

Chapter 1:

Consent and Healthy Boundaries

EDUCATOR FACILITATION GUIDE

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

To provide practical tips and instructions for engaging students and handling difficult discussions on the topic of consent and healthy boundaries.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To understand the definition of true consent and its importance in all interactions.
- ▶ To learn how to respectfully handle someone not giving consent.
- ▶ How to recognize and respect the verbal and non-verbal cues of others.

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ Use inclusive language and terminology that acknowledges these issues can affect individuals of any gender, and ensure the tone remains non-judgmental.
- ▶ Emphasize respectful communication and confidentiality. It is important to listen and value each other's perspectives even if we don't agree with them.
- ▶ If your students have lots of questions or seem restless, take breaks in between the videos to debrief.
- ▶ Offer emotional outlets such as doodling or colouring sheets during the videos and discussion.
- ▶ Let your students know that if they feel triggered, they can go to the school office or speak with the school counsellor.
- ▶ Identify any local support resources and organizations on the issue ahead of time, so that you can readily refer students who may need additional support.

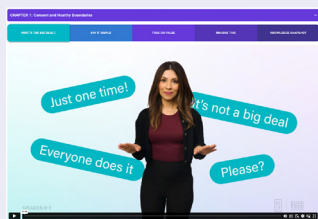
MODERATING DISCUSSIONS

- ▶ Ensure that all students have the opportunity to speak.
- ▶ Providing the class with an anonymous question box might help the students who may not feel comfortable asking important questions.
- ▶ If a question is inappropriate or derails the discussion, gently redirect it back to the main topic.
- ▶ If you don't know the answer, it's okay to admit it! Provide additional resources or take note to look into the question later.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

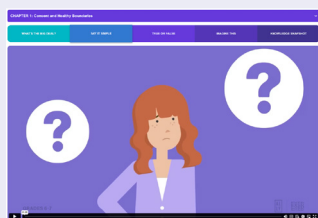
- ▶ Consent is an enthusiastic and clear “yes”; otherwise it is not consent. It is an active and ongoing process of willingly and freely choosing to participate in any act with someone else.
- ▶ Consent is foundational to any healthy and respectful relationship. It is our freedom to choose what we are and are not comfortable with. It applies in all circumstances, not just sexual or romantic ones.
- ▶ Healthy boundaries are our limits and guidelines to what we feel comfortable with in order to protect our physical, emotional, and mental well-being.
- ▶ Components of consent: “FRIES”:
 - Freely given: Consent must be given without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
 - Reversible: Anyone can change their mind at any time.
 - Informed: Everyone involved must have all the necessary information to make a decision.
 - Enthusiastic: Everyone should be excited and eager about the activity.
 - Specific: Consent for one activity does not imply consent for another.
- ▶ Badgering, guilt-tripping, or pressuring someone until an initial “no” becomes an “okay” or “yes” is not actually a consensual yes. A lack of “no” is not a “yes.”
- ▶ Bodily consent is one way of knowing whether or not you are giving true consent to something. It involves recognizing and respecting your body’s physical and emotional responses to activities.
- ▶ Healthy boundaries and consent need to be applied the same way in person and digitally.
- ▶ When it comes to sexual activity of minors, there are laws in place for protection. These laws are not made to get a minor in trouble, but rather to address someone in a position of power taking advantage of a minor. By law, anyone under the age of 12 is not able to provide consent to sexual activity or behaviours of any kind, in person or online. A 12 year old is only able to provide consent to someone who is 12 or 13 years old. A 13 year old is only able to provide consent to someone who is between the ages of 12-14. [Section 150.1]
- ▶ Sexual assault law: Sexual assault occurs if a person is touched in any way that interferes with their sexual integrity: this includes kissing, touching, intercourse and any other sexual activity without their consent. [Section 271]
- ▶ Nobody asks for sexual assault or harassment. If someone experiences sexual assault or harassment, they are never to blame. Sexual assault is a deliberate act, and it is unjust to hold the victim accountable. Everyone has the right to be safe and respected, and suggesting that someone deserves harm because they took a risk undermines this fundamental principle.
- ▶ Sexual assault and harassment amongst peers might happen when one party has not been educated on the concept of consent and the importance of respecting it.

FACILITATION TIPS FOR CHAPTER 1



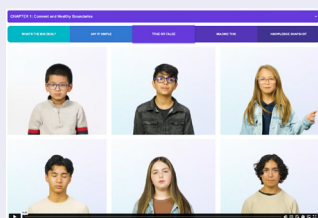
What's the Big Deal?

Encourage students to reflect on their own experiences and share their thoughts and understanding on consent and healthy boundaries. Use open-ended questions like: What does consent mean to you personally? Can you recall a situation where clear communication around consent made you feel respected and comfortable? How do you establish and communicate your own boundaries?



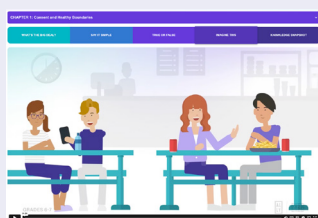
Say It Simple

Encourage students to pause and notice how their bodies feel when discussing consent. Ask them questions like: "How does your body tell you when you're excited or uncomfortable?", "Can you think of a time when your gut feelings helped you make a choice?", "Why is it important to pay attention to what your body is telling you during discussions about consent?"



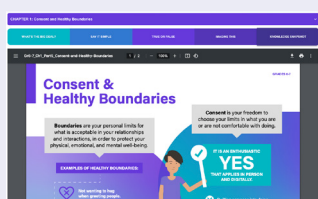
True or False

Use this video as an opportunity to discuss the importance of paying attention to social cues and body language when deciphering whether someone is giving consent. Equip students with true and false paddles or red and green flags to facilitate live responses while watching the video. You can pause the video after each question, to have a discussion about what everyone thinks their answer would be, and discuss the answers given in the video.



Imagine This

After watching the video, encourage students to engage in a reflective discussion. Create an inclusive space for sharing by asking questions such as: "Can you think of a time when your instincts played a role in a decision?", "How do you interpret the FRIES acronym in the context of giving consent?", "Share with the group how you would handle a situation similar to those in the video" and "What are some different ways that someone can communicate 'no'?"



Knowledge Snapshot

Print out the page to keep in the classroom or at home as a summary of the key learnings from this chapter. Encourage students to use the reflection page as a tool for practice and applying what they've learned.

FAQ'S AND RESPONSES TO GET YOU THINKING

Q: So if I have the right to give consent, then my parents can't force me into taking a shower or cleaning up if I don't want to, right?

R: That's an interesting point you brought up! While it is true that you have the right to consent and make decisions about your body, there are some situations where adults like your parents have a responsibility to ensure your health, safety, and well-being. Taking a shower, brushing your teeth, or eating healthy foods fall under those situations. While you can most definitely share how you feel and try to come up with an alternative solution together or a compromise, there are responsibilities that you may be required to do for your health and well-being or to be a respectful member of your family.

Q: How do you express your consent without hurting someone's feelings?

R: Saying no to something doesn't need to be mean! You can be honest and polite at the same time. Here are some tips on how to do that: Show appreciation for the person's suggestion and then use an "I" statement to express how you feel. For example, you could say "That's a good suggestion but I don't feel comfortable with that." You don't always need to explain why you are saying "no" but it can help the other person understand that it is not about them. You can also offer an alternative - if you are uncomfortable with one suggestion, you can suggest something else. It's okay to be firm about your boundaries, but try to avoid being rude or dismissive. And remember that true friends and kind people will understand and respect your feelings and consent.

Q: If it is illegal for someone under 12 to engage in sexual activity, what happens if an 11-year-old dates another 11-year-old or a 12-year-old?

R: Dating and sexual activity would fall under different categories because dating can just involve spending time together. The law exists to protect young people from harm or engaging in something that they are too young to participate in. It is not there to punish young people. If an adult discovers that someone is engaging in sexual activity when they legally should not be, parents or guardians and possibly a counselor would likely get involved to ensure things are safe and respectful. If the relationship does not meet those standards then the two minors would need to stop their behaviours.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Create a Classroom Consent and Boundaries chart together.
- ▶ Facilitate a group discussion on one or both of the following: "Can consent be non-verbal?" and "What does consent look like digitally?"
- ▶ Encourage students to create an art piece or poster that promotes the message of consent.
- ▶ Continue learning—build on the material from this chapter and introduce [Chapter 2: Sexual Exploitation](#) to explore how consent and sexual exploitation are connected.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS



To access the following resources, scan the QR code or [click here](#).

Other Educational Resources

- ▶ Wheel of Consent Game

DISCLOSURES AND REPORTING

As a teacher, you may be one of the first trusted adults a student confides in about these topics. While some may be brief personal stories shared casually, others may require a more serious intervention.

- ▶ Be calm. Reacting with your own shock or disapproval creates further emotional distress.
- ▶ Listen attentively and without interrupting the student.
- ▶ Validate their feelings and acknowledge their courage in speaking up.
- ▶ Avoid making any promises about keeping things confidential or how their parent/ guardian may react. Provide them with comfort that you will continue to be a support and be sensitive to their worries.
- ▶ Ask them if anyone else knows about this already. If a trusted adult in their life already knows, you can simply engage in empathetic listening and ensure that you follow your school/organization's protocols. If a minor is currently at risk of harm or is being harmed, it is your duty to report it to your local child welfare services.
- ▶ Document the disclosure per your school/ organization's best practices.
- ▶ Provide continued support by checking in or providing them with other resources that are available to them.
- ▶ There may be times where a student does not feel comfortable coming forward or is not yet aware that they are experiencing a form of sexual exploitation. The following are signs to look out for as possible indicators:
 - Skipping class or school;
 - A change in grades or participation in classroom or school activities;
 - Appearing more tired than usual;
 - Device addiction;
 - Dressing more provocatively or having items they may not be able to afford;
 - Not hanging around their usual group of friends;
 - Isolating themselves;
 - Having profiles on apps that are not age appropriate;
 - Being involved in intimate image sharing; or
 - Having newfound mental health struggles.
- ▶ If you notice any of these behaviours from a student, make sure to take note and voice your concerns to a school counsellor or administrator.

KIDS HELP PHONE (24/7)

- ▶ Call 1-800-668-6868
- ▶ Text "CONNECT" to 686868