

# About consent

Communication, honesty, trust and respect are important qualities in all relationships.

Relationships based on mutual respect, where both people feel able to express their views freely and where views are heard and respected, provide a solid foundation for a healthy relationship.

Having a relationship does not mean you have to have sex. Engaging in any sexual activity must be something you decide, at a time when you are ready.

In Queensland, the **legal age** a person can engage in sexual activity is 16 years old.

Choosing not to have sex is also ok. There are lots of ways to feel close to someone without having sex.

Remember, no one has the right to pressure you into having sex.

Consent involves **freely and voluntarily** agreeing to something or giving your permission to someone to do something.



It involves you setting personal boundaries and respecting the personal boundaries of others.

In terms of sexual activity, **you must always seek and gain consent.**

You also need to **continuously get consent** during any sexual activity to make sure both people want to continue.

Consent is a continual, ongoing and freely given agreement that involves attention to what someone is saying, their body language and facial expressions.

Sexual activity that involves communication and respect is essential.

You need to ask for consent before having **ANY** sort of sexual activity with another person.



Sexual activity can include:

- talking or messaging about sexual activity
- kissing
- touching someone else sexually
- viewing sexually explicit media
- taking sexual pictures
- oral sex or sexual intercourse.



Consent is never **implied or assumed**. It cannot be based on what someone has agreed to in the past, or even five minutes ago. Just because someone gave consent once, does not mean they want to consent again.

**Consent can be withdrawn at any time.** You have a right to say no and to have that no respected. If you hear a no from someone you shouldn't feel offended, you need to listen and respect that they have set a boundary with you.

**Consent cannot be given** if someone is affected by alcohol or drugs and can't say what they do or don't want, if they're asleep or unconscious, or if they're forced, tricked or threatened.

## Unpacking sexual consent

Sexual consent must be:

- Freely given** Consent should be a choice made without pressure, guilt, threat or intimidation.
- Reversible** Consent can be withdrawn at any time if you or your partner change your mind. Each person's views must be respected.
- Informed** You and the other person both understand what is about to happen. Someone affected by alcohol or drugs, who can't say what they want or don't want, or someone who is unconscious or asleep, is not able to give informed consent. If someone is not capable of understanding what they are agreeing to, they cannot give consent.
- Enthusiastic** You want to engage in the activity and you have checked the other person feels the same way.
- Specific** Saying yes to one thing does not mean you or the other person is saying yes to everything. Consent must be ongoing, you need to check in. Even if you are in a relationship, consent must be gained each and every time.