

Consent and Sex



Thinking about your child having sex can be scary.

This is OK.

It is normal to feel this way.

You might be worried about:

- your child knowing how to give consent
- someone taking advantage of them

This is something lots of parents of children with an intellectual disability or autism spectrum disorder worry about.



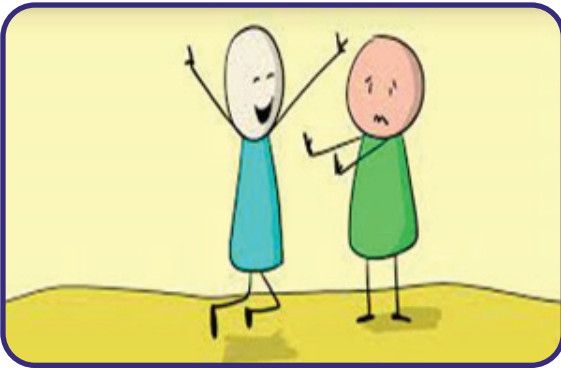
What is on this page?

This page is about how you can help your child to learn about consent and sex.

It has easy read information about:

- when to teach your child about consent
- understanding and making decisions about consent
- what to do if sex happens without consent
- how to talk to your child about consent
- teaching your child about consent

When to teach your child about consent?



It is important to talk to your child about consent from a young age.

This gives them time to practice giving and asking for consent.

You can help your child practice consent by asking for consent before:

- helping your child wash their body
- undressing your child
- hugging or touching a family member



For more information on practicing consent go to [‘Importance of Practising Consent’](#) and [‘Consent in Relationships.’](#)

Does your child have the ability to consent to sex?

Many parents of children with intellectual disability and/or autism spectrum disorder worry about if their child can consent to sex.



A person is able to consent to sex if they can:

- understand what sex is
- talk about their decision to have sex
- understand privacy and the law
- express their decision to have sex

For information on how you can teach your child about what sex is go to [‘Where do babies come from?’](#)



The law says a person needs to be a certain age to consent to sex.

This depends where you are in Australia.

For more information, go to [here](#).

If sex happens without consent

Sex that happens without a person's consent is sexual assault.

Sexual assault is a crime.

Sexual assault is never the fault of the person who has been assaulted.

All people who have experienced sexual assault should have access to help and support.

It can be hard to know what to do or where to go for help.



Here is a list of services you can contact for support and advice.

National



National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) for advice and local referral options.

Australian Capital Territory

Contact the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre or phone the crisis line on (02) 6247 2525 between 7 am and 11 pm, seven days a week.

New South Wales



Contact Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia or phone the NSW Rape Crisis line on 1800 424 017, 24 hours.

Northern Territory

Contact an NT sexual assault referral centre or phone:

- (08) 8922 6472 (Darwin, 24 hours)
- (08) 8973 8524 (Katherine)
- (08) 8962 4361 (Tennant Creek)
- (08) 8955 4500 (Alice Springs, Monday-Friday, 8 am-4.20 pm)
- 0401 114 181 (Alice Springs, out of hours).



Queensland

Contact Queensland sexual assault services or phone the Statewide Sexual Assault Helpline on 1800 010 120.

South Australia

Contact Yarrow Place (Rape and Sexual Assault Service) or phone 1800 817 421 – toll free in South Australia, 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Tasmania

Central and southern Tasmania contact Sexual Assault Support Service or phone 1800 697 877 – 24 hours, 7 days a week.

In north and north-west Tasmania contact Laurel House – North and North-West Tasmania Sexual Assault Support Services:

- North: (03) 6334 2740
– 8.30 am-5 pm, Monday-Friday
- North-west: (03) 6431 9711
– 9 am-5 pm, Monday-Friday
- North and north-west after-hours crisis line: 1800 697 877





Victoria

Contact the Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault or phone the 24-hour crisis line on 1800 806 292.

Western Australia

Contact the WA Sexual Assault Resource Centre or phone:

- (08) 6458 1828 (24-hour emergency service)
- 1800 199 888 (freecall, 24-hour emergency service)



How to talk to your child about consent

It can be hard to talk to your child about consent and sex.

You might feel embarrassed.

You might not know what to say.

Here are some things you can say to start talking to your child about consent and sex.

‘The couple in the movie are kissing in bed.

Do you know what they might do next?

Does it look like they’re both agreeing to have sex?’

‘

The woman on TV just told the man she doesn't want to go out with him.

What should he do?'

Teaching your child about consent

Below are some ways that you can teach your child about consent

Practice consent in daily life

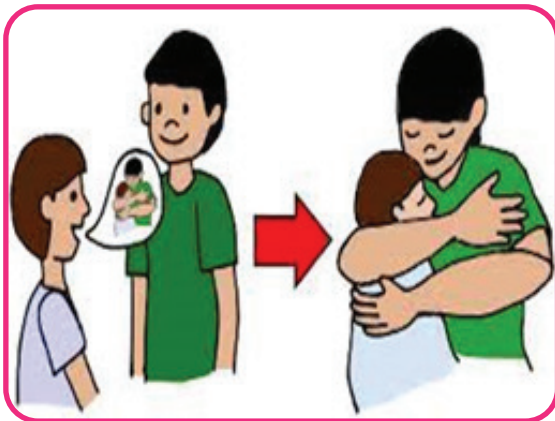
Help your child to practise consent before:

- your child touches other people.

For example, giving hugs to other people, including you

- your child touches other people's things.

For example, another person's phone, computer or toys





Teachable moments

These are moments in everyday life that can help your child practice a new skill.

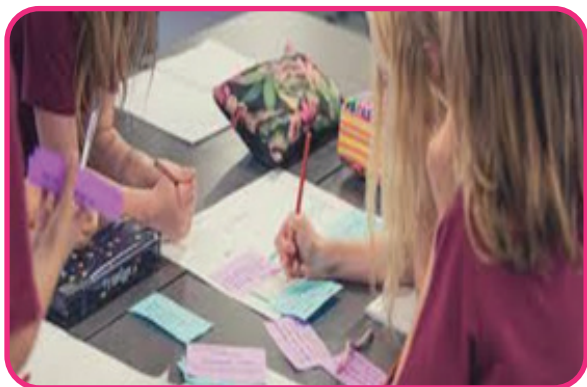
For example, you could talk about sex while watching a movie or tv show.

You could ask your child:

‘Do the characters look like they are consenting to sex?’

You could then ask your child:

‘What signs tell you the characters are consenting to sex?’



Make a No-Go-Tell Plan

Teach your child that if someone asks to touch their body in a way they do not like, your child can tell them 'no.'

Teach your child that if someone touches their body in a way they do not like, your child can also tell them 'no.'

They should then go and tell one of their trusted people.

Use the Trusted People worksheet to help your child identify their 3 trusted people.

Resources for you to use



All About Sex – Sexual Assault Factsheet

Family Planning NSW

https://www.fpnsw.org.au/sites/default/files/assets/factsheet_16_sexual_assault.pdf



In Real Life – Relationships article

Family Planning NSW

<https://www.inreallife.org.au/relationships/tora-do-young-people-feel-peer-pressure-to-do-things-they-might-not-want-to/>



Youth Law Australia – Sex and consent

<https://yla.org.au/nsw/topics/health-love-and-sex/sex/>



Tea and consent video

Thames Valley Police

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8>



Traffic life game

Focus Games

<https://www.trafficlifegame.com/>

**YEAH: Young and Empowered
Around Health – Consent and
negotiation pages**

<https://www.yeah.org.au/tag/consent-and-negotiation/>



Relationship Things

YWCA Canberra

<http://relationshipthings.com.au/>

**Murray Mallee Community Legal
service – consent and sexting
resources**

<http://www.murraymalleelegal.com.au/Resources/Consent-and-Sexting-resources.aspx>



VALID 'Staying Safe' Freedom from Abuse & Neglect Project – Speak up video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxytOTUrTlc&list=PLZ-jy0YPOD4xwxaQUjrzcj1eFDmZ-5Tna8j&index=1>



VALID 'Staying Safe' Freedom from Abuse & Neglect Project – Sexual Abuse solutions video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvKRmAQQ-6jE&list=PLZjy0YPOD4xwxaQUjrzcj1eFDmZ5Tna8j&index=13>



What to read next?

- [Supported Decision Making](#)
- [Introduction to consent](#)
- [Consent in relationships](#)

**For more information go to the
Planet Puberty website**

www.planetpuberty.org.au