



Consent

and PSHE Education

Professionals' Pack

2024

Ellie Chesterton & Natalie McGrath

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Introduction

This pack aims to support education providers to deliver quality PSHE education around consent through identifying the curriculum links within the PSHE Associations' Spiral Curriculum and the Department for Education's statutory guidance and developing staff's confidence and competence on the subject matter to support them to facilitate PSHE education on this topic within their own setting.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance states that:

- Pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing.
- Pupils can put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.
- Learning should support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support
- Teaching should reflect the law as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.
- Schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled.
- It is essential that assumptions are not made about the behaviour of boys and young men and that they are not made to feel that sexual harassment and sexual violence is an inevitable part of being male;

Education providers can help young people to be better equipped to have healthier, safer lives and support them to understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to consent.



Local Quality Framework

We believe that for PSHE education to be effective it must:

- Be delivered in a safe learning environment based on the principles that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.
- Have clear learning objectives and outcomes and ensure sessions and programmes are well planned, resourced and appropriately underpinned by solid research and evidence.
- Be relevant, accurate and factual, including using the correct terminology.
- Be positively inclusive in terms of:
 - Age
 - Gender Identity
 - Race
 - Sex
 - Disability
 - Pregnancy and Maternity
 - Religion or Belief
 - Sexual Orientation
- Designed to include the development of knowledge, skills and values to support positive life choices.
- Use positive messaging, that does not cause shame or victim blaming.
- Challenge attitudes and values within society, such as perceived social norms and those portrayed in the media.
- Be reflective of the age and stage of the children and young people and be tailored to the environment and group.
- Utilise active skill-based learning techniques to encourage active participation.
- Ensure that children and young people are aware of their rights, including their right to access confidential advice and support services within the boundaries of safeguarding.
- Be delivered by trained, confident and competent professionals.
- Empower and involve children and young people as participants, advocates and evaluators in the development of PSHE education.

Best Practice Principles

A safe learning environment enables children and young people to feel comfortable to share their ideas without attracting negative feedback. It avoids possible distress and prevents disclosures in a public setting and enables professionals to manage conversations on sensitive issues confidently.

We have created a guidance document to support professionals to create this safe in their own setting.



No. 01 – Ground Rules

Create in collaboration with the group . As the facilitator role model the agreed ground rules.



No. 02 – Collaborate with DSL

Let them know when the session is being delivered to ensure the correct support is in place should any disclosures be made.



No. 03 – Staff Confidence

Check Staff confidence levels. If anyone is in panic zone it is not safe or appropriate for them or the participants to teach on the topic. This pack should help professionals to move from panic zone to learning or comfort zone



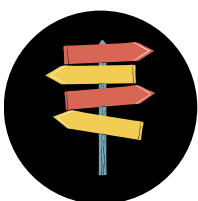
No. 04 – Learning Techniques

Use scenarios and stories to help participants engage with the topic. Refer to the third person rather than you e.g. what could this character do?, or people of about your age....



No. 05 – Difficult Questions

Questions are an important part of learning. Sometimes a child or young person will ask a difficult question. As with all questions the first thing is to value the question whilst either allowing time to consider an appropriate answer or to deflect an inappropriate question.



No. 06 – Signposting

It is absolutely essential, that included in the lesson, is information about different organisations and people that can provide support both within the organisation and outside of it.

A more detailed version of this page is available in our [best practice guidance on Creating a Safe Learning Environment](#).

Do not use scare/fear or guilt tactics

It is a common misconception that if a child or young person is shocked or scared by what they see in images, videos used in sessions, they will avoid the behaviour in the future.

Whilst young people will often say that they like 'hard-hitting' material and that it engages them more effectively, in fact when experienced in a safe setting (in this case a classroom or youth space), shocking images become exciting (in a similar way to watching a horror film or riding a rollercoaster) and this excitement response can block the desired learning. Equally, for anyone who has previously been affected by something similar, it can re-traumatise them or they can block the message as it is too close for comfort, which again prevents the intended learning. It also presents a scenario which is more likely to make young people think 'that won't ever happen to me' than the desired 'that could be me' response.

The adolescent brain is still developing which means that the perception of messaging and how they react to them is different to our experiences as adults. Furthermore, because their brains are still developing, they often live "in the moment;" when an unhealthy situation arises, they'll make decisions based on what they're feeling then and there, instead of making a reasoned, logical decision. The pre-frontal cortex or critical thinking/reasoning part of the brain is the last section to develop.

You can find out more about the teenage brain [here](#).

Young people should be informed of risks in a balance and measured way through an approach that supports them to make informed, healthy, safe decisions and empower them to believe they can act on "good choices.

Top Tips:

- Evidence shows that shock and scare tactics just don't work.
- Check resources (including external agencies) for images or scenes that might be shocking, harrowing or scary for the age group – remember that children and young people will have a much lower threshold for what might worry them.
- Remember the purpose of the session is to educate not entertain. Just because young people might watch scary films in their own time, does not mean using similar films within PSHE Education will promote learning.
- Make sure there is a range of examples, case studies and consequences, most of which do not focus on the most dramatic or extreme outcomes.

Knowledge, Skills and Values

Topics explored in PSHE education, relate directly to a child's or young person's life, when they might find themselves in a tricky situation or "crunch" moment – and need to make a quick decision; for example, a child who is being sexually abused, or a teenager who is being pressured to have sex. They will need to recall learning from PSHE education at that moment to help them make a decision.

They will, of course, require knowledge e.g., of the legality (or not) of their actions. However, in order to make a safe decision in the moment, they will also need skills to negotiate with their peers to resist pressure from others, to exit the situation (if they choose to) and access appropriate help or support if necessary. They will need a strong sense of their own values, to make the right decision and the confidence to stick to it.

Knowledge on its own won't necessarily stop someone from trying things or help young people to negotiate consent throughout their lifetime. In many cases young people end up in situations where they know what they are doing is "wrong", but they do it anyway, as they lack the essential skills or attributes to help them effectively manage the situation.

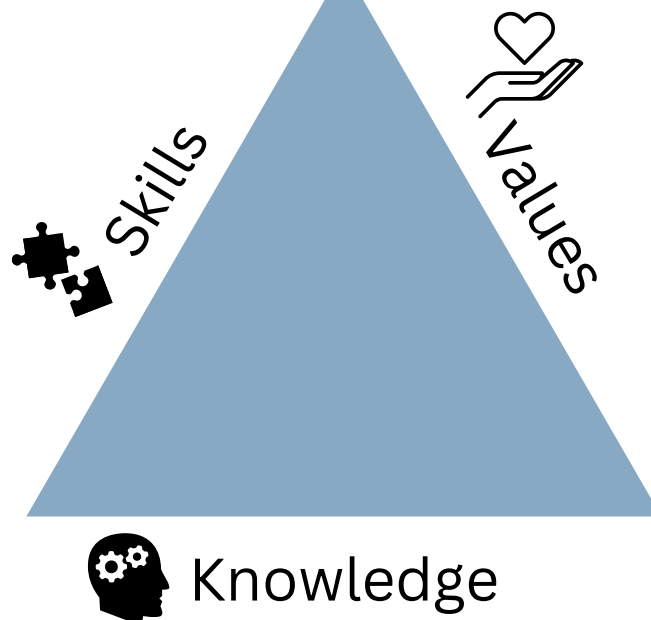
To ensure that sessions are balanced it is important to know the purpose of the activity and create a balanced session that increases or enables reflection on knowledge, skills and values.

The definition of each of these is:

Knowledge: gaining new information on a topic

Skills: gaining new skills on a topic

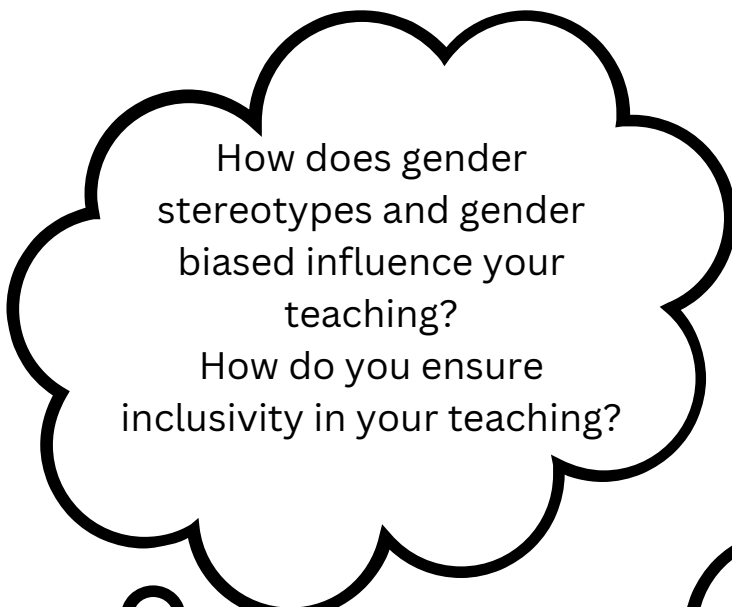
Values: reflecting on, and potentially altering, your own values in relation to a topic



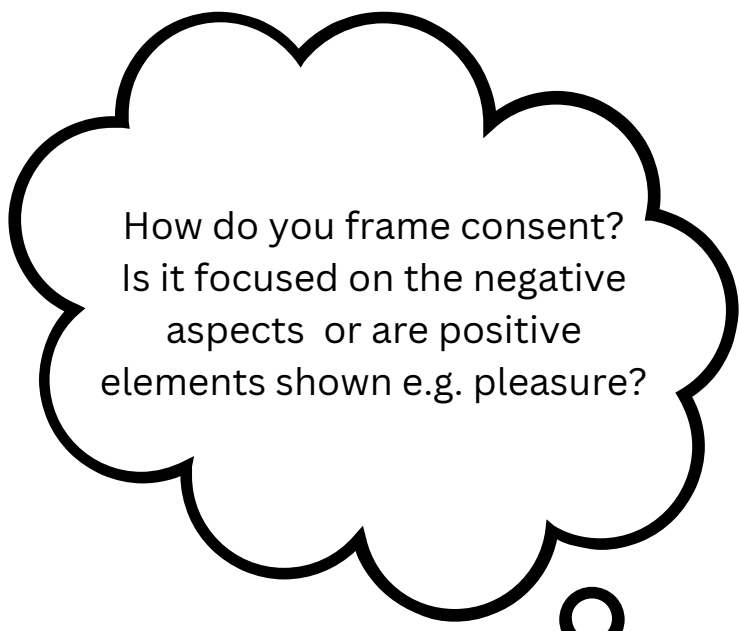
Teaching Consent

Young people's understanding of consent can be distinctly gendered, this means that consent may be understood differently according to sex and gender.


This [video](#) from Boys in Mind and Mighty Girls provide considerations about the way in which education providers facilitate PSHE sessions on consent:



How does gender stereotypes and gender biased influence your teaching?
How do you ensure inclusivity in your teaching?



How do you frame consent?
Is it focused on the negative aspects or are positive elements shown e.g. pleasure?



How does your teaching develop skills around consent alongside knowledge?

It is essential that teaching about consent is inclusive and relevant to all children and young people, irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and background.

Whilst young women are disproportionately more likely to experience situations in which their consent is not respected, and young men are disproportionately more likely to be the perpetrators in such situations, this is not always the case.

It is important that when talking about statistics, consideration is made to how we might use gendered language. This is often how data has been captured and generated and think about how we can challenge perceived social norms that females are victims and males are perpetrators.

Rape Crisis UK states that:

1 in 4 women and 1 in 18 men
have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult

5 in 6 women who are raped don't report – and the same is true for 4 in 5 men.

The OFSTED review of sexual abuse in school found that 34% of boys reported that they had been photographed or videoed without their knowledge or consent.

Dr Emily Setty, from the University of Surrey, has written a guidance document for educators about educating boys about consent which provides support to educators and others who work with young people to effectively address the topic of 'sexual consent' with teenage boys.

Consent is not a gender issue. It is important that everyone feels comfortable to come forward if something has happened to them, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.

Tips for Communication

Communication difficulties

Special provision should be put in place to support conversations with children, young people or adult learners who:

- have communication difficulties.
- are too young.
- are unable to communicate.
- cannot or will not explain.

You should refer to the child or young person behaviour plan and the information available from any assessments. This may include visual cues to help facilitate discussion, such as picture exchange communication cards.

Mencap has published further information on [communicating with people with learning difficulties](#).

The National Autistic Society has also published [tips to communicate more effectively with an autistic person](#).



The table below shows the learning opportunities from the relevant PSHE Association core themes which can be linked to consent.

Primary PSHE Association

Key Stage 1

R16.	About how to respond if physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
R17.	About knowing there are situations when they should ask for permission and also when their permission should be sought.
R22.	About how to treat themselves and others with respect; how to be polite and courteous.

Key Stage 2

R22.	About privacy and personal boundaries; what is appropriate in friendships and wider relationships (including online).
R25.	recognise different types of physical contact; what is acceptable and unacceptable; strategies to respond to unwanted physical contact.
R26.	About seeking and giving permission (consent) in different situations.
R30.	That personal behaviour can affect other people; to recognise and model respectful behaviour online.

PSHE Association:

SSS5 – Public and Private

Development	Demonstrate how to ask to borrow or use something that belongs to someone else.
Enrichment	Explain the importance of respecting others' belongings, privacy and feelings.
Enhancement	Demonstrate ways to give and not give permission when asked to lend belongings.
Enhancement	Explain why we must respect the rights of others who may refuse to lend something to us; explain why this does not mean they do not like us.
Enhancement	Explain what we can do/ say or whom we can tell if someone does not respect our privacy, or shares something with us that makes us feel uncomfortable.

Encountering	Respond to adult modelling/visual stimuli for how to show through our responses if we are unhappy/uncomfortable with the way someone is touching us.
Foundation	Demonstrate ways we can let people who help us know if we are not comfortable with the way we are being touched.
Core	Explain that our bodies belong to us and that we have a right to feel safe.
Core	Recognise the need to respect other people's bodies and to ask for permission before we touch them.
Core	Explain when and why physical contact may be inappropriate (e.g. it causes us to feel upset, hurts us, we feel uncomfortable about it).
Core	Identify occasions when it might be okay for someone to make us feel uncomfortable (injections, cleaning cuts or grazes); that these might be when we are unwell, injured or need medical treatment.
Development	Describe different types of physical contact; explain how to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable, comfortable and uncomfortable necessary and unnecessary physical contact.
Development	Describe or demonstrate how to respond to unwanted physical contact; how to let someone know we don't like it or want it.
Development	Identify trusted adults we can tell.
Enrichment	Explain that we have the right to protect our bodies from inappropriate/ unwanted touching
Enrichment	Explain how we can respect other people's right to protect their bodies from inappropriate/ unwanted touching.

Enrichment	Explain when and whom to tell if we are worried, and the importance of persisting in telling until we feel comfortable and safe.
Enhancement	Identify someone we could safely go to for help if we are worried about ourselves or someone else.

DfE Statutory Guidance:

By the end of Primary pupils will know:

RR2.	Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
RR5.	That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
RR8.	The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
BS1.	What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
BS3.	That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
BS6.	How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.

R8.	That the portrayal of sex in the media and social media (including pornography) can affect people's expectations of relationships and sex.
R24.	That consent is freely given; that being pressurised, manipulated or coerced to agree to something is not giving consent, and how to seek help in such circumstances.
R25.	About the law relating to sexual consent.
R26.	How to seek, give, not give and withdraw consent (in all contexts, including online).
R27.	That the seeker of consent is legally and morally responsible for ensuring that consent has been given; that if consent is not given or is withdrawn, that decision should always be respected.
R29.	The impact of sharing sexual images of others without consent.

R8.	To understand the potential impact of the portrayal of sex in pornography and other media, including on sexual attitudes, expectations and behaviours.
R18.	About the concept of consent in maturing relationships.
R19.	About the impact of attitudes towards sexual assault and to challenge victim blaming, including when abuse occurs online.
R20.	To recognise the impact of drugs and alcohol on choices and sexual behaviour.

Key Stage 5

R11.	To understand the moral and legal responsibilities that someone seeking consent has, and the importance of respecting and protecting people's right to give, not give, or withdraw their consent (in all contexts, including online).
R12.	To understand the emotional, physical, social and legal consequences of failing to respect others' right not to give or to withdraw consent.
R13.	How to recognise, and seek help in the case of, sexual abuse, exploitation, assault or rape, and the process for reporting to appropriate authorities.
R15.	To negotiate, and if necessary be able to assert, the use of contraception with a sexual partner.
R19.	To recognise and manage negative influence, manipulation and persuasion in a variety of contexts, including online.

SEND

PSHE Association:

SSS2 - Feeling Frightened/Worried

Encountering	Respond to stimuli about how to keep our bodies safe (appropriate and inappropriate contact).
Foundation	Identify some of the ways in which pressure might be put on us by other people, including online.
Core	Explain what unwanted physical contact means.
Development	Explain what is meant by 'personal space'.
Development	Describe ways we can safely challenge unwanted physical contact and ask for help.
Enrichment	Describe how it might feel when someone encroaches on our personal space.
Enrichment	Give examples of when it is or is not appropriate to be in someone else's 'personal space'.
Enrichment	Explain that some actions (e.g. assaulting someone and harassment) are crimes, and how to respond, including reporting to police.
Enhancement	Demonstrate what we can say or do and whom we can tell if we are concerned about our own or someone else's personal safety.

Core	Explain that no one has the right to make us share a photo of ourselves, or give information about ourselves or others, online.
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CG3 – Healthy/Unhealthy Relationship Behaviours

Enrichment	Identify positive strategies to manage inappropriate behaviour towards us.
Enrichment	Recognise that some types of behaviour within relationships are against the law (e.g. hitting/ hurting someone, telling someone what to do all the time, not allowing someone to make choices).
Enhancement	Explain how the media portrayal of relationships may not reflect real life but may affect our expectations.

CG4 – Intimidate Relationships, Consent and Contraception

Foundation	Identify instances in or out of school when we might need to seek permission or receive consent.
Foundation	Demonstrate how to ask for permission (get consent) before we borrow or take something from someone.
Foundation	Demonstrate ways to indicate to others that we are happy/willing or not happy/unwilling to do something (giving and not giving permission/ consent)
Core	Explain what seeking and giving/not giving consent means in relationships, that we have the right to say ‘no’ or ‘please stop’ to anything we feel uncomfortable about, and demonstrate how we might do this.
Development	Describe simple ways to check if consent is being given and ways of assertively giving, not giving and withdrawing consent.

Development	Explain that there are laws about the legal age of consent for sexual activity.
Development	Identify how others may manipulate/persuade us to do things we do not want to do or do not like.
Enrichment	Describe ways to manage others' expectations in relationships and our right not to be pressurised to do anything we do not want to do.
Enrichment	Explain that if someone fails to respect another person's right to not give their consent, then they are committing a serious crime
Enrichment	Demonstrate different strategies to deal with manipulation/persuasion in relationships.
Enrichment	Recognise that the portrayal of sex in the media and social media (including pornography) is an unrealistic representation of sexual behaviour and can affect people's expectations of relationships and sex.
Enhancement	Explain that consent must be sought and freely given before any sexual activity and how to tell if someone is giving or not giving their consent.
Enhancement	Identify how saying 'yes' under pressure is not consent, and is not the same as freely given, CG4 enthusiastic consent.
Enhancement	Describe how alcohol/ drugs may influence choices we or others make in relationships, including sexual activity

DfE Statutory Guidance:

By the end of Secondary pupils will know:

RR1.	The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
RR2.	Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
RR4.	That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
RR6.	That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
O6.	That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
11.	The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships
12.	How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
13.	How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.

HR1.	Offering relationship support and guidance to young people, including sex and relationship education, in settings and in a way chosen by young people.
HR3.	Modelling positive, respectful relationships and exploring the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships.



Please check all resources are suitable for your settings and children before use

Consent

Books:

3-7 years.

- [Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect: Teach children about body ownership, respect, feelings, choices and recognizing bullying behaviours.](#)
- [Don't Hug Doug \(he doesn't like it\).](#)
- [No Means No.](#)

5-7 years.

- [It's My Body.](#)

6-10 years.

- [Consent \(for Kids!\): Boundaries, Respect, and Being in Charge of You.](#)

10-16 years

- [What is Consent? Why is it Important? And Other Big Questions.](#)

12+ years.

- [Tradition.](#)

14+ years.

- [Asking For It.](#)

Videos:

Amaze.org - [Consent Explained: What is it?](#)

Disrespect Nobody - [What is Consent?](#)

Gloucestershire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner - [Consent for Kids.](#)

Nottingham Trent SU - [Respect and Consent.](#)

Rise Above - [What is Consent?](#)

Rise Above - [The Basics of Sexual Consent.](#)

Lesson Plans:

Please sign up to our [Resource Library](#) and visit our [Consent Page](#). Here are a few select lesson plans:

3-11 years - NSPCC - [PANTS](#) (includes SEND resources).

4-18 years - Women's Aid - [Expect Respect Toolkit.](#)

9-11 years - Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning Team - [Understanding Consent.](#)

11-16 years - RASAC - [Give & Get Consent.](#)

Training:

Brook - [Consent, Young Men and RSE Webinar.](#)

Brook - [Introduction to Consent e-learning.](#)

Brook - [What is a Spiral Curriculum? Teaching about consent in a timely and relevant way.](#)

Brook - [Managing a Disclosure of Sexual Harassment or Assault.](#)

Department for Education - [Being Safe Module.](#)

DEVELOPING SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE



CONSENT

with thanks to...



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

What is Sex?

Sex, means different things to different people. When people talk about “having sex”, they are often referring to having sexual intercourse, but not always.

Having sex is not the only way people can be intimate or sexual with each other. There are lots of ways to be intimate, like hugging, kissing or watching something sexual with someone else.

It is always important for partners to talk about what everyone is comfortable, for each individual, before deciding whether to keep going

Nobody has the right to pressure anyone or make them feel like they have to do or continue to do something they do not want to do.

Consent applies to anything sexual, not just sexual intercourse.



Definition

Making it clear to a child that they have a right to bodily autonomy, to define their boundaries and personal space, is the cornerstone of consent. This knowledge can then be built on to explore sexual consent. Supporting children and young people to understand consent will mean they are more likely to have safer, healthier and more enjoyable sexual experiences.

Many people will be able to define what is meant by the term “consent”

Verb:

To permit, approve, or agree; comply or yield (often followed by “to” or an infinitive)

“He consented to the proposal. We asked her permission, and she consented.”

Noun:

Permission, approval, or agreement; compliance; acquiescence:

“He gave his consent to the marriage.”

Dictionary

This definition can be problematic when considering consent in a sexual context. The term “complying” and “yielding” imply being willing but not really wanting to do something. Sex shouldn’t be something people have for any other reason than they want it.

People will consent to other sexual activities for a range of reasons, which can sometimes influence their perception of how consent is gained.

Legal Definition of Consent

In the eyes of the law, consent is defined as when a person:

“Agrees by choice and has the capacity to make that choice”

The legal age at which someone is able to give consent, in the UK, is 16. The age of consent is different in different parts of the world and it is important to recognise this if you are working with children and young people from other parts of the world.

0-12

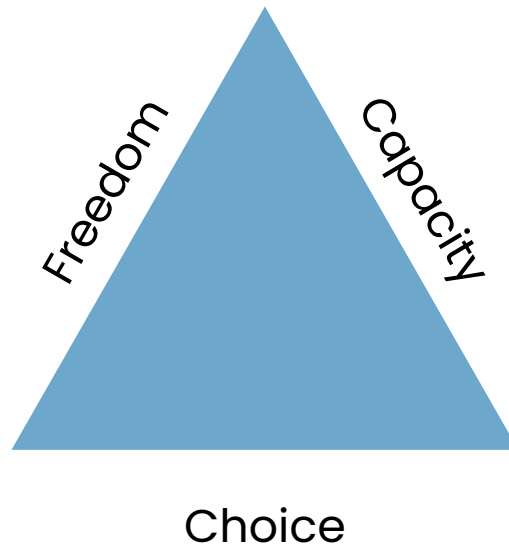
A child under the age of 13 is not considered to have the capacity to provide consent to engaging in any sexual activity. If information shared suggests this is the case, a referral to Children's Social Care is required (details on page 60).

13-15

Whilst the law stipulates it is illegal for 13-15 year olds to have sex, the law is there to protect children and young people rather than prosecute them. The law aims to keep children and young people safe from abuse or exploitation rather than prosecuting two young people (13-15yrs) for engaging in consensual sexual activity.



Based upon the Fire Triangle, that helps people to learn the necessary ingredients required for most fires. The Consent Triangle provides an easy illustration to represent what is required for someone to be able to give consent to sexual activity. All three elements must be present for the activity to be consensual. This is important to recognise as young people who are being abused may believe they are consenting, but do not have the freedom to make that decision. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during any sexual activity.



Choice - The person can say either yes or no. That the person actually wants to engage in sexual activity. Consent is not ongoing, it can be withdrawn at any time. Just because a person said yes once, does not mean it is always a yes, it needs to be negotiated every time. Consent is contextual which means if a person agreed to a sexual activity with particular conditions e.g. wearing of a condom, the consent is tied to this. If the sexual activity takes place outside of this stipulation then the activity is not consensual.

Freedom - Nothing bad would happen to them if they said no. For instance being threatened with violence, or they are being pressured into it. Being kidnapped, forced, pinned down, coerced or pressured to have sex or feeling like you can't say no or are too scared would mean someone does not have the freedom to give their consent.

Capacity - Is the person physically and/or mentally able to make a choice and to understand the consequences of that choice.? It's the same as the law that says someone may be physically able to drive a car when they are drunk but they are not mentally able to - the law recognises that when a person is drunk or high they do not have true capacity to consent to sex. They do not have to be passed out, like with drink driving someone can still be physically able to have sex but they can't give legal consent. Capacity can also be affected by age, or some types of learning disabilities, where a person doesn't have the capacity to give legal consent.

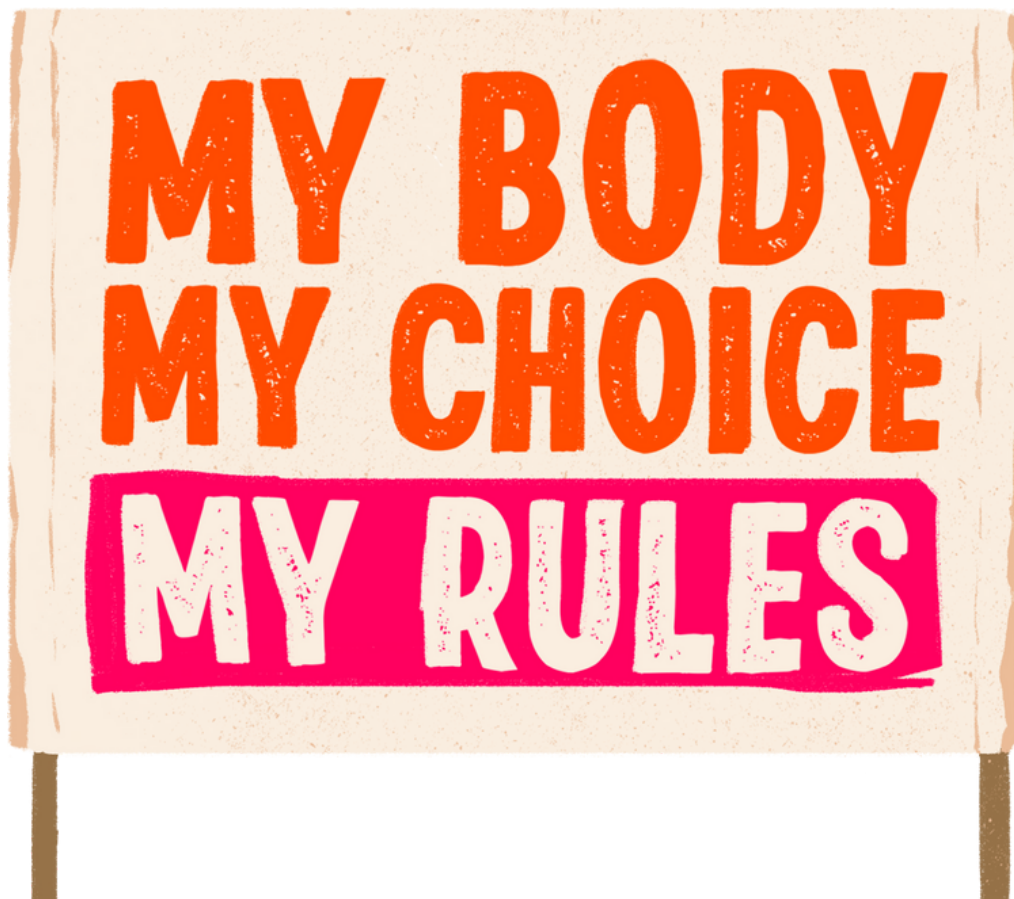
Body Autonomy

It is important that children learn about consent – setting their own boundaries and respecting the boundaries of others. Before teaching about sexual consent, body autonomy should be addressed.

The UN defines this as the power and agency a person has over their body and future, without violence or coercion. Teaching children about body autonomy and consent is an important tool to prevent child sexual abuse.

There are many reasons that children who experience abuse wait to report or never report it. Understanding body autonomy and consent at a young age can empower a child to speak up and say “no” if abuse occurs, it also equips children to disclose abuse if it happens.

It is important to teach children the correct terminology for parts of their body, including private parts. Understanding body autonomy and consent from a young age, can support children/ Young people to identify abuse, empower them to speak up and seek help/support if it occurs.



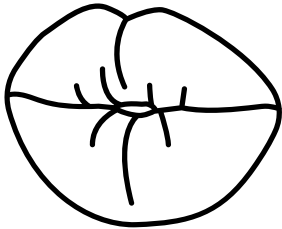
Sexual Harassment

Unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which:

- Violates a person's dignity
- Intimidates, degrades or humiliates someone
- Creates a hostile or offensive environment

Equality Act (2010)

Behaviours that could be classed as sexual harassment include:



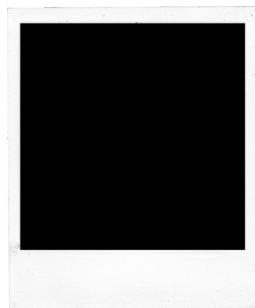
Wolf-Whistling or Catcalling.



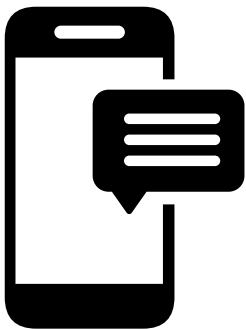
Sexual Comments or Jokes.



Unwelcome physical touching



Displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature.



Sending messages which include sexual content.

A person does not have to have previously objected to someone's behaviour for it to be considered unwanted.

The Sexual Offences Act (2003) outlines that sexual violence is any sexual act, or attempt to carry out a sexual act, that takes place without the consent (agreement) of the person who has experienced it.

This includes, but is not limited to:

Rape

“Penetration with a penis of the vagina, anus or mouth of another person without their consent.

“Stealthing” – the intentional removal or damage of a condom without consent is classed as rape.

Sexual Assault

Other form of sexual activity without consent where a person “intentionally touches someone in a way that is sexual” is classed as sexual assault. This could include:

- Penetration with an object or another part of the body.
- Forcing someone to engage in any sexual activity, including kissing, when they do not want to.
- Sexual touching of any part of someone’s body (regardless if they are wearing clothes or not) without consent.

Gender Stereotypes

Whilst data suggests that more women will experience issues with consent, and not being asked to give it, as mentioned previously gender norms and stereotypes can factor into the process of seeking and giving consent.

“Harmful” gender stereotypes are limiting to everyone.

Below are some slang terms that are often linked to a gender stereotype. Consider how this might impact upon young people’s understanding of consent.

Slang Term	Gender Stereotype
Asking for it	Female
Stud	Male
Whore	Female
Player	Male
Slag	Female
Romeo	Male
Frigid	Female
Slut	Female
Wimp	Male
Lad	Male
Tramp	Female

For young people who do not identify with male or female genders or who are transitioning, they could be negotiating any of these labels, as well as other negative and offensive stereotypes and labels.

For males the impact of this terminology is that they can build their social status around sex and this may influence them to consent more freely and potentially before they are ready for sexual activity.

For females the impact of the term frigid could encourage them to consent to sex before they are ready. Equally terms like slut and slag may discourage women from giving consent or considering their own sexual desires.

Influences on Consent

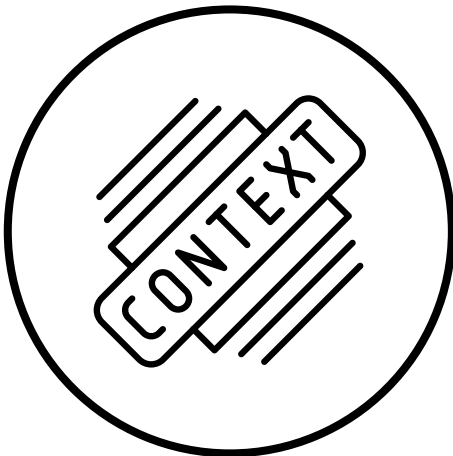
Gender is one factor that might influence someone's understanding around consent. Below are some other factors to consider:



The person themselves

- Their confidence.
- Their resilience.
- Their self-esteem.

All these things play a part in how someone may consent to something.



Context of the encounter

- Does the person feel in control?
- Does the person feel safe?
- Previous experiences.
- Age/experience of partner.

It may be difficult for a person to find a way out of an situation or express their desire.



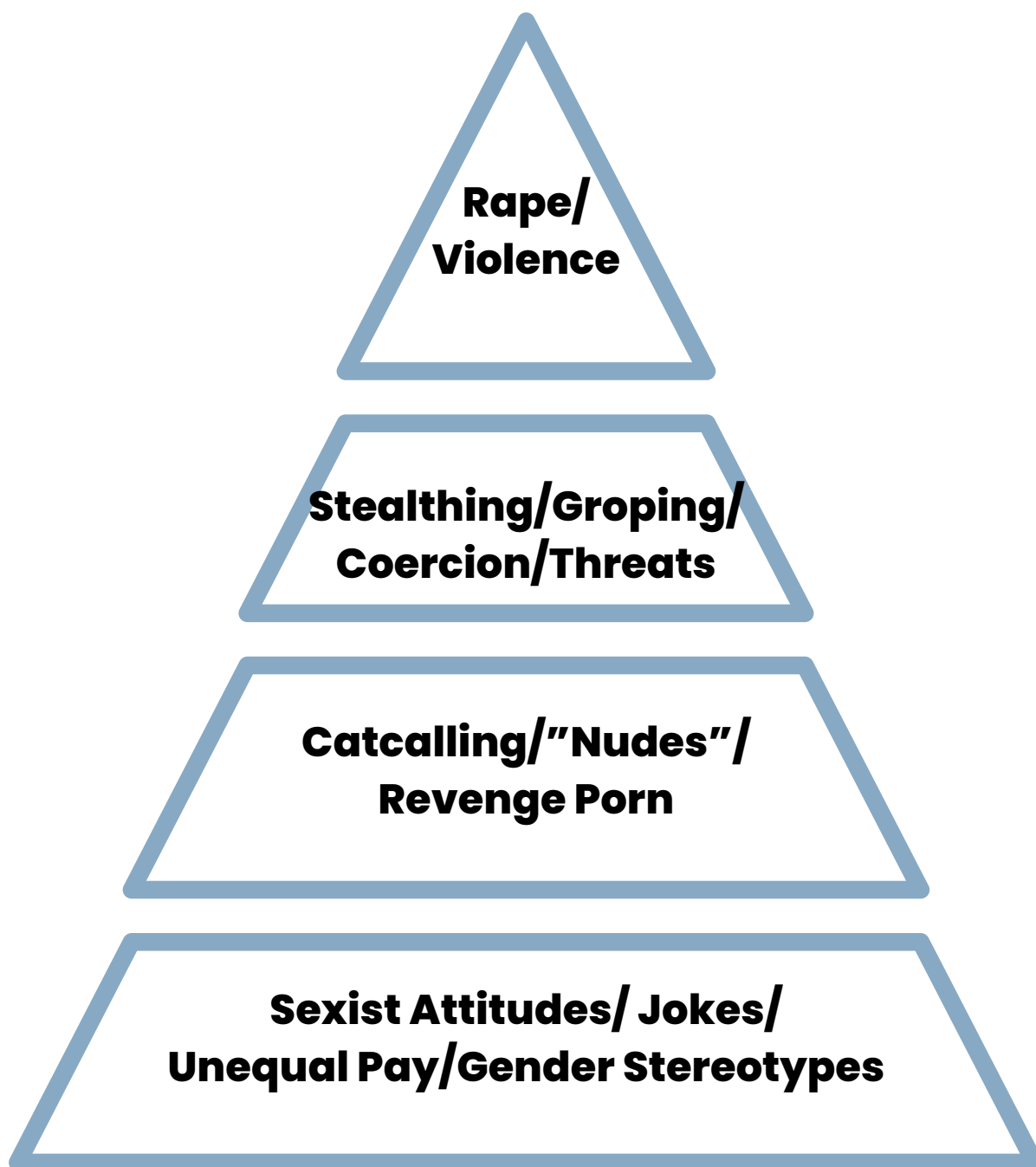
Cultural norms, values and expectations

A person may utilise what they have seen within:

- Family.
- Religious Teaching.
- Peer Group.
- Films or Television.
- Pornography.

These may be or may not be "good" examples of consent.

OFSTED's review into Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges showed how widespread different types of sexual violence is. The chart below, taken from Brook, shows how seemingly low-level behaviours are the first steps on a path of aggression and how these have become seen as a "normal" part of society.



Sexist Attitudes/ Jokes/ Unequal Pay/Gender Stereotypes

By dismissing or minimising comments as “banter” or not challenging inequality these can be seen as acceptable and are often “normalised” in society. Just because something is common does not mean it should be accepted. It's important that, as professionals, we let the person acting inappropriately know that their behaviour is unacceptable and why. This should be part of a whole school/organisation approach.

Catcalling/“Dick Pics”/Revenge Porn

Catcalling is frequently minimised, with people often encouraged to perceive it as a compliment, rather than recognising it as a form of sexual harassment. “Nudes’ and ‘revenge porn’ have become increasingly common in modern dating but are rarely reported.

Stealthing/Groping/Coercion/Threats

Stealthing (removing a condom covertly), groping, coercion and threats are all types of sexual assault and examples of behaviours where consent is absent.

Rape/Violence

At the top of the pyramid sits explicitly violent acts.

It is essential that PSHE sessions on consent do not just focus at the top end of the pyramid , but also consider how consent features in the other types of behaviour and how the normalisation of particular behaviour can influence a person’s understanding and attitudes to towards consent.

HISTORY OF CONSENT

1

1980

Western Feminists fight to get sexual and reproductive rights recognised

In the 1980s Western feminists highlighted the presence of sexual violence in heterosexual relationships and the ways in which pressure, force and male domination were normalised.

Age of Homosexual Consent is set at 21 in Scotland

Sex between two men over the age of 21 'in private' is decriminalised in Scotland.

2

1982

Age of Homosexual Consent is set at 21 in Northern Ireland

Sex between two men over the age of 21 'in private' is decriminalised in Northern Ireland.

3

1991

Rape in marriage is legally recognised

Before this date rape within marriage was not a crime

4

2001

Age of Homosexual Consent is lowered to 16 in England, Scotland and Wales

Stonewall campaigning led to the age of consent being lowered for same-sex relations between men aged 16. changes were made to the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000.

5

2003

Sexual Offences Act

The Sexual Offences Act was substantially reformed to offer greater protection to children and vulnerable adults and to reflect the changing social attitude towards sex.

6

2009

Age of Homosexual Consent is lowered to 16 in Northern Ireland

7

2014

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

Set up to examine how British institutions handled their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse following investigations including Operation Yewtree.

8

2015

Revenge Porn is made illegal

Revenge porn is classified as a sexual offence in the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015. It's described as "the sharing of private, sexual materials, either photos or videos, of another person without their consent and with the purpose of causing embarrassment or distress".

If found guilty of revenge porn, you could face a prison sentence of up to two years.

9

2017

#METOO Movement

The sexual conduct of Harvey Weinstein led to people sharing their experiences of sexual harassment, sexual assault and everyday, casual sexism.

10

2021

Everyone's Invited

An online campaign inviting users to post anonymous testimonies of sexual assault and harassment in the UK was set up. This led to the Department for Education commissioning OFSTED to carry out a rapid review into sexual abuse in schools and colleges.

11

2022

Keeping Children Safe in Education

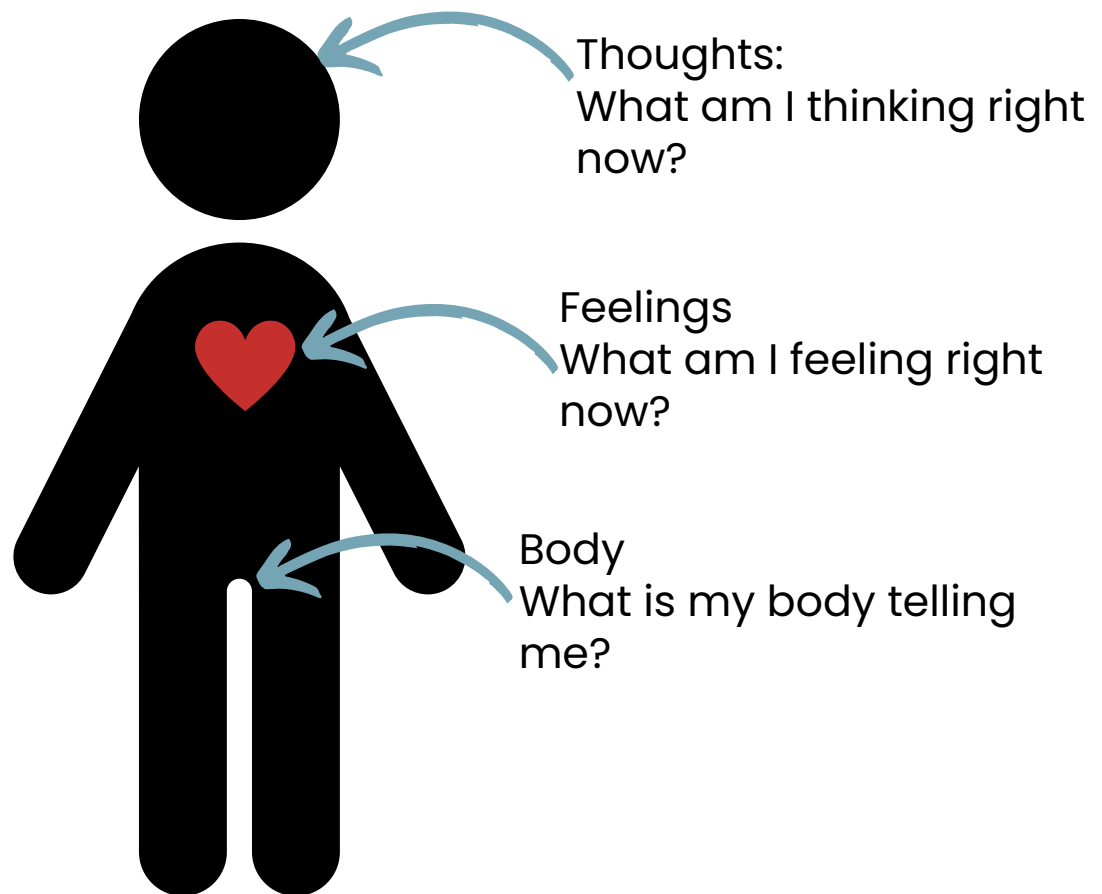
Advice for education settings on sexual violence and sexual harassment was withdrawn as a standalone document and absorbed fully into Keeping Children Safe in Education document.

Communication & Consent

Negotiating consent begins with good communication. This doesn't always have to mean verbally, but it does mean:

- Checking what both parties want.
- Finding ways of expressing what is wanted, not wanted, enjoyed and not enjoyed.

Firstly, the person should think about what they want - checking in with their own thoughts, feelings, emotions and bodies.



Sometime bodies can give clues, but individuals should always take their thought and feelings into account as well. In isolation the human body response may not indicate a 'yes' or 'no' response but alongside a person's thoughts and feelings it will be clearer if a person wants to or doesn't want to engage in sexual activity.

Sometimes people will say that practising good consent stops the flow of sex. This does not have to be the case, in fact it can enhance the sexual activity, through paying attention to a partner's actions, words and sounds every time and throughout the encounter.



What someone might say?

"I'd like to try...
what do you
think?"

"What would
you like to
happen now"

"How does that
feel? Do you want
to carry on?"

"Do you want
to....?"

"You seem tired
- do you want
to go to sleep?"



What someone might hear?

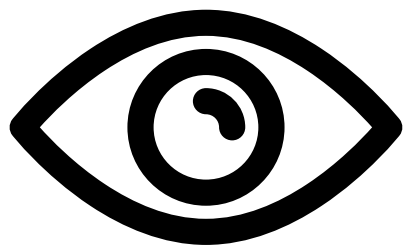
It is important to remember that just because the word “no” is not heard this does not mean that consent has been given. It can be hard for people to say “no” sometimes, in lots of situations, not just in sexual encounters. It is important that people are able to hear other verbal reactions and consider if they are consensual or non-consensual.

A person should always stop if they hear a partner say:

- “No”
- “I don’t know”
- “I’m not sure”
- “Not now”
- “Get off”
- “ F*** off”
- “Don’t do that”
- “Ouch”
- “I’m worried”
- “Stop”
- “Not again”
- “Do I have to?”

Consent may sound like:

- “That feels so good”
- “I’m enjoying this”
- “Carry on”
- “Do it this way”
- “Touch me here”
- “Do that again”
- “Mmmm that feels good”
- “Yes”



What someone might see

It is important that people are also able to pick up on non-verbal clues too. The list below provides some signs that show that a partner wants sex:



- Looking, smiling or nodding at their partner
- Being relaxed and happy.
- Being enthusiastic and responsive.
- Kissing their partner back and touching them.
- Responding to their partner with their body.

Sexual activity should be stopped if the following signs are picked up :








- No eye contact.
- Crying.
- Frozen or frightened expression.
- Shaking.
- Flinching.
- Resistance.
- Silence/Stillness.
- Slurred speech.
- Incoherent talking.
- Passing out/becoming unconscious.
- Sleeping.
- Confusion.
- Rigid or tense body.

It may just be that a check-in is required, and agreement about next steps, or it may be that the sexual encounter must stop as the person does not have the capacity to give or has withdrawn their consent.

Saying “no” outright can be challenging, even more so in a sexual context.

It is important that sexual boundaries are respected, however, unfortunately, there may be occasions where this isn't the case. It is important that young people have the skills to be able to manage these situations. Professionals should encourage young people to:

-  Think about what you want in advance so you are not put on the spot.
-  Practise saying “no”. If someone then puts pressure on you you will feel more prepared.
-  Plan an exit strategy – think of way you can leave beforehand, for example “I've just had an urgent phone call and need to leave”.
-  Talk to you partner about what you are happy doing and what you're not happy to do. Practise with friends before talking to your partner, if that will make you feel more comfortable.
-  Remember it is never your fault and it is never okay, if someone forces you to do something sexual that you do not want to do. If this has happened or does happen you should speak to someone you trust to get support and report what has happened.

Safe Lives Research (2022), asked young people if there was anything missing from their RSE education, responses included:

- How to properly consent.
- How to communicate consent.

Young people are able to identify extreme situations of sexual violence or rape and scenarios where a “yes” to sexual activity has been given, they can struggle to find other forms of consent and refusal more difficult to spot, leaving them vulnerable.

The Children’s Commissioner published a report “*Sex without consent, I suppose that is rape*” *How young people understand consent to sex*, which again showed that young people know what consent to sex is but find it difficult to relate to real life situations (2013).

It is important that PSHE utilises a wide range of scenario-based activities so that young people can build up these skills.

In this video by Brook young people share their views on consent.

This video from Boys in Mind and Mighty Girls provide considerations about the way in which education providers facilitate PSHE sessions on consent.

Brook have also created a range of scenarios that explore the complexities of consent.

- Scenario One: Pete and Kirsty. In this scenario consent is not present as Kirsty experiences pressure and guilt. Agreeing to go home with someone does not equal consent to any sexual activity.
- Scenario Two: Taylor and Alex. Consent can be withdrawn at any time, and if someone does not stop after consent has been withdrawn, this would be classed as sexual assault or rape. If Alex stopped and they both agreed to change the sexual activity to make it more comfortable, for example changing positions or applying lube, consent could have been reinstated.
- Scenario Three: Kerry and Stu. In this scenario there is a power imbalance – both in age and the fact that Stu is Kerry’s tutor. As with any relationship, it’s about having the freedom and space to negotiate and here it doesn’t sound like there is space for Kerry to get what she wants. Instead, it is all about what suits Stu.
- Scenario Four: Jaz and Nav. In this scenario we do not have the full picture. There may be other aspects to the relationship that would put this into context. For example, if the relationship was abusive, then the routine element of sex would feel bad and perhaps controlling. If we knew the relationship was healthy and equal, it may indicate part of the ambivalent ‘give and take’ of the relationship. Jaz may also desire the outcomes of sex (such as closeness and intimacy), whilst not being too bothered about the sex itself. If Jaz and Nav had talked about it and that was ignored, we would judge the sex as being non-consensual. This scenario demonstrates the benefit of communication about sex, even in a long-term relationship. Discussion could lead to more pleasurable sex for both Jaz and Nav.
- Scenario Five: Harrison and Mohammed. This scenario would be judged as rape or sexual assault. The ending of a relationship might be complex and lead to mixed emotions, but remember, previous consent does not confer future permission. Consent must be given and received each and every time.
- Scenario Six: Sasha and Hunter. This is an example of intimate image abuse (revenge porn) and shows how consent should be applied to situations beyond just intimate sexual encounters. Even though Sasha and Hunter had talked about the nudes being private, Sasha still chose to share them publicly without consent. This was done in order to hurt or humiliate Hunter and this is a crime.

Young people often report that the focus of their sex education is on the dangers of sexual activity e.g. unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Similarly young people report that consent is taught as a “black and white” topic and does not reflect the complexities and multi-layered elements.

This [blog](#) by Brook highlights the importance of teaching young people about pleasure in order to keep themselves safe.

Being able to discuss desires, boundaries and consent with partners is essential within a healthy relationship. These conversations prevent misunderstandings, coercion, or non-consensual situations.

Pleasure is more than just about sex, it’s about understanding preferences and boundaries and being empowered to articulate these.



Pornography & Consent

A report prepared for the Government Equalities Office found that the majority of Frontline workers spontaneously mentioned pornography as an influential factor for harmful sexual behaviours towards women and girls. All acknowledged it as a factor when it was later introduced into the discussion (2020).

The PSHE Association also produced a research briefing for educators "*what is the IMPACT of pornography on young people*" which stated:

"Sexual experiences do not neatly divide into those that are desired and enjoyed, and those that comprise harassment, coercion or abuse. Many young people report unwanted sexual experiences that they consented to (Drouin & Tobin, 2014; Bay-Cheng & Bruns, 2016). Qualitative studies suggest that porn can sometimes play a part in these, by creating expectations of various sexual acts that individuals then feel either a pressure from themselves or their partner to comply with (for example, BBFC, 2020; Marston & Lewis, 2014)"

The Children's Commissioner's recent report into young people and pornography found that 79% of young adults, aged 18-21, had seen pornography involving sexual violence before turning 18.

Jenny Fox, Senior Subject Specialist at the PSHE Association wrote in a blog, for the Department for Education, advice on how to approach pornography with young people as part of PSHE.

The PSHE Association has collated a briefing that draws together key research into effective education about pornography including top tips.

Revealing Research (2022) reported that 29% of girls and 14% of boys aged 14-18 years copied poses they had seen on social media when sending nudes or nearly nude pictures or videos of themselves.

Consent

Sharing and receiving nude or nearly nude images is now a common and normalised part of young people's experience of growing up. Not all young people share nude images themselves, but a huge number of young people have received or seen nude or nearly nude images. Sometimes the images are of people they know, sometimes they are of strangers. (Revealing Reality, 2022).

- The majority of young people surveyed said they'd never shared a nude or nearly nude image of themselves. Of girls aged 14 to 16, 17% said they had shared, and 11% of boys. This rises to 26% of girls and 23% of boys aged 17 to 18.
- Six in 10 girls and three in 10 boys said they'd been asked to share a nude by someone else.
- More than half of girls and nearly a third of boys said they had been sent a nude or nearly nude image.

This same report found that males and females tend to share nudes for different reasons and have differing experiences. Girls' experiences of nude image-sharing is more frequently negative. 46% of girls v 10% of boys felt pressured into sending a nude or nearly nude picture or video.

The young people interviewed for the qualitative research talked of images being unsolicited, but didn't tend to talk specifically about consent – and how they felt consent to nude image-sharing differed from consent to physical sex – until they were prompted.

Consent shouldn't just be discussed when talking about sharing images but also girls shared their experience of being more likely to have their pictures taken without permission or shared without consent.

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Violence Reduction Alliance's campaign "Make No Excuses" shows how this is a form of sexual harassment and can be used as a conversation starter into young people's perceptions of this behaviour.

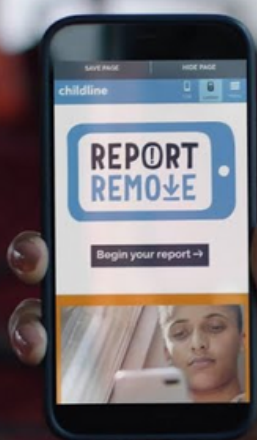
Children and young people may consent to sending a nude image of themselves. They can also be forced or coerced into sharing images by their peers or adults online.

It is important to remember it is a criminal offence to create or share explicit images of a child, even if the person doing it is a child. The law applies to anyone under the age of 18 years old.

If someone has sent a nude and is worried about what might happen next they could:

- Ask for the message to be deleted.
- Don't reply to threats.
- Talk to someone they trust.
- Use the Report Remove tool.
- Report to CEOP.

'Cyberflashing' is where somebody digitally sends sexual images or pornography to an unsuspecting person. It became a criminal offence in 2022. People convicted of this offence can be sentenced to up to two years in prison.



REPORT REMOVE
REMOVE A NUDE IMAGE SHARED ONLINE

Some young people may be tempted to ask someone else for a nude. Childline has some suggestions of things young people should consider before asking.



How will the other person feel?

Being asked for a nude, especially when they don't want to, can make a lot of people feel uncomfortable.



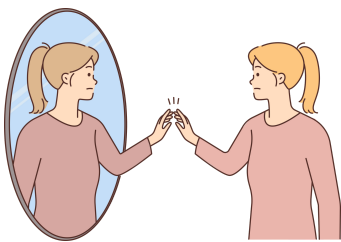
How old are the people involved?

It's against the law to ask someone who's under 18 to send a nude, even if the person asking is under 18 as well.



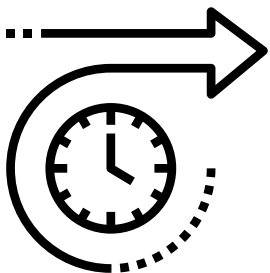
Will it put pressure on the other person?

Making someone feel bad for not sending a nude, even if they don't mean to, is a type of pressure. If someone is not sure if the person being asked would feel pressured, don't ask.



How would they feel if they were asked?

It can help to think about how you would feel if someone asked you to do something you weren't comfortable with or put pressure on you.



What might happen if you ask?

Making someone feel uncomfortable or upset by asking for a nude can have a big effect on your relationship with them.

Even if someone is sent a nude or sexual message, it is not okay to share it without their permission.

It is essential to remember that indecent images of children are a form of sexual abuse and should never be referred to as pornography. PSHE should also prepare people for their future lives and so it is important to talk about non-consensual pornography or image based sexual abuse.

Revenge Porn – as it is commonly known has been a sexual offence since 2015. This term can be misleading as it implies the person has done something to deserve this treatment. This is not the case, a more accurate term would be non-consensual pornography or image based sexual abuse.

This activity carries a sentence of up to two year's imprisonment.

The law defines it as distributing private explicit images without the consent of the person depicted, which is commonly done maliciously to shame ex-partners. Distribution refers to any form of sharing, whether online via social media or websites or offline via physical copies, and the material can either show a sexual activity or a person depicted in a sexual way or with their genitals exposed.

Research shows that that females are disproportionately affected by revenge porn and the impacts of this criminal activity are highly gendered.

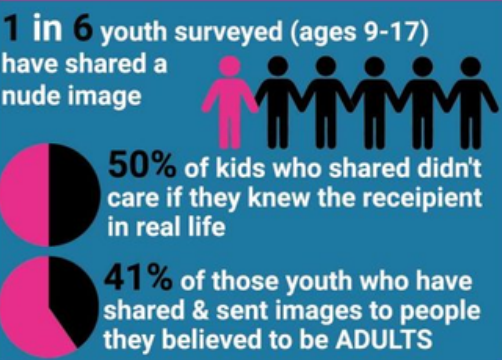
Revenge Porn can also be carried out by hackers or criminal gangs who use sexually explicit content to financially blackmail victims (also termed 'sextortion'). This type of activity is more likely to be against males, in the first six months of 2023 reports of 'sextortion' had increased by 257% compared to the whole of 2022 according to the IWF. This type of criminal activity does affect children and young people.

PREVENTING SEXTORTION AMONGST CHILDREN & TEENS



SEXTORTION IS A REALLY SERIOUS ONLINE EXPLOITATION CRIME DIRECTED TOWARDS CHILDREN & TEENS IN WHICH COERCION & BLACKMAIL IS USED: -

WHAT IS HAPPENING? YOUTH ARE SHARING NUDE CONTENT



CHILD SEXTORTION CASE



THREATS HAPPEN SOONER FOR ONLINE VICTIMS



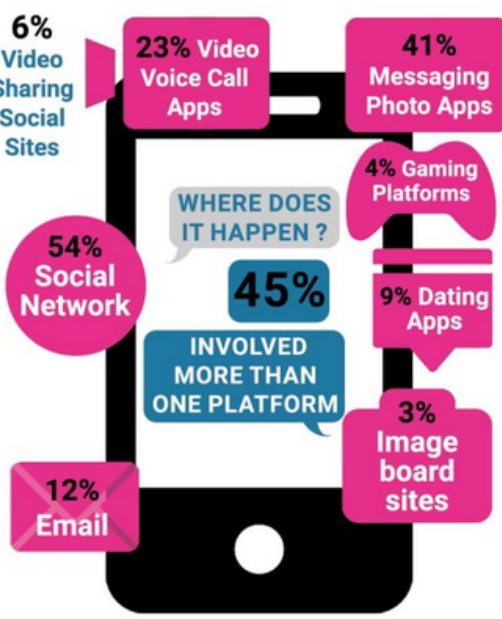
SEXTORTION IS HAPPENING TO KIDS AND TEENS



VICTIMS ARE ATTEMPTING TO ADDRESS THE THREATS THEMSELVES



VICTIMS ARE STAYING SILENT



WHAT CAN WE DO?

- TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT SEXTING & SEXTORTION**
 - Remind them: Don't create, request, or share images!
 - Remember that 5 out of 6 children report that they haven't shared a nude image
 - 1 in 4 victims of sextortion were 13 or younger when threatened
 - The perpetrator is to blame!
- HAVE REGULAR CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT THEIR ONLINE ACTIVITY - BE THEIR TRUSTED ADULT**
- IF SOMEONE ASKS FOR HELP, HELP THEM**
 - Do you know anyone that may need help with this?
 - There's no mistake too big. You can always ask for help.
 - What would you do if someone pressured you for sexual images or "nudes"?
- ACCESS HELPFUL RESOURCES**
 - NSPCC HELPLINE 0800 800 5000 (www.nspcc.org.uk)
 - REPORT, REMOVE (www.childline.org.uk)
 - REPORT TO CEOP POLICE (<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre>)

CALL FOR INFORMATION, ADVICE OR IF YOU JUST WANT TO TALK



IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE CALL NSPCC HELPLINE
0800 800 5000

IF YOU'RE A CHILD & WANT HELP CALL CHILDLINE
0800 1111

NNECA
NATIONAL NETWORK TO END CHILD ABUSE

WWW.NNECA.ORG.UK
WWW.CHILDABUSEHELP.ORG.UK

Consent and the Law

Consent is linked to many UK Laws Here are some key ones.

12

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides specific legal protection for children aged 12 and under who cannot legally give their consent to any form of sexual activity. There is a maximum sentence of life imprisonment for rape, assault by penetration, and causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity.

16

The age of consent to have sex in the UK is 16 years old, regardless of gender and sexual orientation.

18

It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to have any sexual activity with a person under the age of 18 if the older person holds a position of trust (for example a teacher or social worker) as this kind of sexual activity is an abuse of the position of trust.

18

In the UK, it's legal for anyone to watch or look at porn but to buy it a person must be over 18. This is why websites such as OnlyFans are only for over 18s.

18

It is illegal to send naked images or videos of, or to, people under 18. This means under 18's, should not be sending or receiving sexually explicit images even if they are in a sexual relationship with the other person/people. If someone is over 18, it is illegal for them to receive sexually explicit photos of someone who is under 18.



The maximum sentence for rape or sexual assault by penetration is life imprisonment.

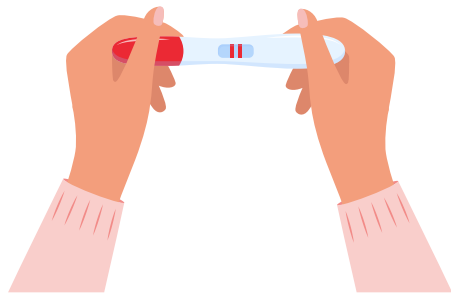
The maximum sentence for sexual assault is 10 years in custody.



This [video](#) by Staffordshire Police share the police's process of reporting a rape and sexual assault.

Physical Health Implications

If a person is raped or sexual assaulted there are a number of potential physical health consequences.



Unplanned pregnancy:

There are steps that individuals can take if they are raped and are at risk of pregnancy including emergency contraception or an IUD. (see our [Sexual Health & PSHE](#) pack for more details).

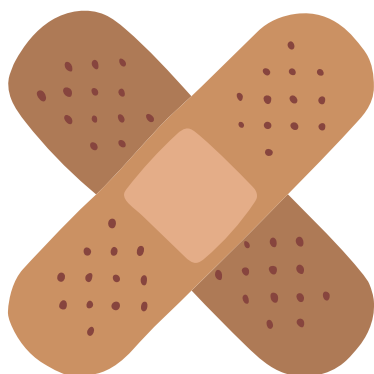
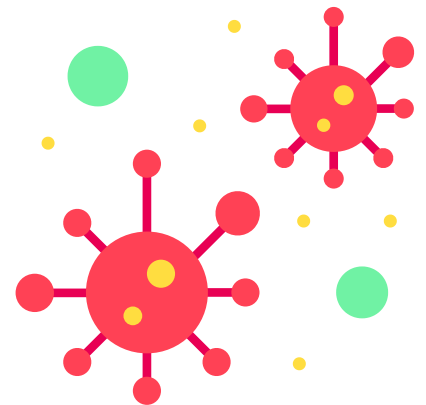
If a person becomes pregnant they may wish to consider a termination (see our [Pregnancy Choices & PSHE](#) pack for more details).

Sexually Transmitted Infections:

Not all Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) have visible signs or symptoms and can only be diagnosed through testing. It is important that the individuals affected are tested as soon as possible and do not wait for symptoms to appear.

PEP can reduce the risk of contracting HIV if taken shortly after the encounter.

Our [Sexual Health & PSHE](#) pack has more information about the testing and treatment of STIs.



Physical Damage or Internal Injury:

These may be obvious if the person used violence, however internal injuries may be less obvious, but no less serious. This is why people should be encouraged to attend their local Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC).

Feelings and Emotions 52

Everyone feels differently after experiencing sexual violence and abuse and it is common to feel a range of different – and often complicated – emotions. Sometimes people may feel unaffected by what has happened to them – and this is completely valid too ([Rape Crisis](#)).

A person may feel amongst other things:

- Angry, 'moody' or short tempered
- Depressed
- Ashamed or 'dirty'
- Upset or tearful
- Embarrassed or humiliated
- 'On edge'
- Guilty
- Like they can't breathe or it's difficult to breathe
- Like they are somehow to blame
- Overwhelmed
- Scared
- Like they can't cope or it is hard to cope
- Unable to Trust
- 'Slow' both physically and mentally
- Numb or empty
- Groggy, foggy or 'spaced out'
- Worthless
- Anxious, panicked, worries

Common Misconceptions

If two people have had sex before with each other, it's always okay to have sex again?

Consent is something that must be sought and given EVERY time. Just because someone has had sex with someone before does not mean that they have to have sex with them again. It is always up to the people involved and if they want to have sex again together.

If a person is turned on, then they are giving consent aren't they?

Being turned on is an involuntary response and sometimes the body can be turned on and a person does not want to engage in sexual activity.

Even if a penis is erect or a vulva is wet – if the person does not want to have sex they do not have to. A physical reaction is not an invitation to continue having sex or to make anyone engage in any kind of sexual activity.

Can woman rape other women?

Women can sexually assault other women, but in law, the offence of rape is defined as non-consensual penetration with a penis. So legally only people with a penis can be charged with rape. Non-consensual penetration with anything other than a penis is defined as "sexual assault by penetration". The penalty for rape and sexual assault is the same. It is important that young people are aware of the use of the term "rape" within society and within the legal system.

Isn't it true that men don't get raped and women don't commit sexual offences?

Whilst the majority of sexual assaults and rape are committed by men against women and children, it is essential to remember that a small number of women do perpetrate sexual violence and men are also raped and sexually assaulted.

Survivors UK report that, on average, it takes 26 years for a man to speak out about sexual abuse or rape.

If a woman dresses in sexy or revealing clothes doesn't it mean she is asking for it?

There is no excuse for sexual violence and it is never the fault of the person who has been abused or assaulted.

If someone is flirting, is dressed in a certain way, or has laughed at the other person's joke this is irrelevant. None of these can be taken as a form of consent.

Is it okay to have sex with someone if they are drunk or high?

The legal definition of sexual consent states that a person must agree by choice to sexual activity and they must have the "freedom and capacity to make that choice"

Alcohol and drugs can stop people from making informed decisions because they limit a person's capacity to understand what is happening. It is important to remember that everyone reacts differently to drugs and alcohol. It is essential to be aware of how having sex with someone who is drunk or high can impact the lives of the people involved.

Is consent only applicable when it comes to penetrative sex?

There are lots of different ways people can have sex - many of which do not involve penetration. Consent is required for all types of sex. PSHE education should be inclusive and reflect people of all genders and sexual orientations as per the statutory guidance. Everyone needs to ask and give consent and consenting to one sexual activity does not mean that consent has been given for anything else.

16

The average age of a most recent experience of non-consensual sex for men (NATSAL, 2013)

18

The average age of a most recent experience of non-consensual sex for women (NATSAL, 2013)



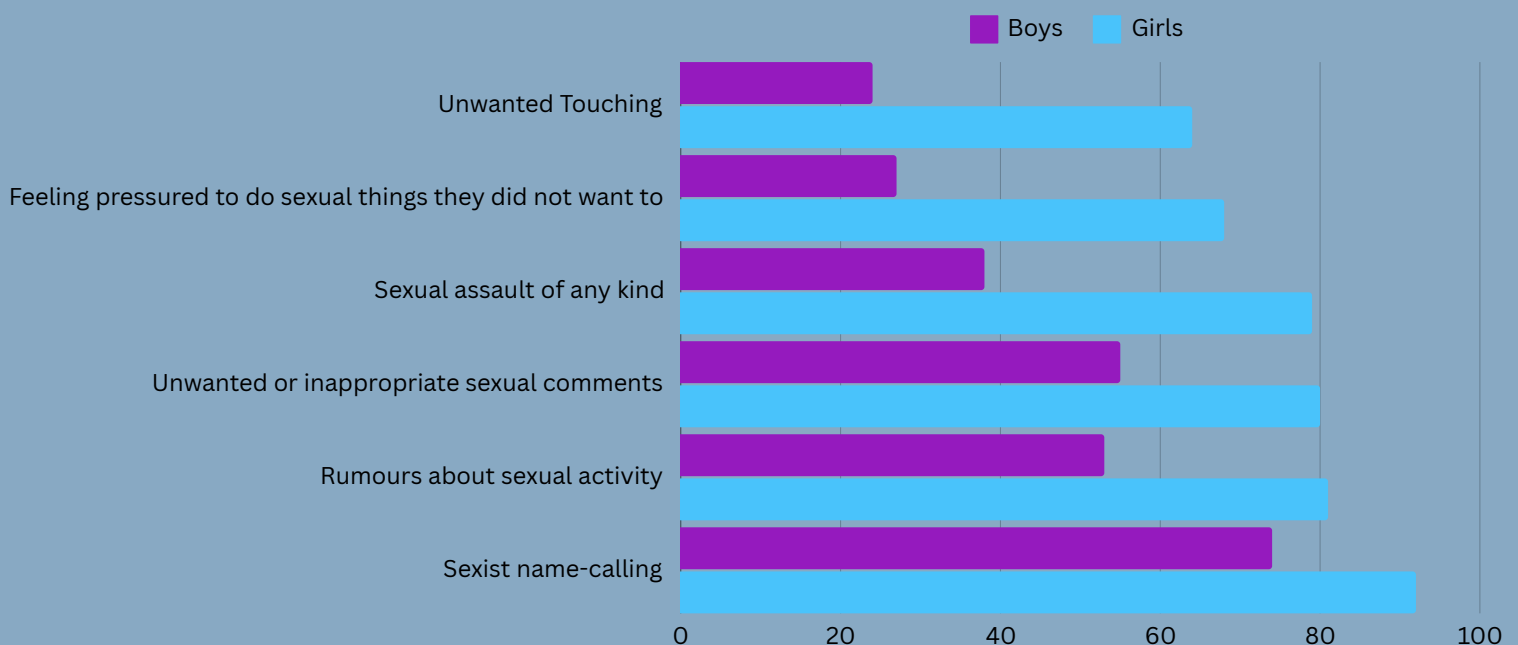
1 in 71 males have experienced non-consensual sex since the age of 13 years old (NATSAL, 2013)



1 in 10 females have experienced non-consensual sex since the age of 13 years old (NATSAL, 2013)

Studies suggest that sexual assault disproportionately affects people from ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities.

These things happen “a lot” or “sometimes between people my age (%) (OFSTED, 2021)





A recent Women's Aid report found that nearly a quarter of 18-25 years old disagreed with the statement

"You should always have consent from your partner to have sex when you are in a relationship".

This was broken down to 23% of women and 25% of men

The same report found that where children/young people had viewed nudity/pornography online they were more likely to disagree that "it is important to talk with your partner about whether you are ready to have sex"



Safeguarding

THEY (YOUNG PEOPLE) WORRY ABOUT HOW ADULTS WILL REACT, BECAUSE THEY THINK THEY WILL NOT BE BELIEVED, OR THAT THEY WILL BE BLAMED. THEY ALSO THINK THAT ONCE THEY TALK TO AN ADULT, THE PROCESS WILL BE OUT OF THEIR CONTROL.

OFSTED Review, June 2021

Children and young people say they are more likely to tell a friend about their experiences of sexual harassment or sexual violence, both on and offline,

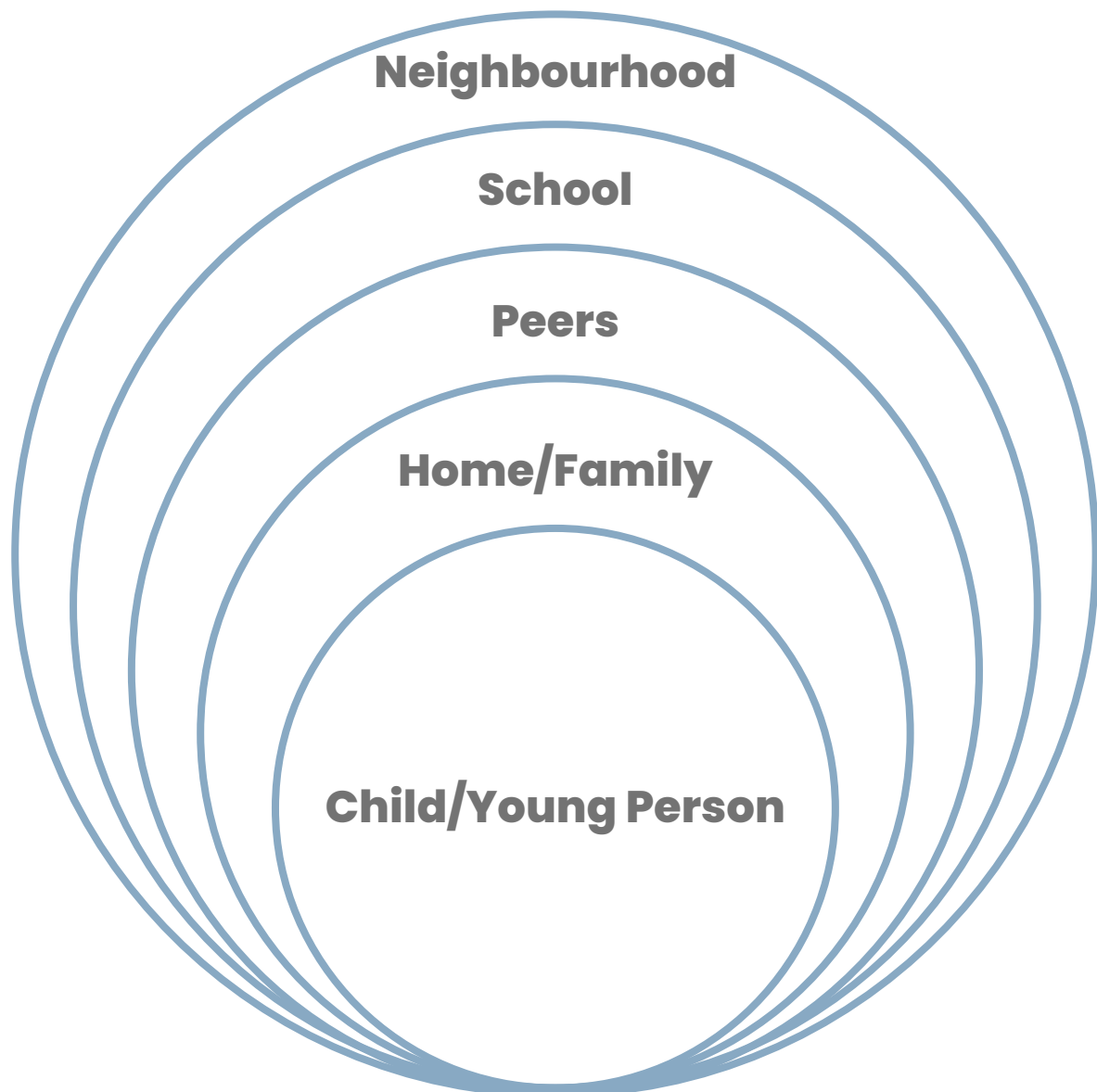
This highlights why it is important we teach acceptable and unacceptable behaviours with clear guidance and support. This will enable children and young people to support each other and to bring concerns or worries to trusted adults.



Contextual safeguarding recognises the impact of the public/social context on young people's lives, and consequently their safety. Contextual safeguarding seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse posed to young people outside their home, either from adults or other young people.

Using Contextual safeguarding can enable professionals to build a holistic picture of the child or young person's individual factors and also identify where and by whom interventions can occur

More information on contextual safeguarding can be found [here](#)



Most sexual abuse is not reported, detected or prosecuted. Recognising the signs that a child or young person might be suffering from abuse can be challenging – especially if the child or young person does not recognise the abuse as sexual abuse, does not want to talk about it or struggles to communicate/ share what is happening due to age or disability.

Here are some signs that a professional may notice. It is important to remember that all children and young people are different and the signs could appear in different ways.

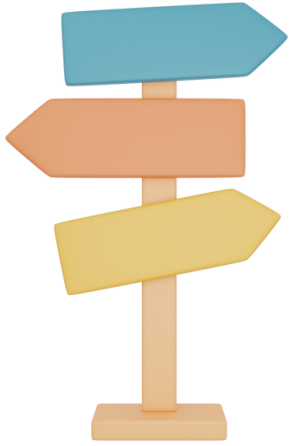
- Changes in the child or young person's behaviour.
- Changes to achievement and progress.
- Talking about sexual acts or using sexually explicit language.
- Sexual contact with other children or showing adult-like sexual behaviour or knowledge.
- Being withdrawn or clingy.
- Changes in personality.
- Becoming more insecure than previously observed.
- Using toys or objects in a sexual way.
- Changes in eating habits.
- Inexplicable fear of particular places or people.
- Regression to young behaviours.
- Becoming secretive or reluctant to share things with adults.
- Continence issues.
- Frequent UTIs.

Dealing with Disclosures:

- Listen carefully
- Display empathy and understanding.
- Be attentive and display positive body language.
- Be patient
- Convey belief through your communication.
- Acknowledge the person has shown courage talking to you and be clear that sexual assault or sexual abuse is never the fault of the person who is assaulted or abused.
- Be clear about your role and boundaries including safeguarding and confidentiality.
- Offer practical support in line with your organisation's policy.
- Provide information if you can, but don't overwhelm the person e.g. details of sexual health services.
- Ensure that you remember self-care for you and your colleagues.
- Remember the importance of a consistent, whole-school approach.
- Do not question the person or ask for details of the assault or abuse.
- Do not ask why they did not stop it - this can feel like you are blaming them.
- Respect their decisions.

Signposting

Information:



It is important to signpost children and young people to relevant local and national organisations who can provide further advice and support.

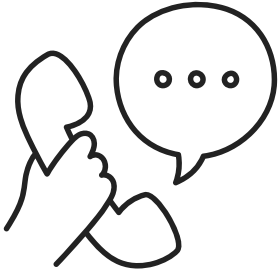
Local Services

- [Staffordshire Police](#)
- [West Midlands Regional Children and Young People Sexual Assault Service \(aged up to 18\)](#)
- [Staffordshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre \(SARC\)](#)
- [Horizon Sexual Assault Referral Centre \(South Staffordshire only\)](#)
- [Savana \(North Staffordshire only including Stoke on Trent\)](#)
- [SARAC \(East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth only\)](#)
- [Staffordshire Women's Aid \(Staffordshire only\)](#)
- [NSPCC Together for Childhood \(Chell, Chell Heath and Fegs Hayes only\)](#)

National Services

- [Brook](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [Galop \(for LGBTQ+\)](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [Rape Crisis](#)
- [Report Remove](#)
- [Shore](#)
- [Survivors UK \(for boys and men\)](#)

Useful Contacts:



If you would like more information or support about consent please contact:

Staffordshire Police

If a referral to Children's Social Care is required, please contact:

Staffordshire:

Staffordshire Children's Advice Service – 0300 111 8007

Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30–4.30pm

Out of Hours – 0345 604 2886 / 07815 492613

Stoke:

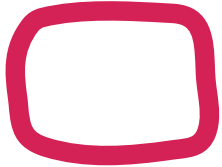
CHAD – 01782 235 100

Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30–4.30pm

Out of Hours – 01782 234 234



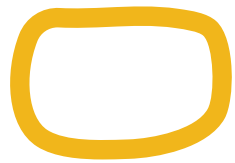
[Teaching Boys about Consent](#)



[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)



[Teaching about Consent Guidance](#)



[Teaching about Pornography Guidance](#)



[OFSTED Rapid Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges](#)

VERSION CONTROL

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Date	Changes	Made by
November 2022	Pack first published	Ellie Chesterton Natalie McGrath
April 2024	Links updated to Sexual Health & PSHE pack Date changed to 2024 on front page	Natalie McGrath

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PSHE
Education
STOKE-ON-TRENT
STAFFORDSHIRE

SASCAL
STRONGER TOGETHER

Ellie Chesterton
PSHE Coordinator
Stoke on Trent
echesterton@horizonoat.co.uk

SCVYS
STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY YOUTH SERVICES

Natalie McGrath
PSHE Coordinator
Staffordshire
natalie@staffscvys.org.uk

www.pshestaffs.com