

Why Consent is Important



Consent is part of everyday life.

We make decisions everyday where we give consent.

It is important that your child understands that they can say 'no' to things they do not want to do.

It is also important that your child understands that they can say 'yes' to things they do want to do.

Teaching your child about consent is important.

It will help keep them safe.

It will help them make healthy decisions.



What is on this page?

This page is about how you can support your child to learn about consent.

It has information about:

- what consent is
- when you need to give consent
- why teaching about consent is important
- how non-verbal people can give consent



What is consent?

Consent is when both people say 'yes' to do something.

One person will ask for permission to do something.

The other person thinks about what they want to do.

You can say 'yes' or 'no'. It is your choice.

You can change your mind later.



When do you need to give consent?

There are lots of different types of consent.

You need consent to:

- touch another person's body
- touch another person's private body parts
- touch another person's belongings
- enter another person's private place
- enter another person's home or car
- do an activity with another person



Why is teaching about consent important?

Your child's body belongs to them.

Nobody should touch your child's body unless your child gives consent.

Teaching your child about consent will keep them safe.

Teaching your child about consent helps them to:

- have healthy relationships
- make healthy decisions
- make friends and have fun
- be part of their community

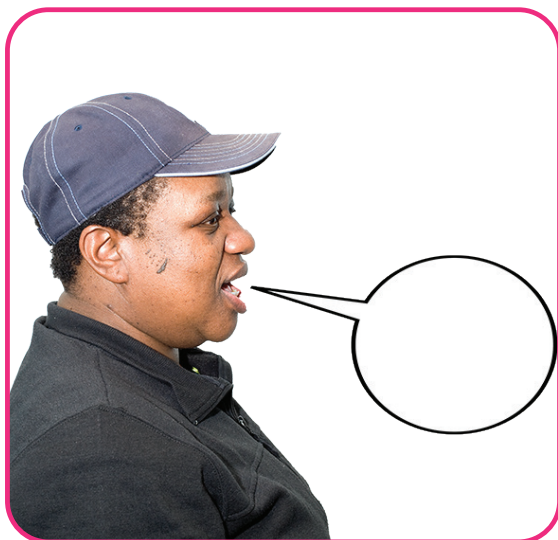


What if my child is non-verbal?

Your child does not have to be verbal to give consent.

Instead of saying 'yes' or 'no', your child could:

- nod 'yes' or shake their head 'no'
- use a thumbs up or thumbs down
- push somebody away if they do not want to be touched
- push something away if they do not want it
- offer something to somebody and wait for them to take it
- use sign language to give consent



Do I have to ask my child for consent to hug them?

Consent is part of everyday life.

It is important to practise asking and giving consent with your child.

This will help to keep your child safe.

It might feel awkward to ask your child for consent.

But asking for consent helps your child learn.

You can do this by asking “Can I help you get dressed?” or “Can I give you a hug?”





Things you can try

Help your child to practise giving consent

It is good for your child to practise giving consent.

It is important they understand how to give consent and say yes or no.

You can ask your child if it is OK to:

- give them a hug or kiss
- enter their private space (like their bedroom)
- help them with personal care (for example, showering, toileting, getting dressed)

It is important to wait for your child to say 'yes' or 'no'. It is important to respect their choice.



This shows them that consent is important.

Teachers, health professionals and other family members should also help your child to practise giving consent.

They can ask your child if it is OK to:

- borrow their school equipment
- ask them personal questions
- help them get dressed

Consent is very important.

So is keeping your child safe.

Sometimes it is not safe for your child to say 'no' to something.



This can be things like taking medicine or wearing a seatbelt in the car.

These things are important for keeping your child safe and healthy.

When this happens, you should talk to your child about what is happening and why it is important.

It is to keep them safe.

Here is an example:

Instead of saying “Can I put the seatbelt on you?” you can say “Everyone has to wear a seatbelt in the car.”

This is the law.

Seatbelts help keep people safe.

Do you want to put the seatbelt on or should I help you?”





Help your child to practise asking for consent

It is good to support your child to practise asking other people for consent.

This will help them to be safe and make healthy decisions.

This shows them that asking for consent is important.

Teachers, health professionals and other family members can help your child to practise asking for consent.

Your child can practise by:

- asking to give someone a hug
- asking to borrow someone's belongings
- asking if someone would like to play with them



It is important to ask for consent before doing the activity.

Show your child what consent looks like

You can show your child what consent looks like.

This is called modelling.

Modelling consent everyday will help your child to understand and practise consent.

You could record a video of yourself asking and giving different types of consent.

This will help your child to learn about asking and giving consent.

This is called video modelling.



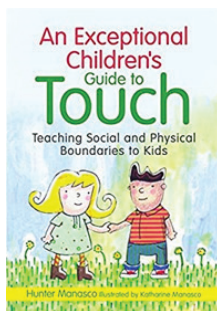


Resources for you to use

All About Sex – Relationships

Family Planning NSW

https://www.fpnsw.org.au/sites/default/files/assets/fact-sheet_09_relationships.pdf



An Exceptional Children's Guide to Touch

Hunter Monasco



Everyone's got a Bottom

Tess Rowley



What to read next?

- [Consent and relationships](#)
- [Consent during personal care](#)
- [Supporting decision making](#)

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

www.planetpuberty.org.au