

WAIT! Every time you engage in sexual activity, ask yourself: **Do I have consent?**

What is consent? Consent means that all people in a sexual encounter must agree to it, and can decide at any time that they no longer consent and want to stop the activity. Remember: Consenting to one behaviour does NOT mean you consent to any others; Consenting on one occasion does NOT mean you consent at any other time.

How do I determine consent?

- Does the person want to give consent?

The clearest way to determine if a person wants to give consent is simply to ask. This eliminates the uncertainty of guessing or trying to interpret nonverbal signals. If your sexual activity includes a number of different acts you must be sure you have consent for each, which often requires ongoing communication. If at any time your partner seems to become more hesitant or shows any signs of discomfort, you should stop and take a moment to 'check in' with them: Reassure them that you don't want to do anything that they don't also want to do, and ask if there is anything you can do or stop doing to make them feel more safe.

- Is the person capable of giving consent?

Certain circumstances make it impossible for a person to legally give consent e.g. if they are drunk, or high, or under the age of 16 (UK). This means that even if someone seems eager to engage in sexual behaviour, doing so can be considered sexual assault, rape, or statutory rape.

Above all, if your partner ever says no during sex or asks you to stop, you must stop immediately. Saying no should never be treated as a game or as a signal that someone is "playing hard to get". Simply put, "No" means "No" in any sexual encounter.

If you are concerned about a sexual encounter that happened without your consent, please consider the below resources and know that it is not your fault if someone did not respect your right to say no.

LGBT Foundation Manchester (for LGBTQI+ persons)

03453 30 30 30

LGBT.foundation

Manchester Rape Crisis (for female identified persons)

0161 273 4500 (Helpline: Mon-Fri 10.00-16.00 plus Wed-Thu 18.00-21.00)

manchesterrapecrisis.co.uk

Survivors Manchester (for male identified persons)

0161 236 2182

survivorsmanchester.org.uk