

# Consent

Consent is about choice, respect and feeling safe.

## What is consent?

Consent means freely agreeing to something or permit something to happen. You can only freely agree to something when you

Consent should be:

- Given without pressure
- Ongoing
- Able to be withdrawn at any time

## What consent should feel like

- Comfortable and safe
- Like you have a genuine choice to participate
- Not pressured, rushed or like you are obligated to participate

You should feel safe to change your mind at any time.

## What is NOT consent

- Silence is not consent.
- Feeling pressured or manipulated is not consent
- Being afraid of their reaction if you say no is not consent
- Being in a relationship does not mean automatic consent is given
- Being unable to respond is not consent (e.g. intoxicated, drug affected, asleep)

## Consent after trauma

After you have experienced a trauma such as sexual assault, the things you used to consent to might change. You might have days where you are able to do more or less than you used to. You might find yourself saying yes to things when you don't really mean it. This is a normal trauma response. If you are in a healthy and safe sexual relationship with someone, you should be able to talk to them about how you are feeling and how they can see if you are providing free and willing consent even after trauma.

## Consent and your rights

You have the right to:

- |                                             |                                |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Say yes or no                             | • Set boundaries               |
| • Change your mind                          | • Take things at your own pace |
| • Not engage in any type of sexual activity | • Enjoy sexual activity        |

## Seeking support

The Australian Government has a website dedicated to understanding consent: <https://www.consent.gov.au/>

If you would like to speak to a counsellor/advocate from the SECASA Intake team, give us a call on 8769 2200 – opt 1 during business hours.

To speak to a sexual assault counsellor after hours, call 1800 806 292