



# Sex without consent isn't sex. It's rape.

## WHAT IS CONSENT?

- Consent is voluntary, mutual, and can be withdrawn at any time.
- Past consent does not mean current or future consent.
- There is no consent when there is force, intimidation, or coercion.
- There is no consent if a person is mentally or physically incapacitated or impaired because one cannot understand the fact, nature, or extent of the sexual situation.

## LEARN

- **CONSENT NEEDS TO BE CLEAR.** Consent is more than not hearing the word “no.” A partner saying nothing is not the same as a partner saying “yes.” Don’t rely on body language, past sexual interactions, or any other nonverbal cues. Never assume you have consent. Always be sure you have consent by asking.
- **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL IMPACT DECISION-MAKING AND BLUR CONSENT.** When drugs, such as alcohol, are involved, clear consent is not possible. A person who is intoxicated or impaired cannot give consent.
- **CONSENT CAN BE FUN.** Consent does not have to be something that “ruins the mood.” In fact, clear and enthusiastic consent can enhance sexual interactions. Not only does it allow one to know that their partner is comfortable with the interaction, it also lets both partners clearly express what they want.
- **CONSENT IS SPECIFIC.** Just because someone consents to one set of actions and activities does not mean consent has been given for other sexual acts. Similarly, if a partner has given consent to sexual activity in the past, this does not apply to current or future interactions. Consent can initially be given and later be withdrawn.

## CHECK OUT THESE EXPLANATIONS OF CONSENT:

- [“How Society Treats Consent” comic strip](#)
- [Consent is as Simple as Tea](#)
- [NotAlone.gov Sample Language and Definitions of Prohibited Conduct for a School’s Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

- **CONSENT IS FREELY GIVEN AND THERE IS NO FEAR OR PRESSURE INVOLVED.** Consent is when there is a mutual agreement for sexual activity without any coercion or persuasion involved. When someone says no that does not mean that they can be convinced or pressured to change their mind. Consent must be given freely by each individual involved.

## REFLECT

- **HOW DO YOU ASK FOR CONSENT?** Don't assume a partner is OK with what you want to do. Always ask them. Be direct. If you are unsure whether you have their consent, ask again.
- **HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE YOUR NEEDS?** Don't be afraid to talk about sex and communicate your boundaries, wants, and needs. Encourage your partner to do the same.
- **WHERE DOES CONSENT FIT?** Consent does not have to be something that interrupts sex; it can be a part of sex. Checking in with your partner throughout sexual experiences can be a great way to build intimacy and understand your partner's needs.

## DISCUSSION

Practicing consent means making sure everyone is on the same page when hooking up. These sample questions can be used to start a dialogue on consent.

- Getting consent means asking for permission. What activities require consent?
- Whose responsibility is it to ask for consent? Who can give and get consent?
- How often do you need to ask for consent?
- What happens if someone changes their mind?
- How does consent work if you're already in a relationship?
- What if you've had sex before?
- Explain how the use of drugs or alcohol impacts someone's ability to give consent.
- What are different ways someone can communicate boundaries?
- How can communication make hooking up better? How comfortable are you talking about sex?
- Is there consent if there is any threat, pressure, or coercion involved?

If you've experienced sexual assault, please visit [notalone.gov](http://notalone.gov) for resources.

# WHAT IS CAMPUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

It's clear the epidemic of sexual assault on college campuses impacts all of us. Preventing sexual violence on campus takes more than one student, staff member, professor, administrator, team, club, office, or department. It takes all of us working together. Everyone can play a role in prevention by creating a culture of safety, equality, and respect on campus.

## WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Sexual violence occurs when someone is forced or coerced into unwanted sexual activity without agreeing or consenting. Consent initially can be given and later withdrawn. Sexual violence is a crime that comes in many forms, including forced intercourse, sexual contact or touching, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and exposure or voyeurism.

Sexual violence is never the victim's fault. It does not matter what the victim is wearing or doing, whether the victim has been drinking, or what type of relationship the victim has with the person who is sexually abusing them.

There are many reasons people choose to not consent, and there are times when they do not have the capacity or ability. Reasons someone might not be able to consent include:

- fear
- being underage
- having illness or disability
- incapacitation due to alcohol and other drugs

## SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS IS A PROBLEM

- One in five women have been a victim of completed or attempted sexual assault while in college. (Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation 2015)
- One in 16 men have been a victim of sexual assault during college. (Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation 2015)
- Nearly two-thirds of college students experience sexual harassment (Hill & Silva, 2005)
- Among college women, nine out of 10 victims of rape and sexual assault knew the person who assaulted them (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000)
- More than 90% of sexual assault victims on college campuses do not report the assault (Fisher et al., 2000)
- 40% of colleges and universities reported not investigating a single sexual assault in the previous five years (U.S. Senate Subcommittee, 2014)

## **PREVENTION IS POSSIBLE**

Prevention happens when people take action to promote safety, respect, and equality. National initiatives are under way, including the White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault and the It's On Us campaign, to change cultural norms and engage the campus community in prevention (White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault, 2014). National Sexual Violence Resource Center PreventConnect and partners in the field are working with campuses, private and public institutions, law enforcement, government, and communities to help everyone see their role in preventing sexual violence.

## **TAKE ACTION**

**STUDENTS.** Students are the core of every campus community. Together, they can be the most powerful advocates for changing campus culture, promoting safety and respect, and preventing sexual violence.

**PARENTS.** Students rely on parents for guidance. Parents can have a conversation about sexual assault with their child before they leave for college. Be sure to address questions of consent and on-campus resources.

**FACULTY.** Faculty from every academic discipline can model healthy, respectful attitudes and behaviors in their roles as educators, scholars, mentors, and colleagues.

**ADMINISTRATION.** As leaders and policymakers, campus administrators play an important role in challenging attitudes and beliefs that support sexual violence and establish an environment of equality and respect.

**ATHLETICS.** As highly visible and respected members of campus communities, athletes and coaches can play a leadership role by publically speaking out about changing campus culture and preventing sexual violence.

**CAMPUS LAW ENFORCEMENT & SECURITY.** By responding supportively to victims, investigating reports, and strongly conveying that sexual violence will not be tolerated, campus law enforcement and security officers play a vital role in creating a safe campus environment and preventing sexual violence.

**GREEK LIFE.** Fraternities and sororities are the center of social life for many students, and can be leaders in shaping campus culture and preventing sexual violence.

**COMMUNITY.** Community-based resources – including local rape crisis centers, health organizations, cultural centers, and faith communities – contribute valuable perspectives and expertise in preventing and responding to sexual violence on campus.

## LEARN MORE

- National Sexual Violence Resource Center: [nsvrc.org](http://nsvrc.org)
- PreventConnect: [preventconnect.org](http://preventconnect.org)
- Clery Center for Security on Campus: [clerycenter.org](http://clerycenter.org)
- It's On Us: [ItsOnUs.org](http://ItsOnUs.org)
- Not Alone: [notalone.gov](http://notalone.gov)
- Know Your IX: [knowyourix.org](http://knowyourix.org)
- SAFER (Students Active For Ending Rape): [safercampus.org](http://safercampus.org)
- American College Health Association: [acha.org](http://acha.org)
- Victim Rights Law Center: [victimrights.org](http://victimrights.org)
- Culture of Respect: [cultureofrespect.org](http://cultureofrespect.org)
- End Rape on Campus: [endrapeoncampus.org](http://endrapeoncampus.org)

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