and all races and backgrounds.
- **Use stakeholders to help you define and understand your audience(s)**. Have students in your school learned about consent before? What language have they used? How can you build on what they already know?
- **Clarify the messages or activities for each audience**. How will each activity impact the audience group? What will the audience get from it? How do the activities build on each other and support the message?
- **Think about success measures**. What will show you that your efforts have made a difference? How will you evaluate your campaign in the short and long term?
- **Think about continued education**. How will you keep the conversation going after the activity concludes?

NOTE ON USING MEDIA: Think about how local and social media like your school or community newspaper, cable access channel, and Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat can help get your messages out. Youth are surrounded by media that is often filled with negative messages. Using media to push back against those messages and replace them with messages that support healthy and respectful choices is a key strategy for many campaigns. Your strategy may also include promoting media that sends positive messages about consent, although they may be more difficult to find. Students are the experts in social media. Ask them how adults can best to use those tools as part of a campaign to reach youth.

Here are some go-to organizations that have current and well-assessed content: scarleteen.com, plannedparenthood.org, vtnetwork.org, and thatsnotcool.org.

Step 4: Create a Campaign Timeline

- Establish dates for your activities, whether classroom-based, school-wide, or community-based.
- Establish milestones to measure your planning process. What will you have done, by when? What are the tasks that need to be accomplished to reach the end goal?
- Engage a strong core of stakeholders to take on responsibilities every step of the way.

Step 5: Implement and Evaluate

You are off and running now! Celebrate the small successes along the way as you move into implementation. Did you get posters up in all the bathrooms? Success! Did you have a parent meeting for which 20 people showed up? Super success!

Remember to keep checking in on those evaluation measures you identified in Step 3. Measuring your success and marking indicators of change will help create ongoing support and buy-in for the campaign.

The following are examples of scalable evaluation tools that can help you review and revise the campaign as the work progresses:

- Lesson plan evaluations (we have provided a pre/post survey tool for your lesson plans in APPENDIX 1)
- School or community polling
- Focus groups

Conducting an evaluation provides useful information for ongoing, effective implementation of any prevention project. One way to think about the goal of evaluation is to answer the questions:

- How are students/adults/the audience different after participating in the program?
- What are you hoping to learn from the evaluation?

Evaluations measure to what degree an activity or message influences or changes knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, skills, and behavior or behavioral intention. Realistically, most evaluations only capture “proximal” measures, short-term or before-and-after kinds of information about an audience. This basic information can help determine whether the program content is having the intended effect.

Evaluation design specialists often recommend the following basics for best results:

- Keep the evaluation simple and brief.
- Don't assume a lack of knowledge on the part of the respondents.
- State clearly when responses are confidential. Be clear that you may be compelled to report if you recognize a student's response that includes reportable information.
- If possible, try to capture some measure of behavior or behavioral intent.
- A short pre and post survey is practical in many settings.

Some points to consider when deciding what kind of evaluation tool to use:

- Resources: Who will be conducting the evaluation and what material and design costs are involved?
- Time frame and format of prevention activity: Is it a one-time event or series of lessons? Do you want before and after information?
- Size of audience: For example, will the evaluation be used with several small groups or school-wide?
- Implementation logistics: Is it practical to use a real-time pen and paper form or an online survey? Do you also want to conduct some interviews or focus groups?
- Information sought: What key pieces of audience knowledge do you want to measure? Do you also want to measure attitudes or behavior/behavioral intent?
- Results analysis and use: Who will compile the evaluation results and how will they be used? Internally for project improvement? Externally for project promotion and sustainability? Or both?

Consider asking if the local school district or supervisory union has an evaluation coordinator or committee available for consultation. You can also explore whether a local higher education institution has faculty whose course requirements or service learning options might assist with your evaluation design.

Ongoing Implementation: Key Points to Remember

- With each step of campaign planning and implementation, your goal is to pave the way toward sustainability.
- In a way, the community is part audience, part consumer, and part supporter. When it is engaged at all levels from the start, you will have buy-in that builds ongoing support.
- Time taken to evaluate and review the work as you go demonstrates the value of what you are doing and how it benefits the community. This is a key selling point to potential funders and supporters, whether public agencies, private foundations, or community members who donate time or money to help with your consent campaign activities.
- The more consistent and deep your work becomes, the more you will experience a cultural shift in how your community and school defines and honors the idea of consent. You'll have a broader understanding that consent extends far beyond sexual and physical contact and that it is inherent in many different interactions that students have with each other daily. The more we talk about consent the easier it becomes — and the easier it is to understand when you have it and when you do not.

DISCLOSURES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Due to the prevalence of sexual violence in our society, it is likely that when we talk to youth and adults about consent, some of them will have already been victimized. Below are some tips on how to be a safe person to disclose abuse or violence to.⁵

UNDERSTAND CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

- In Vermont, all sexual abuse of minors (among peers — this includes sexual activity which is not consensual) must be reported to the Department for Children and Families, Family Services (DCF/FS) by mandated reporters.
- Know and follow your mandated reporting status and policy. Your organization’s policy may include guidance on how and when you disclose that you are a mandated reporter.
- More information about mandated child abuse reporting in Vermont can be found here: dcf.vermont.gov/protection/reporting/mandated.
- If a young person discloses something that you must report to DCF/FS, do so with care. Provide the youth with as much information as you can about your mandates, the process, and what to expect.
- DCF Policy 52 (bit.ly/2QEDaMO) outlines an option for sexual abuse victims ages 15 and older (both chronologically and developmentally) to request that the “alleged actor” not be notified or interviewed if the alleged actor is under the age of 19.

USE STRATEGIES THAT SUPPORT DISCLOSING

- Establish safe environments and nurture consistent positive relationships through open and respectful communication.
- Teach children and youth about healthy sexual development as well as the correct anatomical names for all of their body parts including genitals.
- Ensure that youth have the skills needed to describe a situation that makes them uncomfortable and that they feel they have permission to use these skills.

KNOW HOW TO RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF ABUSE AND DISCLOSURES

- Disclosure is not always obvious and can easily be missed.
- Disclosure is often a process rather than a one-time event.
- While full disclosure happens occasionally, more often information is provided a little at a time — the process may span hours, weeks, months, or even years as youth test the reactions of the adults around them.
- A youth may be hesitant, confused, uncertain, or agitated during a disclosure. They may disclose, then retract and deny abuse. This does not mean that the person isn’t telling the truth or that you should disregard the information.
- Youth often express through behavior rather than words. It is important to know what signals might indicate that something is worrying the young person. Some signs include abrupt changes in temperament including increased anxiety or depression, aggression, or withdrawal; changes in behavior like attendance or grades; physical illness; and sleeplessness.

5. Adapted from Vermont’s Sexual Violence Prevention Technical Assistance Resource Guide, for school communities K-12 incorporating sexual violence prevention into their health education curriculum.

HOW TO RESPOND TO DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE⁶

Remain calm.

Listen.

- Any self-disclosure is a gift of trust for a young person to offer.
- Thank the person for telling you. Let them know that you believe them and that it is not their fault. Continue providing these messages throughout your conversation.
- Ask if the person would like to find a private place to talk where you won't be interrupted.

Be aware of space and ask the person where they'd like to sit and where they'd like you to sit. Don't sit behind a desk.

- Only touch the person with their permission. Touch may be associated with physical and/or emotional distress.

Recognize and respect the variety of feelings that the person may be experiencing.

- Use nonjudgmental language and ask open-ended questions.

Avoid questions or statements that place blame on the person who is disclosing. Questions about why they were at a certain place or doing a certain thing or about how long they waited to tell may indicate that they didn't behave safely or correctly and so are responsible for the violence.

Encourage the youth to tell you what happened but don't press for details.

- Honor the person's method of disclosure. If someone is making a disguised disclosure (for instance, talking about the abuse as having happened to someone else), encourage the person to tell you about the situation.
- Respect and honor the person's relationships, which may include the person who caused them harm, who is most likely familiar and someone whom the youth may care about and want to protect.

Try to get enough information to determine the youth's safety. Immediate action is needed if you think the child is in imminent danger.

- If the young people with whom you work are aware of your mandated reporting requirements, it is not necessary to immediately talk about reporting or solving the problem. **It is most important that you listen well and stay present.**
- After your conversation, plan for follow up. If you would like to check in with the individual later, ask permission to do so.

6. Adapted from CWS-569: *Child Abuse and Neglect: Recognizing, Reporting, and Responding for Educators*. Virginia Commonwealth University VISSTA eLearning Center (2009).

CONSENT LESSON PLAN
GRADES 7/8

CONSENT LESSON PLAN

GRADES 7/8



Length: 1 hour 30 minutes or two 45 minute sections.



Evaluation: Administer your pre-survey to students prior to the lesson to help identify what they already know and what they need to learn. In order to evaluate retained learning, the post-survey is best administered two days to two weeks after you've completed the lesson plan. However, using the post-survey directly after the lessons works as well.



Learning Objectives: Students will:

- Be able to state the legal age of consent in Vermont.
- Be able to describe the elements that need to be present to be able to give or get consent.
- Be able to describe the importance of consent.
- Be able to identify a broad range of situations in which consent is needed (e.g., for any touch, not just sexual touch).

SECTION 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO CONSENT (45 MIN)

INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Trainer Note: Be sure to use language that is comfortable for you. Below is a suggested script.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Many of you may have heard the term “consent.” Today we are going to talk about what it means and what needs to be present for consent to be possible.

Consent means words and actions that show that someone really wants to do, and freely agrees to do, the same thing. Consent is important in many different situations. We sign consent forms to let doctors see our health information. We have consent waivers that say we agree to play on a sports team and abide by the rules of that team. Can you think of other situations in which we get or give consent?

Today we are going to talk about consent and communication around sexual and physical touch and activity.

Write up on the board:

- **Consent means: At the time of the act, there are words and physical actions indicating that everyone freely agrees and really wants to do the same thing. Checking for consent is a process that each person needs to do repeatedly.**

Ask students to help you find the main points of the definition and circle the words on the board as you talk about them:

- “At the time of the act”: Giving and getting consent has to be current, in the now, not yesterday or even 15 minutes ago, in case someone changes their mind.
- Words AND actions: In order to know that someone is into what’s happening, we want to see BOTH words (YES!) AND actions (smiles and nods, moving toward, not away). One without the other could mean that someone is feeling uncomfortable.
- “Freely agrees”: For consent to be given, every person needs to feel “free” to do so. What does this mean? That there can’t be power imbalances, that no drugs or alcohol are involved, that both have the ability to change their minds, both understand the consequences, and both feel safe to say no at any time. (This is a lot; we’ll talk more about it soon!)

This kind of consent applies to a wide range of sexual touch and activity including:

- kissing
- holding hands
- hugging
- touching or rubbing under or over clothes
- being fully or partially naked with or in front of each other
- sending fully or partially nude pictures (sexting) of ourselves or someone else
- all other forms of sexual contact

Trainer TIPS:

Ask students where else they give consent beyond the examples you offer. Ask them about non-sexual situations in which they get and expect consent from someone before an activity (borrowing money, using someone’s phone, going out to a movie, etc).

You may want to write the various forms of sexual activity listed in paragraph two on a flip chart or chalk board so that students can read them as well as hear them.

Trainers can also ask students to populate the list of forms of sexual activity and then add the ones they left out.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Each activity needs to have clear consent from each person involved every time and throughout the activity (if someone changes their mind mid-activity, it needs to stop). If you want to touch someone or be sexual with them in a non-touching way, it is your responsibility to make sure you have the other person’s consent. It is not the other person’s responsibility to have to say no or yes once you start, though they have the right to do that or even change their mind partway through if they want. The responsibility of consent falls on the person who is initiating the touch or activity.



ASK: Why is it important to ask if you can touch someone?

Write up student answers so they can be seen by the whole class. Be sure to include the following as they appear on the sample pre/post survey:

- We each have the right to set boundaries around our bodies and the right to expect that they will be respected.
- It is the right thing to do.
- It makes our experience with each other more comfortable and enjoyable.
- Without clear and enthusiastic consent, we might be pressuring someone to do something they don't want to.
- It's a way to show we care about someone.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Those are all great reasons. Consent is important for all kinds of touch, all the time. Now, let's try to see if we can tell how someone is feeling using body language clues in person. How good are we at understanding someone's clues?

Trainer Note: It may be useful to write a few words on the board that will support the concepts above. They are key concepts that are included on the sample evaluation surveys. Consider writing: "You can change your mind!" and "The responsibility of consent falls on the person initiating the activity."

READING CLUES (10 minutes)



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- 6 "feeling cards" for each pair (3 cards for each person). There should be a mix of easily identifiable feelings and more difficult ones. Feeling cards are provided in APPENDIX 2.
- A timer, such as a cellphone, wall clock, or stopwatch.

GET STARTED

Divide participants into pairs. GIVE each person in each pair three feeling cards face down. Tell participants not to look at the cards until they are instructed to. If there is an uneven number of people in the group, have one person join another group. Each person in that group will get two feeling cards instead of three, and both "receivers" can guess what the "sender" is trying to convey at the same time.

Have each pair decide who will go first.

EXPLAIN

SAMPLE SCRIPT

When asking for, giving, and denying consent, we communicate in many ways without using words. Facial expressions and body language can give us many important clues that we need to pay attention to.

*Each of you will have a turn to read a feeling another person is trying to convey with their body language. The first person to go will look at one of the cards they were given (without showing it to the other person) and then "send" the feeling to their partner **using facial expressions and body language only, no sounds.***

The other person, the receiver, will try to guess the feeling. If they guess correctly, the sender will say "yes" and go to the next card they have. You will have only one minute to go through all three cards. If one feeling seems really hard, the sender can choose to set it aside or the receiver can say "pass." After a minute I will tell you to switch and the person

who was trying to guess will now try to express the feelings on their three cards to the other person.

Give each person a chance to send and receive.



ASK: Was anyone unable to identify a feeling their partner was sending? What feeling was it? Why do you think this feeling was hard to express or guess? When might someone be feeling this feeling?

CONCLUDE

SAMPLE SCRIPT

While body language can't tell us everything, it is important to observe. Sometimes, even though someone may have said "yes" with words, their body may be saying "no" or "I'm more nervous than excited." In those situations, we need to check in and ask.

It is always important to be sure that the words we see and the body language we observe line up with one another. That way, we really know what is going on. If we aren't sure, or if there seems to be a disconnect between words and actions, then we need to stop and check in with the other person.

Let's practice some more using our powers of observation to see if consent exists between two people.

YES or NO (15 minutes)

Trainer Note: This activity may need to be adapted for groups with people who may have barriers to reading body language in pictures due to developmental or physical disabilities. Alternatives could include having two people demonstrate using sounds and body language (not words) that might mean yes or no and have the group discuss together.

Leave space for students who are nonverbal and/or non-hearing. Ask: What steps can be taken to ensure that all involved parties understand each other completely and can give full consent? Answers could include: writing things out, using sign language or visual language that is agreed upon prior to initiating contact, etc.



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- Yes/no cards for each student
- Yes/no images

EXPLAIN

Pass out yes/no cards.

Tell students that you are going to show a few images. In response, students should hold up a "yes" card if they think that both people in the picture are into what is happening. Students should hold up a "no" card if they think one person might not be enjoying what is happening, or not feeling into it.

Explain further that, for some images, we don't have a lot of information beyond what we can see in the picture. For other images, some of us may know the story behind it (e.g., the photo from *Twilight*). Students should use their best judgment based on what they see and know.



Go through a few images with the “yes” and “no” cards.

ASK: What clues did you notice when you held up “yes” cards? What about the “no” clues?

COMPLICATE

After showing an image that may be ambiguous or where students don’t agree, add some new information that complicates the situation or ask some questions that may help them think more critically. For example: What if we knew they were dating? What if we knew that one had a crush on the other? What if one was drunk and one had not been drinking? What if they are best friends? What if one of the people has a developmental disability? Does it look like that person is able to say no if they wanted to?

If participants know a story behind a photo (perhaps from a movie), ask them to explain their thoughts based on the backstory. This is a good way to create space for conversation about complications.



ASK as you introduce complications: How does this information impact our impression of whether this was okay touch or not? Do you think that person A asked if they could touch person B? What might have happened if they did ask? (They might have said “no, I don’t want to hug” or they might have said “sure” and been more into it and ready for it and therefore made a hug that both people liked more.)

CONCLUDE

SAMPLE SCRIPT

We can’t really tell if there was active and enthusiastic consent in any of these pictures because we didn’t hear the conversation that was happening or see other body language clues. It’s important to remember that the only people who can tell us if there is really consent are the people in these situations. We may be using our best judgement, and we might guess correctly, but it is still just a guess.

All right, let’s take some time to define consent together more thoroughly. Consent is more than just a “yes” or a “no.” Those words, “yes” and “no,” need some other pieces in place around them before they mean anything.

DEFINING THE ELEMENTS OF CONSENT (15 minutes)

Trainer Note: Read the first BOLD sentence of each element on the handout and lead a brief discussion about each using the sentences that follow it as a guide.



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- Consent: Got It? handout for each student

Pass out Consent: Got It? handout to every student, allow students a couple of minutes to read the handout.

Have a student read out loud the paragraph on the right:

- **Consent means: At the time of the act, there are words and physical actions indicating that everyone freely agrees and really wants to do the same thing. Checking for consent is a process that each person needs to do repeatedly.**

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

Let's take a look at what we will call the "Five Elements of Consent." These five elements are what make up the "freely agrees" part of the decision. They need to be considered for there to be real consent.

1. There is a sufficient balance of power in the relationship.

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

This balance of power piece is important but probably a new concept for a lot of us. An example you might remember from when you were little or maybe you've seen somewhere is when a little kid is told to give his aunt or grandfather a hug or kiss but doesn't want to. You may have heard a parent say: "Come on now, Johnny, give your aunt a hug, you won't see her for a while." Johnny can't really say no because he is just a kid and will get in trouble with his parents.



ASK: What are some examples of where there might not be a sufficient balance of power in your relationships with other people now?

- Teacher and student
- Senior and a 7th grader (the senior has more information about engaging in sexual activity and also a lot more life experience to base decisions on)
- Boss and employee
- Coach and athlete



ASK: What about someone who is popular with someone who is maybe less popular? Do they have a balance of power?

This is what we call a status difference, and it is important because a popular person may be more likely to be believed, especially by other students, if they say something did or didn't happen. If the popular person does something wrong, they might not be held accountable for their actions. The less popular person might not get the support or help they need.

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

This doesn't mean that people with different levels of popularity can't be together, but the popular person, with more social power, needs to be really careful around checking in for consent.

Another example of a status difference might be if two people of the same sex are engaging in sexual activity and one of them is "out," meaning many people know that they are gay, and the other is not. The person who is out could tell people about the other person if they wanted to, which might make it scary or unsafe for the person who is not out to consent.



ASK: Look at the age chart on the back. How do you think age plays into power differences?

People under 15 may not have had access to information about all of the potential consequences of sexual activity. It might also be too awkward for them to be able to talk openly with the person they are engaging with, which is a really important thing to do.

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

Adults have more power than teenagers. It's not okay for an adult to ask a teenager to consent to any kind of sexual activity with them.

The consent law in Vermont says that it is okay for people between the ages of 15 and 18 to consent to each other because these people could be in high school together and have a balance of power.

Society believes that someone 16 years old has had a chance to learn about safe sexual activity and can make informed choices and not give into adult pressure from someone 18 or over if they do not want to consent.

Even if age or power differences are not present, the other elements of consent must also be in place.

2. Both people are aware of the consequences of sexual activity, both positive and negative, and know what will happen next.



ASK: What do you think this means? How do you make sure that both people have all the information needed to give consent?

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

Make sure to do your research about the possible consequences of sexual activity. Talking about all the things listed here is the only way to make sure you know about consequences. Think ahead about what is important to you, what you might want to do, and how to be safe and comfortable with your decisions. Making decisions in the heat of the moment is not the way to go!

To help students better understand consequences, choose between one of the following two approaches:

A. Scenario:

Ron is 13 years old and at a teens-only pool party at the public pool in his town. Gabby is a 17-year-old girl who lives on his street and who he has had a crush on since he can remember. Gabby walks up to Ron at the pool party. She may have been drinking, and she tells Ron she wants to make out with him right then. Ron can't believe it. He instantly breaks out into a sweat. He has never even talked to her but he doesn't want to say no because he really wants her to like him and he wants to seem cool. Gabby grabs his hand and they walk towards her blanket. Ron is already thinking of the flowers he will get for her tomorrow, the movie he will ask her to next weekend and what else he will do with his new girlfriend. What he doesn't know is that Gabby was dared by her friends to pick the youngest-looking boy and make out with him. To her, it is just a joke.



ASK: Does Ron know the consequences? (No.) What might those consequences be? (Embarrassment, hurt feelings, etc.) Whose responsibility is it to initiate more talk about "making out" in this scenario? (Gabby.)

B. Conversation:



ASK: What is an example of a situation in which one person might not know the consequences of sexual activity? Possible answers include:

- Lying about being on birth control.
- Someone says they've been tested for STI/HIV and they haven't.
- One person thinks it's just a hookup and the other person thinks it's the beginning of a relationship.



Ask: If one person doesn't have all the information they need, what could happen? Possible answers include:

- Health risks
- Embarrassment
- Hurt feelings

People need to be informed so that they can make the best decisions for themselves and then feel okay about it!

3. It's safe to say no: This is really important!

SAMPLE SCRIPT

In order for activity to be consensual, it must be safe for anyone to say no at any time. That means saying no will not put the person in real or perceived danger of any kind.



ASK: What are some things a person might say to pressure someone and make sexual activity feel unsafe.

Offer these statements as examples. Follow up by asking why each of the statements are unsafe.

- “If you loved me, you would do this.” (manipulation, guilt)
- “I’m going to tell everyone you did it anyway.” (threats)
- “You’re such a tease, just do it.” (name calling, guilt, manipulation)
- “If you don’t do this, I’ll break up with you.” (threats)
- “I’ll tell everyone that you’re gay” — particularly when one person is out and the other is not. (threats)

4. If you say “yes,” you can change your mind or stop at any time



ASK: Why is this important?

- If someone gets uncomfortable or changes their mind, they have the right to stop and not be forced to continue.
- Sexual activity should be a good experience for all involved.
- Remember: checking for consent is a process that each person needs to do repeatedly.

5. Neither party is under the influence of drugs or alcohol



ASK: Why is it important for both parties to be sober when giving consent?

- People’s brains don’t function the same way when they’re under the influence as they do when they are not. Drugs and alcohol impair judgement and decision-making.
- Think about driving: we say that for people over 21, more than one drink can impact your ability to drive safely. For people under 21, any amount of alcohol is considered intoxicated.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

(If it makes sense to add:) Certainly we know people may decide to engage in sexual activity when they are intoxicated and may wake up the next day feeling okay about it. BUT, if people feel they were too intoxicated and the other person took advantage of that, then that is a crime.

When people have been drinking or drugging, the safest choice is to wait until everyone is sober.

Continue on...



ASK: What do you think is meant by “consent is a process”?

You have to ask about what you are doing along the way; not assume or guess if it is okay. Someone might like something or be willing to try it once, but not again. We don't know unless we check in about it each time and make a habit out of talking about what we like, don't like, and do or don't want to do.

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

Consent to one thing, one time, with a specific person does not mean it will necessarily apply the same way at any other time.



ASK: What else stands out for you about the Consent: Got it? handout or about consent in general?

Trainer Note: Try to answer questions as openly as you can. If you can't answer something immediately, write it down on a flip chart and say you will come back to it in the next session. Invite youth to talk to you in private at any time if they have things they don't want to talk about in front of the whole class. Or suggest other people they might talk to instead.



Let's work to shift our approach to consent to be an

ACTIVE, ENTHUSIASTIC YES!!

YES MEANS YES

Find time to watch: Tea Consent Video
(clean version: bit.ly/2H5V4Z6)

SECTION 2: APPLYING OUR SKILLS (45 MIN)

DECISION-MAKING (15 minutes)



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- Write the bullet-pointed questions below on a flip chart or chalk board but cover them so students can't see them at first.

INTRODUCE

SAMPLE SCRIPT

In the last section we talked about the elements of consent and started to think about how we check in with ourselves and with others. Knowing if there is consent is all about making decisions TOGETHER about what you want to do. In this next activity we are going to try out our decision-making skills.

Turn to someone near you. In your pairs, you are going to have two minutes to decide to do something nonsexual together, such as eating a specific food, playing a sport, going to a destination, or watching a specific movie together. If you can, make this something that one of you has never tried before.

Give students two minutes, then ask a couple of the pairs what they decided to do together. Reveal the bulleted list of questions below. Ask those same pairs that reported out if they talked about any of these things.

- When you are going to do it?
- How you are going to get there?
- How long you are going to stay there?
- What you are going to do if one of you is ready to go before the other one?
- How does thinking about doing it make the other person feel?

Ask students to talk in their pairs again and answer all of these additional questions. Give them another two minutes.

DISCUSS



ASK: How did the conversations feel? Was it awkward?

ASK: Where there any pairs that decided to do something one of them had done already?

- What was that like?
- Did it seem that the person who had done it already was in charge of figuring out how you would do it together?
- Did the person who hadn't done it defer to the experienced person because they knew what they were doing?



ASK: Did anyone have conflicts come up during the discussion? What was the conflict about and how did it feel for each person?

ASK: Why is it more important to think about all these other questions when thinking about consent?

- Decision-making together can be difficult. There are lots of different parts that need to be agreed upon. You can't assume that if you agree on one part of it that you will agree on everything else too, so you have to talk about it all.

CONCLUDE

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Talking about what we like and don't like with people who we might engage sexually with is important! And it is not always easy or comfortable. As a rule, if you can't communicate about it, don't do it.

Discuss the little things first, like holding hands and hugging; this is really good practice for the bigger stuff that you might want to do in the future.

As you get to know your partner more, talking will become easier and easier. Check in with them often. Check in with yourself often. If you want to have more fun, you need to find out whether or not EVERYONE is into it!

Now we are going to look at some scenarios and apply what we have learned about consent.

CASE SCENARIOS (20 minutes)

Trainer Note: *Trigger Warning:* This is a good time to let students know that the scenarios that will be discussed may bring up feelings for people about times when they or someone they know has experienced uncomfortable sexual contact. Give students many options, including deciding their own participation comfort level, choosing their own groups/pairs, and opting out of discussions.



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- Copies of the grade 7/8 scenarios and questions (pages 33-38) for each student
- As an alternative, you can have the full class watch this brief video using the same discussion questions: "Ask. Listen. Respect: A Video about Consent" (bit.ly/2FsQq4Y). The ASK. LISTEN. RESPECT. was created by the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Alliance for kids ages 11-16 to show concrete examples of how to ask for consent, what enthusiastic verbal consent looks like, and how to respond to "no" respectfully.

Have the large group break into three smaller groups. Assign each group a scenario and have each group read and discuss. One person in the group should read the scenario out loud, and another person should take notes about their conversation. The group should also choose someone to report out at the end.

After about 10 minutes of small group discussion time, bring the class back together to discuss. Have each group report out briefly about their scenario.

Large Group Discussion Questions:

- What do you think about how consent played out in your scenario? Was it awkward? Was it easy? Was it there?
- What feelings were involved for each person in the scenarios you looked at?
- What pressures might these people have been facing to do or not do something?
- Whose responsibility was it to check for consent? Why?

POINTS TO MAKE WITH EACH GROUP:

Scenario 1

- Ellie didn't ask Sarah if she could hold her hand.
- There is a lot that they could talk about that would help — like how to manage the fact that Ellie is out at school and Sarah is not.

Scenario 2

- ANY SEXUAL ACTIVITY BETWEEN THESE TWO, as defined by law, IS ILLEGAL. Consent is not possible in this scenario because of the ages of each person. Dave is 17 and Julie is 14. No one under 15 can legally consent.
- Even if Julie was 15, she was clearly uncomfortable with the situation. Her body language showed that.

Scenario 3

- This is a good example of talking ahead of time AND checking in with each other in the moment.

Trainer Note: If you have extra time, consider incorporating the Values and Boundaries Free Write activity (10 minutes) (page 45) from the 9/10 grade lessons into your plan. In addition, the Are you READY to do it? handout in APPENDIX 3 offers a great decision-making tool for youth considering sexual activity.

CONCLUSION (10 minutes)

Let's review what we have learned and tie things together.

What did we learn about body language?

- It is an important clue around how people are feeling but can't be the only way we are checking for consent.

What kinds of activities do we need to ask permission to do?

- Any kind of touch or sexual activity like sexting.

What do we mean by sufficient power balance?

- That one person isn't a lot older, isn't in a position of authority, and doesn't have more social power or a lot more experience.

Can someone give me an example of a statement that makes it unsafe to say no?

- "If you loved me, you would do this."
- "I'm going to tell everyone you did it anyway."
- "You're such a tease, just do it."
- "If you don't do this, I'll break up with you."

Whose responsibility is it to check in around consent?

- Primary responsibility is with the person initiating the activity.
- Because sometimes the initiation role can shift throughout an interaction and a relationship, it is

also important that each person check in with themselves about what they want as well as their own behavior.

Can you think of other ways to apply this besides just with a boyfriend or girlfriend?

- Hugging a friend; with siblings; any time you touch anyone you should ask first.

What are some phrases we can use to ask if something is okay?

- May I...?
- Do you like it if I...?
- Want to...?
- Can we...?

What makes it difficult to ask?

- Why is asking better?

What other questions do you have?

- Remind students that they can find you after class or another time if something comes up and they want to talk more about consent.

LESSON PLAN SCENARIOS

Grades 7/8 Consent Campaign Lesson Plan

Scenario #1: Holding Hands

Ellie and Sarah are both in 7th grade. They started hanging out a few weeks ago. They mostly just see each other at school, but they talk on the phone on the weekends and sometimes during the week. They are in the same homeroom, but that is the only class they have together. It is the first time either of them has dated anyone, and they both feel a little shy sometimes, not knowing exactly what to say to each other. Ellie is out to her friends and family and Sarah is out to her family and to a few friends but not to everyone at school.

In their school, lots of 8th graders date and a few 7th graders do too. Couples often walk to class together holding hands and give a kiss before going into the classroom. Sarah walks Ellie to a lot of her classes, but they haven't kissed or even held hands yet. Ellie's friends are starting to ask her if she wants to hold hands with Sarah and if she has kissed her yet. She hasn't done either. She would like to hold her hand when they walk to class, but Sarah keeps her hands in her pockets or holding her books. Sarah is also excited for her first kiss but doesn't know if she wants it to happen at school in front of everyone.

That Friday, while walking to the last class of the day, Ellie tries to grab Sarah's hand. Sarah pulls it away. Neither of them says anything but both feel awkward and Ellie gets really bummed and thinks Sarah may not really like her. They part quickly when they reach the classroom. Sarah doesn't meet Ellie after class to walk her to the bus like she usually does.

That night, Ellie texts Sarah. She is mad and sad and not sure what is going on. She asks Sarah if she wants to break up. Sarah says she doesn't. Ellie asks why she wouldn't hold her hand. Sarah pauses for a bit and then says she doesn't know, she doesn't like it, it makes her uncomfortable.

Inside, Sarah is feeling that she doesn't want to hold hands because she's not out to everyone at school yet. Also, Ellie makes her nervous and her palms sweat. She's embarrassed and doesn't want Ellie to know. Ellie assumes that Sarah is embarrassed to be seen holding hands with her and gets mad. Ellie says she doesn't like Sarah anymore and hangs up.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: *Have one student take notes and be prepared to report to the class.*

What pressures do you think Ellie and Sarah were feeling and from whom?

Why do you think it was hard for them to talk?

What might have made it easier?

What could each of them have done differently to avoid confusion and discomfort?

How does this relate to consent?

Scenario #2: License to Drive

Dave is an 11th grader who is 17; he has his license and a car. He is on the soccer team and is really popular. A couple of months ago he met his sister's friend Julie, who is in 8th grade and 14 years old. Dave thought she was cute. He would hang out with her when she came over to see his sister, and he started offering her rides home. Julie couldn't believe he was interested in her; she wasn't popular and was still in junior high.

They started dating. They both updated their Facebook pages to say they were in a relationship together. Julie's friends were jealous that she was dating someone so much older who was so popular and had a car. They would talk on the phone every night and he texted her all the time during the day asking what she was doing and who she was with. If she said she was with any other boys, though, he would text things like "you better not be sitting too close to them." At first, she thought he was joking, but then he would bring it up constantly and one time told one of her guy friends to "get his own girlfriend." She thought his jealousy was a sign of how much he liked her.

They kissed a lot, and Dave had felt Julie's breasts over her shirt. One time, after they had been dating about three months, they were making out in Dave's car in the parking lot after the movies. When things were heating up, Dave tried to pull Julie over to sit on his lap. Julie didn't want to and resisted when he tried to pull her over. As soon as he let go of her, she went back to her seat and stared out the window and said she wanted to go home. Dave muttered, "What is wrong with you?," gave her a dirty look, and started the car to drive her home.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: *Have one student take notes and be prepared to report to the class.*

Was there sufficient power balance in the relationship? Why/why not?

Why does having a sufficient balance of power matter?

Was there consent? Explain.

What pressures do you think Dave and Julie might have been experiencing from friends that impacted this situation?

Which of Dave's actions were not okay? Why?

Scenario #3: Friends, or More?

Taylor and Jordan have been friends for a long time. They are both in 8th grade. They hang out with a group of other friends all the time, some of whom are dating each other. One weekend, they are all hanging out listening to music. They all decide to start playing a version of spin the bottle where the person who the bottle points toward has to kiss the spinner. Everyone seems to have a lot of fun playing the game, and Taylor and Jordan kiss a couple of times during it.

The group moves on to doing other things and it is soon time for them all to head home. Taylor and Jordan live in the same direction and start walking together. On the way home, Taylor tells Jordan that they really liked kissing them and that they'd like to do it again. Taylor asks for another kiss.

Jordan says yes, but asks if it means that they are going out or does Taylor just want to be friends. Taylor responds by saying that they've had a crush on Jordan for a while and asks if they'd like to date. Jordan says yes. They stop walking and kiss each other. It's just a closed-mouth kiss, and then they hug. Then they open-mouth kiss. Taylor asks if that was okay, if Jordan liked it. Jordan giggled and said "yes, a lot" and asked if they could to do it again. They kiss some more.

They realize they need to get home, so they start walking. Both of them let their hands dangle and touch each other's. They start to hold hands, look at each other and smile.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: *Have one student take notes and be prepared to report to the class.*

What do you think about how they communicated with each other?

When and how was consent communicated?

Was it safe for Jordan to say no if they wanted to?

How do you think Jordan feels that Taylor has asked them if the kissing is okay?

What might have happened if Jordan didn't want to do anything?

CONSENT LESSON PLAN

GRADES 9/10

CONSENT LESSON PLAN

GRADES 9/10



Length: 1 hour 30 minutes or two 45 minute sections.



Evaluation: Administer your pre-survey to students prior to the lesson to help identify what they already know and what they need to learn. In order to evaluate retained learning, the post-survey is best administered two days to two weeks after you've completed the lesson plan. However, using the post-survey directly after the lessons works as well.



Learning Objectives: Students will:

- Be able to state the legal age of consent in Vermont.
- Be able to describe the elements that need to be present to be able to give or get consent.
- Be able to describe the importance of consent.
- Be able to identify a broad range of situations where consent is needed (consent for any touch, not just sexual touch).

SECTION 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO CONSENT (45 MIN)

INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

Trainer Note: Be sure to use language that is comfortable for you. Below is a suggested script.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Today we are going to talk about communication and consent around engaging in sexual activities. Many people may be familiar with the term "consent."



ASK: What is consent?

Invite students to create a working definition, asking them questions and helping them revise as needed. Here is our brief definition:

- **Consent is words and physical actions indicating that everyone freely agrees and really wants to do the same thing.**

Consent applies to a wide range of physical and sexual touch.



ASK: What kinds of sexual activities do you think you need consent for?

- kissing
- holding hands
- touching or rubbing under or over clothes
- being fully or partially naked with or in front of each other

- sending fully or partially nude pictures (sexting) of ourselves or someone else
- vaginal and anal penetration
- oral sex (giving and receiving)
- watching someone masturbate or touch themselves

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Each activity needs to have clear consent from each person involved every time and throughout the activity (if someone changes their mind mid-activity, it needs to stop).

If you want to touch someone or be sexual with them in a non-touching way, it is your responsibility to make sure you have the other person’s consent. It is not the other person’s responsibility to have to say no or yes once you start, though they have the right to do that, and to change their mind at any time.

The responsibility of consent falls on the person who is initiating the touch or activity.

Trainer Note: It may be useful to write a few words on the board that will support the concepts above. They are key concepts that are included on the sample evaluation surveys. Consider writing: “You can change your mind!” and “The responsibility of consent falls on the person initiating the activity.”



ASK: Why is it important to ask if you can touch someone?

Be sure to include the following as they appear on the sample pre/post survey:

- We each have the right to set boundaries around our bodies and the right to expect that they will be respected.
- It is the right thing to do.
- It makes our experience with each other more comfortable and enjoyable.
- Without clear and enthusiastic consent, we might be pressuring someone to do something they don’t want to.
- It’s a way to show that we care about someone.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Those are all great reasons. Consent is important for all kinds of touch and sexual interaction. But consent means more than just a “yes” or a “no.” Those words, “yes” and “no,” need some other pieces in place around them before they mean anything.

DEFINING THE ELEMENTS OF CONSENT: (25 minutes)



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- Consent: Got It? handout for each student.

Pass out Consent: Got It? handout to every student. Allow students a minute or two to read the handout.

Have a student read out loud the paragraph on the right:

- **Consent means: At the time of the act, there are words and physical actions indicating that everyone freely agrees and really wants to do the same thing. Checking for consent is a process that each person needs to do repeatedly.**

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

Let's check in with what we will call the "Five Elements of Consent." These five elements are what make up the "freely agrees" part of the decision. In order for consent to be given, all five elements need to be considered.

Trainer Note: Read the first BOLD sentence of each element on the handout and lead a brief discussion about each element using the following as a guide.

1. There is a sufficient balance of power in the relationship.

This balance of power piece is important and probably the hardest to wrap our heads around. Let's tease it out.



ASK: What are some examples of when one person has power over another person? What is the source of the more powerful person's power?

- Teacher and student: Teacher can give student bad grades; teacher has authority over student.
- Boss and employee: Boss can fire employee if they don't do what the boss wants.
- Coach and athlete: Coach determines the role athlete plays on the team.
- Someone who is a lot more popular than the other person.



ASK: What is the role of social status in the power balance?

- A popular person may be more likely to be believed, especially by other students, if they say something did or didn't happen. If the popular person does something wrong, they might not be held accountable for their actions. The less popular person might not get the support or help they need. (This doesn't mean that people with different levels of popularity can't be together, but the popular person, with more social power, needs to be really careful around checking in for consent.)
- Another example of a status difference might be if two people of the same sex are engaging in sexual activity and one of them is "out," meaning many people know that they are gay, and the other is not. The person who is out could tell people about the other person if they wanted to, which might make it scary or unsafe for the person who is not out to consent.
- In addition, people who speak different languages and who cannot fully understand each other may not fully understand consent. It is possible, for example, for a person whose first language is English to take advantage of a person who doesn't speak or understand English well.



ASK: What role can developmental differences play in the power balance?

- Someone who may have a learning disability may not understand all the consequences.
- Someone who is much younger or much more immature, even if there isn't a huge age difference, may not understand all the consequences.



ASK: What role does previous violence or threats of violence play in the power balance?

- The person who used violence (or threatened to) has more power because the other person would be scared to make them angry. If one person is scared of the other, there isn't a sufficient balance of power.

- Violence can also mean emotional threats. For example, if someone says no and their partner says that they are going to tell everyone they did it anyway or starts to name call.



ASK: Look at the age chart on the back. How do you think age plays into power differences?

- People under 15 may not have had access to information about all of the potential consequences of sexual activity. It might also be too awkward for them to be able to talk openly with the person they are engaging with, which is a really important thing to do.
- Adults have more power than teenagers. It's not okay for an adult to ask a teenager to consent to any kind of sexual activity with them.
- The consent law in Vermont says that it is okay for people between the ages of 15 and 18 to consent to each other because these people could be in high school together and have a balance of power.
- Society believes that someone 16 years old has had a chance to learn about safe sexual activity and can make informed choices and not give in to adult pressure if they are consenting with someone 18 or over.
- Even if age or power differences are not present, the other elements of consent must also be in place.

2. Both people are aware of the consequences of sexual activity, both positive and negative, and know what will happen next.



ASK: What do you think this means? What are potential consequences to engaging in sexual activity with another person? How can you make sure you know about all the possible consequences?

- Pregnancy and STIs. (If a person knows that they have an STI and withholds that information/ doesn't not use adequate protection, consent is not fully possible.)
- Taking the relationship to another level — or not
- One person might tell others about what you did together.
- You might have a really good time and enjoy yourself.

Talking about all the things listed here is the only way to make sure you know about all the possible consequences.



ASK: What are some questions you can ask to help find out about the potential consequences and make sure you and your partner are on the same page?

- What does this mean for our relationship? Are we just hooking up or are we dating?
- Do you have any STIs? Have you ever been tested?
- Have you done this with other people before?
- Are you on the pill or using some other form of birth control?
- When we do this, are you going to want to do more right away, or is this it?
- If you change your mind partway through, will you tell me? Or will you be able to stop and be cool with that?

These might seem like awkward things to ask, but it will make the experience much safer and more pleasurable. It is best to talk about these things ahead of time, not in the heat of the moment.

3. It's safe to say no: This is really important!



Offer these statements as examples. Follow up by asking why each of the statements is unsafe.

- “If you loved me, you would do this.” (manipulation, guilt)
- “I’m going to tell everyone you did it anyway.” (threats)
- “You’re such a tease, just do it.” (name calling, guilt, manipulation)
- “If you don’t do this, I’ll break up with you.” (threats)
- “I’ll tell everyone that you’re gay” — particularly when one person is out and the other is not. (threats)

4. If you say yes you can change your mind or stop at any time.



ASK: Why is this such an important element of consent?

- If someone gets uncomfortable or changes their mind, they have the right to stop and not be forced to continue.
- Sexual activity should be a good experience for all involved.
- Remember: checking for consent is a process that each person needs to do repeatedly.

5. Neither party is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.



ASK: Why is it important to for both parties to be sober when giving consent?

- People’s brains don’t function the same way when they’re under the influence as they do when they are not. Drugs and alcohol impair judgement and decision-making.
- Think about driving: we say that for people over 21, any more than one drink can impact your ability to drive safely. For people under 21, any amount of alcohol is considered intoxicated.

**SAMPLE
SCRIPT**

(If it makes sense to add:) Certainly we know people may decide to engage in sexual activity when they are intoxicated and may wake up the next day feeling okay about it. BUT, if people feel they were too intoxicated and the other person took advantage of that, then that is a crime.

When people have been drinking or drugging, the safest choice is to wait until everyone is sober.



Let’s work to shift our approach to consent to be an

ACTIVE, ENTHUSIASTIC YES!!

YES MEANS YES

Find time to watch: **Tea Consent Video**
(clean version: bit.ly/2H5V4Z6)

Continue on...



ASK: What do you think is meant by “consent is a process?”

- You have to ask about what you are doing along the way, not assume or guess whether it is okay. Someone might like something or be willing to try it once, but not again or not now. We don't know unless we check in about it each time and make a habit out of talking about what we like, don't like, and do or don't want to do.
- Consent to one thing, one time, with a specific person does not mean it will necessarily apply the same way at any other time.



ASK: What else stands out for you about the Consent: Got it? handout or about consent in general?

Trainer Note: Try to answer questions as openly as you can. If you can't answer something immediately, write it down on a flip chart and say you will come back to it in the next session. Invite youth to talk to you in private at any time if they have things they don't want to talk about in front of the whole class. Or suggest other people they can talk to instead.

VALUES AND BOUNDARIES FREE WRITE: (10 minutes)



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- My Values and Boundaries handout for each student.

INTRODUCE

SAMPLE SCRIPT

We are going to take these next few minutes to think about what your values are around sexual activity. A value is a belief or feeling that is important to you and helps you make decisions. An important piece of consent is knowing what YOU want and don't want to do. When you are aware of your own values, it is easier for you to communicate your wishes and boundaries and to understand and respect others' — even if they are different from yours.

We get a lot of messages from variety of sources about what we should or should not be doing with our bodies.



ASK: Where are some places we get information that might influence our values?

- Parents and family
- Friends
- Media
- Faith/religion
- Songs

SAMPLE SCRIPT

It is helpful to think about our own values before we are in the heat of the moment with someone. If we don't, we may be more influenced by what others think or what pleases someone else.

We want our decisions to reflect our values and what WE FEEL IS RIGHT FOR OURSELVES.

Take a couple of minutes to fill this sheet out. YOU WILL NOT BE ASKED TO SHARE YOUR ANSWERS. This is for your eyes only.

Give 5 minutes for students to write.



ASK: What did it feel like to fill that out? What does it feel like when your boundaries and values are respected?

CONCLUDE

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Talking about what we like and don't like with people we might engage in sexual activities with is important, but not always easy or comfortable. We need to practice communication, build trust, and make sure we get enough information about what the other person likes. Keep thinking about your values and boundaries. These might shift for you as you move through your life, and that is okay and normal.

It is important that we understand what consent is. We are each responsible for checking in every time and backing off if the person we are with doesn't want to do something or isn't sure. Check in with them often. Check in with yourself often. Making sure EVERYONE is into it (or not) means everyone is having more fun.

SECTION 2: APPLYING OUR LEARNING (45 MIN)

REVIEW (10 minutes)

Let's review what we have learned about consent so far:

What kinds of activities do we need to ask permission to do?

- Any kind of touch or sexual activity like sexting.

What do we mean by sufficient power balance?

- That one person isn't in a position of authority and doesn't have more social power or a lot more experience.
- That there is no significant age or developmental difference

Can someone give me an example of a statement that makes it feel unsafe to say no?

- "If you loved me, you would do this."
- "I'm going to tell everyone you did it anyway."
- "You're such a tease, just do it."
- "If you don't do this, I'll break up with you."
- "I'll tell everyone that you're gay."

Whose responsibility is it so check in around consent?

- The person initiating or escalating the activity.

Can you name a few situations where someone cannot give consent?

- When they are drunk, high, passed out, or incoherent
- When they are not fully aware of consequences because they don't have enough information (about STI/HIV, birth control, the impact on their relationship, etc).

Great. Now let's dig a little deeper.

What are some phrases we can use to ask if something is okay?

- May I...?
- Do you like it if I...?
- Want to...?
- Can we...?
- Would you be into...?

What makes it hard to ask? Why is this awkward?

- Nerves, embarrassment, uncomfortable language, etc.
- If it feels uncomfortable to ask, maybe you're not ready to ask.
- If it feels too scary or intimidating to check in with your partner, is the relationship a healthy one?

Why is it important to ask anyway?

- If you think it is awkward to talk about before you do it, imagine being in the heat of the moment with someone and not knowing what they want to do or what they like.
- You want to make sure both people feel safe and are totally into what you are doing.
- Legally, sexual activity without consent is sexual assault.

What are some ways that enthusiastic consent is given?

- Through the word "yes."
- Look closer. What if "yes" was said in a quiet or hesitant way — is that still yes? (no: you would need to check in more)
- What about a "yes" said in a really bored or apathetic way? (no)
- What if yes was said like this? [Do this:]
 - Say "yes" and shake your head no at the same time (no)
 - Say "yes" and pull away at the same time (no)
- What about if:
 - I said "yes" at the same time that I was pushing your hand away? (no)
 - I am not kissing you back? (no)
- Why aren't all of these examples a "yes"?
 - Words and body language need to match.
 - If someone's body is all tense or shaking or showing some other signs of resistance, you need to stop what you are doing and check in, even if their words said "yes."

Well done. Let's take all this learning we have done and check out some case scenarios.

Trainer Note: High school students can benefit from a discussion about consent and pleasure and how they connect. If it makes sense, elicit some conversation about how good consent practice leads to good things, including healthy, enjoyable sexual relationships.

LOOKING AND LISTENING FOR YES OR NO (30 minutes)



TRAINER MATERIALS and PREPARATION:

- Copies of 9/10 scenarios and questions (page 50-54) for each student
- Copies of the Consent: Got it? handouts for each student's reference

Trainer Note: *Trigger Warning:* This is a good time to let students know that the scenarios that will be discussed may bring up feelings for people about times when they or someone they know has experienced uncomfortable sexual contact. Give students many options, including deciding their own participation comfort level, choosing their own groups/pairs, and opting out of discussions.

Have the large group break themselves into 5 small groups. Pass out one scenario to each group. For each group, ask one student to read the scenario out loud while the others follow along. Each group will have a few minutes to discuss the questions at the end of their scenario. One student from each group should be ready to report out in the end. After about 10-15 minutes of discussion time, call the students back together.



ASK each group in turn to share a bit about their scenario and what they focused on in their discussion about the questions.

POINTS TO MAKE WITH EACH GROUP:

Scenario 1

- Young people don't always want to "do it" or rush into things, even though we see a lot of messages in media that tell us that this is the case.
- It can be really hard to say no at this point, in the heat of the moment, but hopefully Jordan feels like Jesse won't be offended.
- They didn't discuss using protection.
- Jesse should be checking in with Jordan and asking if they are ready.

Scenario 2

- It isn't cool that Gary took a picture of Chris in an intimate moment without his permission.
- Sending pictures like this is called "sexting," and it is a risky thing to do. Pictures are easy to forward or post. Phones get easily lost or set down somewhere where people might look through them.
- It is illegal for anyone to show, forward, or post a sext that someone sent to them.
- There is not a sufficient balance of power in this relationship because Chris has not told anyone he is gay. Therefore, Gary has a secret that he could use to manipulate, threaten, or tease Chris with.
- We hope Gary doesn't do that and that they can talk about the sexting and come to an agreement on what BOTH of them feel comfortable with.

Scenario 3

- This is a good example of talking ahead of time AND checking in with each other in the moment.

Scenario 4

- ANY SEXUAL ACTIVITY BETWEEN THESE TWO, as defined by law, IS ILLEGAL. Consent is not possible in this scenario because of the ages of each player. No one under 15 can legally consent.
- Even if Anna was 15, Mark would still be too old. The oldest he could be would be 18.
- Even if she was old enough (or he was young enough), Anna does not have all the information she needs to make an informed decision about whether to engage in sexual activities with Mark. It seems clear that Anna has a crush on Mark and might assume that doing things with him means they would be dating, but that is not what Mark is thinking.

Scenario 5

- This is another great example of talking ahead of time AND checking in with each other in the moment.

CONCLUDE (5 minutes)

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Good job grappling with those scenarios! Consent is not complicated, but it can be awkward to talk about when we first get started. Starting by talking about the little things will make you more comfortable talking about the larger topics. REMEMBER, without clear and enthusiastic consent, it could be sexual violence. Let's keep our relationships healthy and happy and make sure we got it!

Trainer Note: Additional materials for 9/10 grades:

- “What If We Treated All Consent Like Society Treats Sexual Consent?” (comic: bit.ly/2M4tl4A)
- “2 Minutes Will Change The Way You Think About Consent” (video: bit.ly/2RDA4NF)

LESSON PLAN SCENARIOS

Grades 9/10 Consent Campaign Lesson Plan

Scenario #1

Jesse, a senior, and Jordan, a junior, have been dating for two months. They really like each other and have been kissing and holding hands a lot but haven't done more than that. Jesse wants to do more. Jordan feels that some of their friends are having sex and wants to know what it is like. Jordan also thinks it will bring them closer together and is worried that Jesse might leave if they don't do it soon. Jordan sometimes doesn't feel ready yet and is worried about getting STIs.

Jesse had sex before with someone at a party last summer. Jesse didn't really know much about the person and didn't have protected sex. Jordan knows that Jesse had sex before but not that it wasn't protected.

Jesse and Jordan go to a bonfire party together and Jesse brings a blanket. They go into a nearby field to look at the stars and start making out. Things get pretty heated up and Jesse starts to unbutton Jordan's jeans and gives Jordan oral sex.

Next thing Jordan knows, Jesse takes their pants off, rolls on top of Jordan and whispers "do it" into their ear.

DISCUSS: Use your "Consent: Got It?" handout for reference.

What elements of consent are present? Not present? (*Example: In this situation, it is not safe to say no.*)

Can there be consent in this scenario? Why or why not?

What could be the outcomes of sexual activity happening this way?

Positive:

Negative:

Scenario #2

Chris and Gary have been dating for a month, but it is a secret since Chris hasn't told anyone that he is gay, and he is afraid what might happen to him if people find out. Gary likes to joke that he has been out since the 3rd grade, he is part of the school's pride group, and everyone knows he is gay. Chris is on the hockey team, and he hears his teammates make homophobic comments all the time. They are always saying "that is so gay" when something is stupid and making other comments. This makes Chris think that coming out would mean he couldn't play hockey anymore and he would lose his teammates as his friends.

Chris really likes Gary, though and Gary has been really cool about everything so far, not hanging out in school, coming over only at night and not telling anyone they have been hanging out — even though they have been fooling around with each other. Chris still doesn't want to tell anyone that he is gay yet. Gary has started to text Chris during the day with some pretty racy messages and even sent Chris a picture of his bare chest and stomach. Chris is really worried that someone will see these texts. He deletes them as soon as he gets them but hasn't asked Gary to stop. Then, during school one day, Gary sends Chris another picture. It is of Chris kissing Gary's stomach. Gary must have taken it the other night without Chris knowing.

DISCUSS: Use your "Consent: Got It?" handout for reference.

What elements of consent are present? Not present? (*Example: In this situation, there is a power imbalance. It is not safe to say no.*)

Can there be consent in this scenario? Why or why not?

What could be the outcomes of sexual activity happening this way?

Positive:

Negative:

Scenario #3

Rachel and Miguel, both sophomores, have been dating for a year. They haven't had sex yet, or done anything more than kissing, holding hands, cuddling, and taking naps on the couch next to each other. They are very happy and say they are in love. They have talked about having sex before and have decided that they wanted to wait until they were both at least 16, which they have both been for a month now. Rachel has talked to her mom about birth control and safe sex. Her mom took her to the doctor and they talked about options. Rachel decided to start taking the birth control implant in her arm because it will also help with her irregular periods.

She told Miguel about the visit and her decisions. They also agreed that Miguel would start carrying condoms with him in case they felt the time was right — to ensure safe sex. They didn't want to plan the first time, just go with the flow.

One day after school they were at Miguel's house, and his parents weren't home yet. Rachel and Miguel started making out. One thing led to another and things were really heating up. They both had their shirts off and were starting to touch each other's genitals when Miguel asked if he should get up and get his condoms. Rachel nodded her head "yes" enthusiastically.

DISCUSS: Use your "Consent: Got It?" handout for reference.

What elements of consent are present? Not present? (*Example: The power balance is equal.*)

Can there be consent in this scenario? Why or why not?

What could be the outcomes of sexual activity happening this way?

Positive:

Negative:

Scenario #4

Mark is 19. He met Anna at a party this summer. She told him she was 16 at first, but he found out later that she was actually only 14. Mark wasn't that interested, but Anna kept following him around and friended him on Facebook, which he accepted because he didn't think that it mattered that much. Anna kept texting him, asking him to meet up with her here and there. He would text back saying he was busy, maybe next time. She was really cute, but he thought she was too young.

One day they ended up at the same party again and they were both drinking. Anna was all over Mark. He thought she was looking hot, not 14 at all. Mark waited until no one seemed to be looking and took her hand, leading her upstairs. He doesn't plan to date her but thought he could at least get a little action since she was throwing herself at him.

DISCUSS: Use your “Consent: Got It?” handout for reference.

What pieces of consent are present? Not present? (*Example: Both parties are under the influence of alcohol.*)

Can there be consent in this scenario? Why or why not?

What could be the outcomes of sexual activity happening this way?

Positive:

Negative:

Scenario #5

Alex and Sara met at the local pride parade. They go to different schools but spend time at a local youth center together after school a few nights a week. Alex is usually shy and reserved, while Sara likes to be in the spotlight. They bonded over their shared experiences — Alex is transgender and Sara is pansexual — and they both have supportive parents.

One night after group, Sara asked Alex if he needed a ride home. Alex got into Sara's car and they drove to his house. When Sara parked the car, Alex thanked her for driving him home. Sara leaned over and said, "You're welcome and you're cute." Alex responded that he thought Sara was cute too.

They decided that they wanted to go see a movie together the next night. Alex let Sara know he wasn't ready to do anything other than kiss. Sara responded that it was OK with her and asked, "Does that mean you want me to kiss you now?" Alex smiled and nodded his head. They kissed and Alex got out of the car and went inside.

DISCUSS: Use your "Consent: Got It?" handout for reference.

Ask: What pieces of consent are present? Not present? (*Example: It is safe to say no.*)

Ask: Can there be consent in this scenario? Why or why not?

Ask: What could be the outcomes of sexual activity happening this way?

Positive:

Negative:

APPENDIX 1

Sample Pre/Post Surveys

EVALUATION

Pre/post survey examples for use with all grades.

CONSENT CAMPAIGN PRE/POST SURVEY

Please answer the following questions.

1. **It is legal for a 19-year-old to engage in sexual activity with a 15-year-old.** True False

2. **It is legal for an 18-year-old to engage in sexual activity with a 15-year-old.** True False

3. **Circle all the situations below in which consent is not possible:**
 - a. Both people are 15, one has an STI and has not told the other.
 - b. One person is 22 and the other is 16.
 - c. One person is 17 and the other is 19; the 19-year-old is the 17-year-old's manager at work.
 - d. One person is 14 and the other is 18; one of them has an STI but the other knows.
 - e. One person is 16 and the other is 17; one told the other that they'd "out" them if they didn't do something sexual with them.

4. **If you say yes to touch, you cannot change your mind.** True False

5. **A person who is under the influence of alcohol or other substances cannot legally give consent to sexual activity.** True False

6. **Why is it important to get and give consent when touching somebody?**
 - a. We each have the right to set boundaries around our bodies and the right to expect that they will be respected.
 - b. It is the right thing to do.
 - c. It makes our experience with each other more comfortable and enjoyable.
 - d. Without clear and enthusiastic consent, we might be pressuring someone to do something they don't want to.
 - e. All of the above.

PRE/POST SURVEY QUESTION ANSWERS

1. It is legal for a 19-year-old to engage in sexual activity with a 15-year-old. True False
2. It is legal for an 18-year-old to engage in sexual activity with a 15-year-old. True False
3. Circle all the situations below in which consent is not possible:
- a. Both people are 15, one has an STI and has not told the other. *consequences*
 - b. One person is 22 and the other is 16.
 - c. One person is 17 and the other is 19; the 19-year-old is the 17-year-old's manager at work. *power imbalance*
 - d. One person is 14 and the other is 18; one of them has an STI but the other knows. *age difference*
 - e. One person is 16 and the other is 17; one told the other that they'd "out" them if they didn't do something sexual with them. *not safe to say no*
4. If you say yes to touch, you cannot change your mind. True False
5. A person who is under the influence of alcohol or other substances cannot legally give consent to sexual activity. True False
6. Why is it important to get and give consent when touching somebody?
- a. We each have the right to set boundaries around our bodies and the right to expect that they will be respected.
 - b. It is the right thing to do.
 - c. It makes our experience with each other more comfortable and enjoyable.
 - d. Without clear and enthusiastic consent, we might be pressuring someone to do something they don't want to.
 - e. All of the above.

APPENDIX 2

Lesson Plan Supports

FEELING CARDS

Make a copy and cut these up. Each participant should get three cards.

Playful

Shy

Surprised

Happy

Relaxed

Tired

Nervous

Sad

Loved

Hesitant/Unsure

Courageous

Confused

Annoyed

Good

Ashamed

Rejected

Scared



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



**YES or
NO?**



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



**YES or
NO?**



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?



YES or NO?

YES

YES

NO

NO

APPENDIX 3

Handouts

Terms & Definitions

Gender Identity: One's internal sense of being male, female, neither of these, both, or other gender(s).

Sexual Orientation: A person's enduring physical, romantic, emotional, and/or other form of attraction to others. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same.

LGBTQIAP: A collection of queer identities short for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and pansexual (sometimes abbreviated to LGBT or LGBTQ+).

Trans(gender): An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

Cis(gender): A term or people whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

Queer: General term for gender and sexual minorities who are not cisgender and/or heterosexual. There is some overlap between queer and trans identities, but not all queer folks are trans and not all trans folks are queer. This term has a complicated history.

Nonbinary: Preferred umbrella term for all genders other than female/male or woman/man, used as an adjective. Many nonbinary people identify as trans; not all trans people identify as nonbinary.

Cissexism/Heteronormativity: These terms refer to the assumption that being cisgender/heterosexual is the default; normal and expected. Attitudes, assumptions, policies, and systems can be cissexist and heteronormative.

For more definitions, visit outrightvt.org/terms-definitions





CONSENT: Got it?

Before you engage in any kind of sexual activity, you need to make sure you have your partner's consent.

Sexual consent can only be FREELY given if:

1. There is a sufficient balance of power in the relationship.

There is no significant age,* developmental or status differences. One person doesn't have authority over the other. No one has used or threatened to use violence against the other. *See *Vermont laws about this on the flip side*.

2. Both people are aware of the consequences of sexual activity, both positive and negative, and know what will happen next.

Decisions have been made together about birth control and STI/HIV protection. Both people agree to what types of contact are okay. Both people understand what it means for their relationship together.

3. It is safe to say no.

There is no pressure, tricks, or manipulation to say yes, no threats of harm or embarrassment. There are no negative consequences for saying no, no teasing, no pressure, no jokes or telling other people.

4. If you say yes, you can change your mind or stop at any time.

You feel comfortable that if you change your mind at any point, you will be respected and listened to.

5. Neither party is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

If someone is drunk or high, they can't really say yes for sure. Save sexual activity for when you're both sober.

Don't guess: **ASK.**

CONSENT MEANS:

At the time of the act, there are **words** and **physical actions** indicating that **everyone freely agrees** and really wants to do the same thing.

Checking for consent is a **process** that each person needs to keep doing.

BY LAW:

People 18 and over cannot engage in sexual activity with people younger than 16 unless both people are between the ages of 15 and 18. The age of consent in Vermont is 16.

EXAMPLES

| Age of Person 1 | Age of Person 2 | Is It Legal? |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 18 | 14 | NO |
| 18 | 15 | YES |
| 19 | 15 | NO |
| 19 | 16 | YES |

REMEMBER:

Vermont law defines sex as contact between any genitalia or breasts (without clothing) and any other part of the body including the mouth; any penetration, however slight, by any part of a person's body or any object into the genital or anal opening of another; and masturbation in front of someone else.

You really need consent for ALL sexual activity including kissing, touching, or rubbing under or over clothes, being naked with each other, sending fully or partially nude photos or sending provocative messages via email or text (sexting). Each activity needs to have clear consent from each partner every time.

You have a right to your feelings. What might feel right one time may not feel right the next time. You don't have to do something again just because you did it before. You have a right to set your boundaries and talk about them.

ASKING = RESPECT.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual violence, help is available.

Call Vermont's 24-hour sexual violence hotline:
1-800-489-7273

It is free and you don't have to give your name.

You can talk about your own experience or find out how to help your friend.



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My Values and Boundaries

A value is a belief or feeling that is important to you and helps you make decisions. An important piece of consent is knowing what YOU want and don't want to do. When you are aware of your own values, it is easier for you to communicate your wishes and boundaries as well as understand and respect others' — even if they are different from yours. When you are in the heat of the moment, your judgment may get foggy. Thinking about these things ahead of time will help you resist pressures to act in ways that don't fit with your values and boundaries. Take a moment to think about what you value and how you can respect others!

What do I feel ready to do or want to try?

What don't I feel ready to do or want to try?

These are some ways I can let someone know what I want to or don't want to do:

These are some ways that I can ask someone else what they like:

If we don't agree on what we want to do together, these are some things I can do or say:

I know it is important to never pressure anyone into something they don't want to do. I can make sure I don't do this by:

I might be uncomfortable talking about it, but I know it is important to because:

These are the questions I still have and where I might go to talk about them:

Information is power. Get some!

There are lots of places online for more information, and you can also talk to a safe teacher or another adult you trust.

Here is a great website for teens: Scarleteen.com: Sex ed for the real world



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TALK ABOUT IT...

Tips for ADULTS talking to youth about consent

Youth benefit from the opportunity to talk to trusted adults, such as parents, coaches and teachers, about healthy sexuality and relationships. Your student is currently learning in school about concepts and the law regarding sexual consent. We encourage you to use the Consent: Got It? handout and talking tips below to start an important 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 nonjudgmental, 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 cannot be sexual with 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 afraid.

Sexual activity and consent questions

- How do you know that you are ready for sexual activity?
- How do you know that your partner is ready for sexual activity?
- How would you ask whether 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 can you do? What can you say?

- What can 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 okay 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 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 they were being pressured to have sex and didn't feel ready?
- What if your friend is boasting about how they are going to get this person they know high or drunk and have sex with them?
- 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 youth 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?**



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Are you **READY** to **do it**?

Before you engage in any kind of sexual activity with someone, you should know your own boundaries and desires. Below is a list of questions to help you think about whether this is the right person, right time, and right thing for you to do now.

ASK YOURSELF:

- Am I doing this because I **WANT** to? No pressure from anyone else?
- Do I know my partner well enough? Do I know what they will share about me and trust them to respect my boundaries?
- Do I know how to have safe sex and have access to things like condoms and other safe sex and birth control tools?
- Can I talk to my partner about this easily?
- Does sexual activity at this time match with my beliefs and values?
- Do I think I might regret this at some point down the road?
- Am I doing sexual things because I want to or because other people seem to be doing it and I don't want to be the only virgin?

More tips

Some people are **NOT READY to do sexual things** yet, even if they love their partner or have been with the same person forever. Some people can't wait to express their affection physically.

There is no "normal" time for people to feel like they are ready for sexual activity; some people abstain from intercourse until marriage, and some people don't. Each of us makes the choices that feel right for us.

Don't rush. Take the time to think about what you do and don't want to do and how you will talk about it. If you're not sure, wait. Your partner should always respect your choices and you have the right to say no to anything, anytime — even if you have said yes before.



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Check it out!

LEARN MORE ON THE WEB

Outright Vermont: Support for LGBTQQ youth ages 13-22, training, and education. outrightvt.org

Advocates for Youth: Since 1980, Advocates for Youth has worked with youth leaders to ensure that all young people's rights are respected and that we have the tools we need to protect ourselves from STIs, HIV, and unintended pregnancy. advocatesforyouth.org

Love Is Respect: Live peer online chat, cool videos, and quizzes. loveisrespect.org

That's Not Cool: Information for teens on textual harassment, how to communicate your boundaries and deal with pressure to send risky pics or engage in other sexual activity. thatsnotcool.com

RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW

Vermont Sexual Violence Helpline: For information and support if you or a friend has been forced to have sex or to engage in any kind of sexual activity. vtnetwork.org

Call anytime 24/7: 800-489-7273 (800-489-RAPE)

Pride Center/SafeSpace: Emotional support, referrals, and advocacy to LGBTQQ survivors of violence. pridecentervt.org/programs/safespace

Hotline available Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.: **802-863-0003/ toll free: 866-869-7341**



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APPENDIX 4

Local and National Resources

HELPFUL LOCAL RESOURCES

Vermont Sexual Violence Hotline: **800-489-7273 (489-RAPE)**

Vermont Department for Children and Families, Protect Kids VT: protectkids.vt.gov

Vermont Department for Children and Families Child Abuse Hotline: **800-649-5285**

USEFUL STATE AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Vermont

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROGRAMS of the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

(sexual and domestic violence direct service advocacy programs)

An interactive Vermont map of programs can be found at vtnetwork.org/get-help

The Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

802-223-1302, vtnetwork.org

Outright Vermont

(support for LGBTQQ youth ages 13-22, training and education)

802-865-9677, outrightvt.org

Vermont Department for Children and Families, Protect Kids Vermont

protectkids.vt.gov

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England

(reproductive health and sex education)

plannedparenthood.org

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

(child sexual abuse prevention)

800-CHILDREN (800-244-5373), pcavt.org

SafeArt

(healing through art, music, and dance)

802-685-3138, safeart.org

Pride Center of Vermont SafeSpace Program

Support Line: 802-863-0003 or toll-free 866-869-7341

pridecentervt.org/programs/safespace

Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services (DVAS)

Videophone & Hearing & Hotline: 802-661-4091

Test Line: 730-235-6539, dvas.org

DIVAS (Discussing Intimate Violence & Accessing Support)

Support for women incarcerated in Vermont: divas@vtnetwork.org

Green Mountain Self Advocates

802-229-2600 or 800-564-9990, Email: gmsa@sover.net

Vermont Center for Independent Living

802-229-0501 or 800-639-1522, vcil.org

National

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), cdc.gov/injury

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678), missingkids.com

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)

717-909-0710, nsvrc.org

NATIONAL SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION EDUCATION RESOURCES

Youth Specific

Love Is Respect: National Teen Dating Violence Hotline

Live peer online chat, videos and quizzes.

Hotline: 866-331-9474, 866-331-8453 TTY, loveisrespect.org

That's Not Cool

Information for teens on textual harassment and how to deal with pressure

thatsnotcool.com

Netsmartz

Online safety for youth

netsmartz.org

Break the Cycle

Empowering youth to end domestic violence

breakthecycle.org

For the Disability Community

Can Do! Project Disability, Abuse and Personal Rights Project (DAPR)

310-473-6768, disability-abuse.com

SafePlace/Disability Services ASAP

512-267-7233, safeplace.org

My Body! My Choice!

217-875-1910, spaceley@maconresources.org

For Men and Boys

Men Can Stop Rape, Inc.

The Strength Campaign

202-265-6530, mencanstoprape.org

Mentors in Violence Prevention

407-823-3337, mvpstrat.com

For Adults

100 Conversations, Power of Prevention

Tools for adults to have 100 conversations about relationships and sexuality with youth

100conversations.org

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Parent Guide and Protect Kids Vermont Information for Adults

protectkids.vt.gov

Darkness to Light

Child sexual abuse prevention

d2l.org

Engaging Bystanders in Sexual Violence Prevention

National Sexual Violence Resource Center

nsvrc.org

Stop It Now!

Child abuse perpetrator prevention

stopitnow.com

The Vermont Consent Campaign materials and other useful info and resources about sexual violence prevention and services can be found online at vtnetwork.org.