

Consent / Talk Pants

CASEL Core Competencies: Social awareness, self-awareness, responsible decision-making

State Health Standards: Standard 4, Standard 5

Learner/Participant Objectives: Learners will learn the definition of consent and its application in real life scenarios. Learners will understand how to respond to non-consensual interactions with their peers and others in their lives.

Content Warnings: Discussing consent may bring up past non-consensual experiences from the participants.

Facilitator Tips: Have ground rules to establish a safe space for vulnerable discussion. Notify onsite behavioral health staff when the lesson will occur and be ready for potential referrals. It is important for participants to understand that if they themselves are not comfortable with something and are being forced against their will (they do not give consent), to reach out to a trusted adult and ask for help immediately.

Key Terms: Consent

Time: 60 minutes

Materials needed: Large white paper, markers, sticky notes, Kahoot, notebooks for journaling

Background: Across the United States, age of consent ranges state-by-state from 16 to 18 years old. 22 states and the District of Columbia mandate both sex education and HIV education, but only 13 states require that the instruction be medically accurate. Although this activity is not intended to provide comprehensive sex education, it does address a fundamental element of sexual intimacy, which is consent. When discussing the elements of consent to children, mutual respect, meeting of the minds, and the absence of force, coercion, and deception should be integral components of the conversation.

Unfortunately, children are continuously receiving harmful mixed messages about romantic relationships that normalize aggressive behavior and violence, such as:

- Boys will be boys.
- Well, what did she expect? Look what she was wearing.
- She wanted it all along.
- No until I say yes vs. yes until they say no and mean it.
- It's easier to ask for forgiveness than permission.
- Boys only want one thing, sex.
- She owes it to him especially if he spent money on her.
- A "nice" girl would never have gone out alone with him.
- She's supposed to say "no" even if she means "yes" because girls play "hard to get."
- Gay men act like Cis women.

Resources: Consider reviewing this resource <http://www.teachconsent.org/facilitators> and incorporate the videos or other materials into this session.

- <http://www.teachconsent.org/facilitators>
- <https://www.safesecurekids.org/teaching-consent>

Procedure

- Ask participants to describe what consent means to them. Have them provide their answers verbally. Then clearly define consent to your group by providing age-appropriate examples:
 - to agree to do or allow something
 - to give permission for something to happen or be done
- Play one or both videos and facilitate discussion.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3nhM9UJjc>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vmsfhw-czA>
- Have your group discuss key words or phrases that indicate someone has given you their consent. Consider using Kahoot for a fun, interactive way to engage the participants on the topic.
 - **You have consent if the person says...**
 - Yes, I want that.
 - Yes, I like that.
 - I would love that!
 - That sounds like a great idea!
 - I want to go with you.
 - **You do not have consent if the person says...**
 - No.
 - Maybe.
 - I'm not sure.
 - I think so.
 - Please, stop.
 - Their body moves physically away from you or they look uncomfortable (i.e., trembling because they are scared)
 - I like you, but I do not want to...
 - We should not do that.
 - I'm scared.
 - Move.
 - **But remember...**
 - Stop, Listen, and Observe

- No means NO!
 - Consent can be taken away at any time which means someone can change their mind at any point.
 - Just because the person said “yes” to one thing, you cannot assume that it is a “yes” to something else.
 - The activity should be fun for everyone.
- In closing, stress to participants that consent could be given and/or taken away at any time and simply because the person agrees to go to the movies with them it does not mean they want to hold their hand, for instance. Or saying to someone, “I’ll give you \$5 if you hit Joey with the ball” (bribing) or “I’ll punch you if you don’t hit Joey with the ball” (coercion) or “I won’t be your friend if you don’t hit Joey with the ball” (coercion) is not true consent.