

# Introduction to Consent

A book about consent for people of all ages and abilities.



**SECCA** Ability  
Relationships  
Sexuality

 **SHFPACT**  
SEXUAL HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING ACT

# Introduction to Consent

A book about consent for people of all ages and abilities.



## Free advice and support

If anything in this book makes you feel worried or unsafe, free advice and support is available all day, every day, online or by telephone through the following services.

### 13YARN

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Crisis Support

13 92 76

### 1800RESPECT

National Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Counselling Service

1800 737 732

### Kids Helpline

Support for people aged 5 to 25 years old

1800 55 1800

### Lifeline

National Crisis Support

13 11 14

### QLife

LGBTIQ+ Peer Support, available 3pm to midnight

1800 184 527

This book uses words and concepts from the SoSafe Framework.

SoSafe is a set of visual and conceptual tools to promote social and sexual safety for people of all genders and ages with intellectual disability or who are Autistic, and the people who work with them.

The SoSafe Framework is owned and managed by SHFPACT.

## Disclaimer

There are many images in this book. All of the images are drawn pictures. Some of the images are of **private body parts** and sexual topics. These images are anatomically and biologically correct to support learning. Images help people learn and teach.

Sexuality Education Counselling and Consultancy Agency (SECCA) and Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (SHFPACT) have intended to provide information that is accurate at the time of printing.

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This project is managed by SHFPACT and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. There are two books in this series. This is the first book and it is about **consent**. The second book is about sexual **consent**.

SECCA is proud to live, work and love on the lands and by the waters of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

SHFPACT acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of country in the region our organisation operates, and recognises any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the continuing and enduring connection to the lands, waters, flora and fauna. SHFPACT acknowledges that sovereignty was never ceded.

Australia always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

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# Introduction

**This book is to help you understand **consent**.**

**Consent** is a way you or other people can set and share boundaries.

**Consent** helps you feel **safe** and comfortable with other people and helps other people feel **safe** and comfortable with you.

**This book will tell you what your **rights** are about your body.**

**Rights** are like rules about what a person is allowed to be, to do, to have or to experience.

Other people have the same **rights** as you.



Some words will be **bolded**. This means you can find out more about this word in the glossary at the end of this book.

There are lots of words and pictures in this book. You can ask a **trusted person** to look at this book with you. A **trusted person** is an adult that you know well, that you like and that helps you. This may be your support worker, **OK helper**, a friend or a family member. They can also read the book with you.

**This book will tell you why giving and getting **consent** is important.**

It will teach you about when you need to ask for **consent**, give your **consent**, and what **consent** may look or sound like.

**This book will tell you about:**

- ✓ personal space
- ✓ boundaries
- ✓ **consent**
- ✓ feeling and being **safe**
- ✓ public and private
- ✓ different types of touch.

# How to use this book

**Who this book is for**

This book is for everyone. It is designed so you can read it yourself or with a **trusted person**. This is called supported reading. You can read it with a support worker, **OK helper**, a friend or a family member.

**Pages on the left-hand side**

- From page 6 to page 46, the left-hand pages are written in Easy English to be clear and short
- These pages have larger letters and pictures.



## Glossary

At the end of this book, you will find more information for yourself or your **trusted person** and a glossary of the **bolded** words.



You can read this book by yourself. You can read this book with a friend, **OK helper**, support person, carer, parent or teacher.



On the pages on the right-hand side you will find questions to help you apply what you have learned.

# Your rights

You have a lot of **rights**. **Rights** are like rules about what a person is allowed to be, to do, to have or to experience.

Your **rights** might be about your body or what others can do to your body. This is called **body autonomy**.

You can agree or disagree about what happens to you or your body. People should **respect** that decision. This means that they listen to you and should only do something if you have agreed.

Other people have the same **rights** as you. This includes **rights** about their **body autonomy** and what you can do to other people's bodies.

The **rights** of other people need to be **respected**. This means that you listen to them and should only do something to another person if they have agreed.

## You have the right to:

- ✓ feel **safe** at all times
- ✓ tell a **trusted person**, like an **OK helper**, about anything
- ✓ make choices about your own body and what happens to it
- ✓ get information in ways you understand
- ✓ share your feelings and be listened to
- ✓ be offered choices
- ✓ tell someone no at any time
- ✓ change your mind at any time
- ✓ be listened to about what you want to happen to your body.

You have a lot of **rights**. These are some of them.

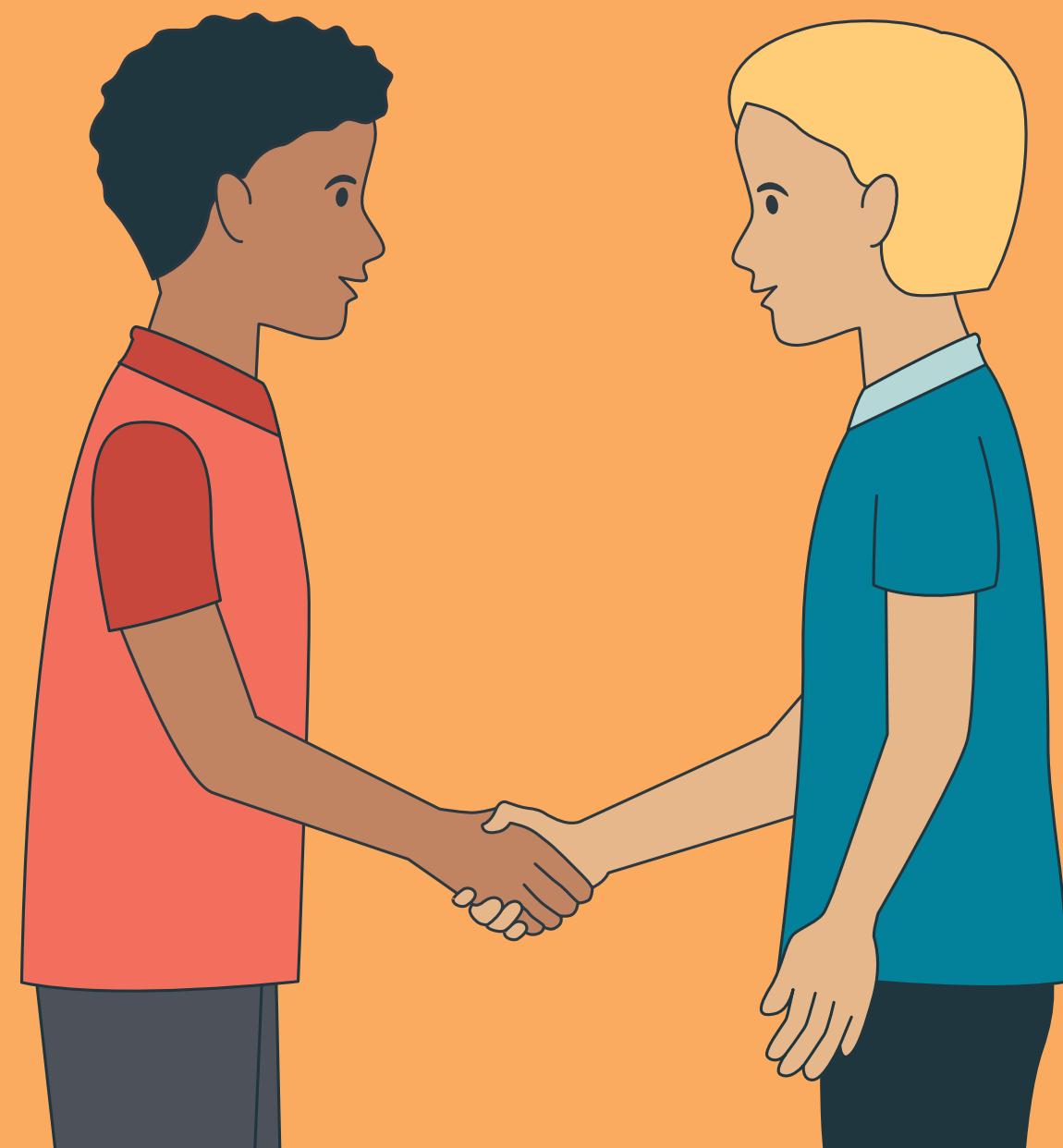
# Boundaries

What are boundaries

Personal space

How to set boundaries

Examples of boundaries



# What are boundaries

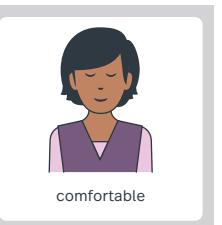
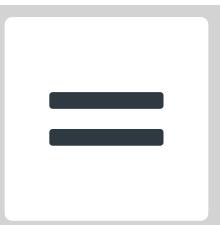
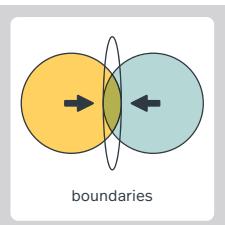


Your body belongs to you. You make choices about your own body and what happens to it.

Boundaries are limits you set with yourself and others about what you do and do not like for yourself and your body.

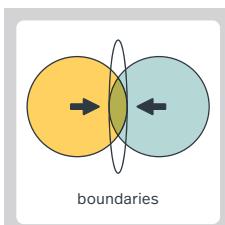
Your boundaries let you feel **safe** and comfortable.

Other peoples boundaries let them feel **safe** and comfortable.



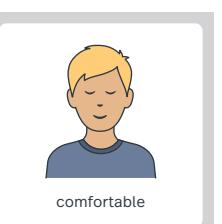
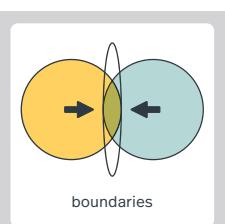
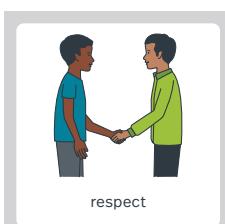
A boundary may include:

- ✓ what you want to happen
- ✓ when it can happen
- ✓ how it should happen
- ✓ who it can happen with
- ✓ where it can happen.



Other people should **respect** our boundaries.

We should **respect** other peoples boundaries.



# What are boundaries

Boundaries are limits you set with yourself and others about what you do and do not like for yourself and your body. They may include:

- ✓ what you want to happen
- ✓ how you want it to happen
- ✓ when you want it to happen
- ✓ who you want it to happen with
- ✓ where you want it to happen.

All people have the **right** to set their own boundaries.

Other people should **respect** our boundaries. We should **respect** other people's boundaries.

Boundaries can help you feel **safe** and comfortable. Boundaries also let the other person know what they can and cannot do.

Boundaries let other people know what you are willing or unwilling to have happen. It creates limits around different relationships and what **safe** interactions could look like in those relationships.

For example, you may not like someone standing close to you when you do not know them. Therefore, your boundary may be: when you are not my friend, you cannot stand closer than an arm's length away from me.

It is good to know what your boundaries are so that you can share them with the people around you in the way you feel most comfortable.



How do you know what your boundaries are?

# Personal space

Personal space is a type of physical boundary.

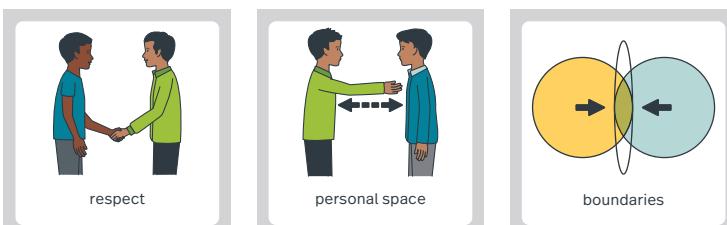


Your personal space is the amount of space you need to be comfortable when you are near another person.

Your personal space may change depending on your relationship with that person.

Other people have an amount of personal space that is comfortable for them.

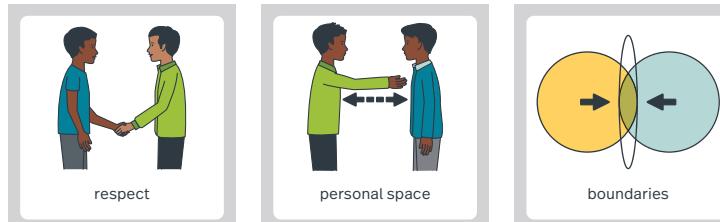
The amount of personal space other people are comfortable with may be different than you.



Other people should **respect** your personal space boundaries and you should **respect** theirs.

# Personal space

Personal space is a type of physical boundary that you have. Personal space is the amount of space that you or other people need around them. This includes their mobility or specialist equipment, for example a wheelchair or walking stick.



This space allows them to feel comfortable and **safe**. It is important to **respect** the amount of space each person needs.

The amount of personal space each person needs to be comfortable may be different depending on what is happening and how they are feeling.

The amount of personal space that feels **safe** and comfortable to you may change for the different types of relationships you have in your life.



Everyone has a right to be and feel **safe** at all times. If another person is too close to you and ignoring your personal space boundary, you may feel uncomfortable or unsafe. If you are too close to another person and are ignoring their personal space boundary, they may feel uncomfortable or unsafe.



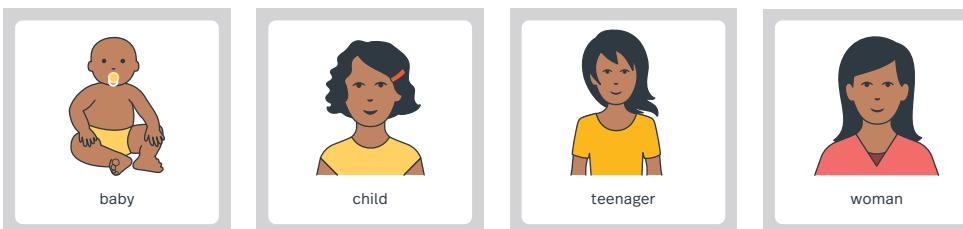
How much personal space do you need?

# How to set boundaries

You can set your boundaries with anyone at any time.

You can share your boundaries with people in a kind but firm way. Sometimes you may have to share your boundaries as soon as you meet someone to be **safe**.

Your boundaries may change as you get older.



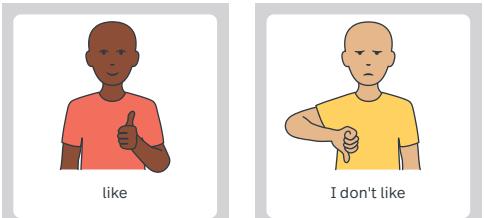
Your boundaries may change in different places or with different people.



When you share your boundaries with another person you can share:

- what you like or do not like
- when you like or do not like it
- how you like it to happen
- who it can happen with
- where it can happen.

You can share a boundary by speaking, writing or using gestures. Other people should **respect** your boundaries regardless of how you share them.



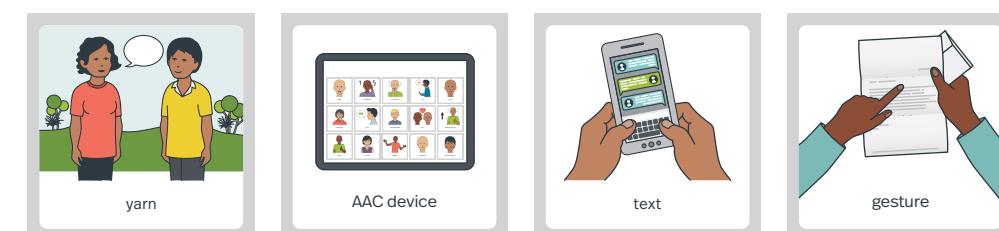
# How to set boundaries

Setting your boundaries can sometimes be uncomfortable. This is why it is important to practice. As you get more familiar with setting boundaries it will become more natural and you will feel more confident.

You will need to decide and let other people know what, how, when, who with, and where you want something to happen.

You should try your best to let people know your boundaries in a kind but assertive way. Sometimes you may have to share your boundaries as soon as you meet someone to be **safe**.

You can share your boundaries with people in a way that is comfortable for you. This may be spoken, through sign language, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) including writing or using a phone, or gestures.



 Other people should **respect** your boundaries regardless of how you share them.

 How do you share your boundaries with other people?

## Examples of boundaries

You can set boundaries with your friends, family, support worker or people you do not know.

For example, I am happy for my support worker to wash my clothes.



But I want to put my underwear away.



For example, thank you for your offer to help but I can walk myself. Please walk next to me.



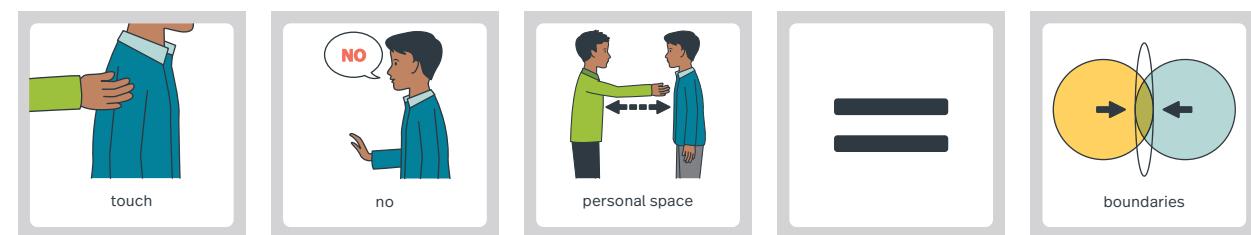
## Examples of boundaries

There are times when you may be able to share your boundaries with other people before you need to use them. This may be with your friends, family members or support workers. Sometimes, with people you do not know, or people you have just met, you may have to ask them to stop and tell them your boundary.

For example, if someone you do not know touches you and you want more personal space, you need to tell them.

Some examples of how you can share your boundary are:

- put your hand in front of you and say no
- indicate or tell the other person what your personal space boundary is.



People have different boundaries. What is comfortable for you may not be comfortable for other people.

For example, one person may want to greet all people with a hug but they also like handshakes. The other person may only like handshakes. You should do the greeting that is comfortable for both people.



Can you describe a boundary you have with a friend, family member or with a person you do not know?

# Consent

What is consent

When consent is needed

Why consent is important

Elements of consent

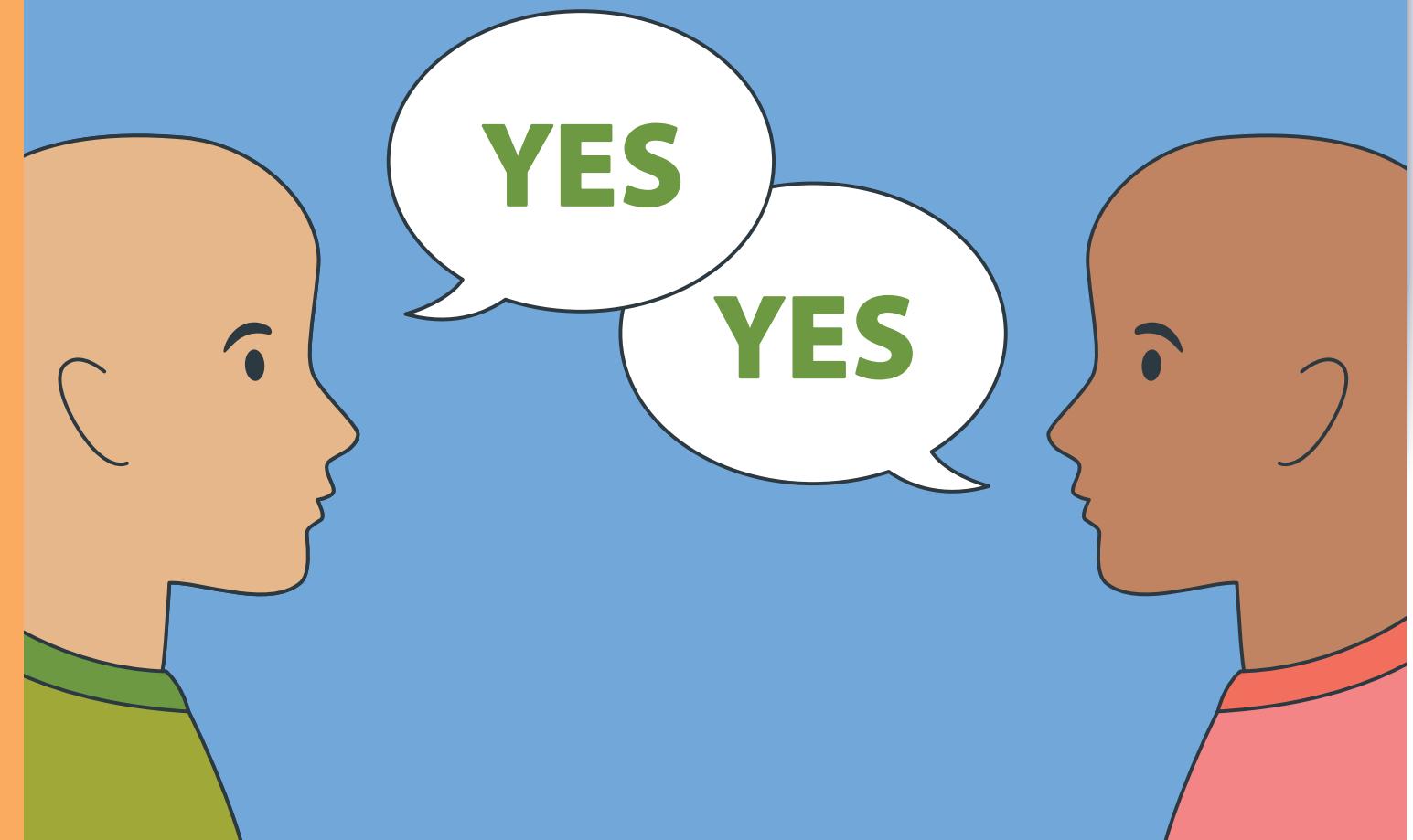
How to ask for consent

Yes and no

When there is no consent

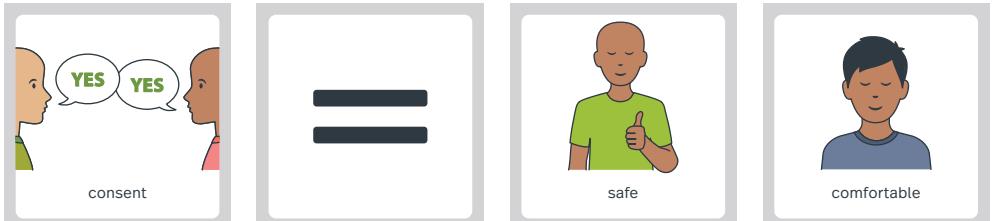
Risk awareness

Feeling safe and being safe



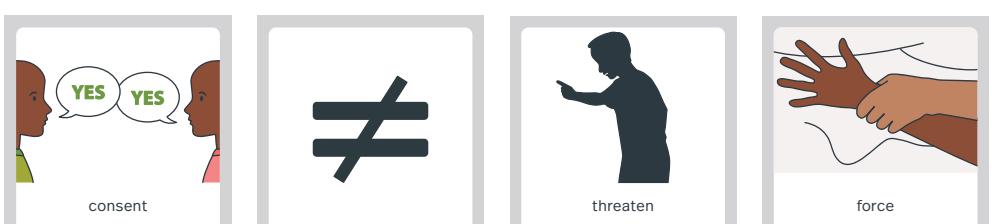
# What is consent

Everyone has different boundaries.



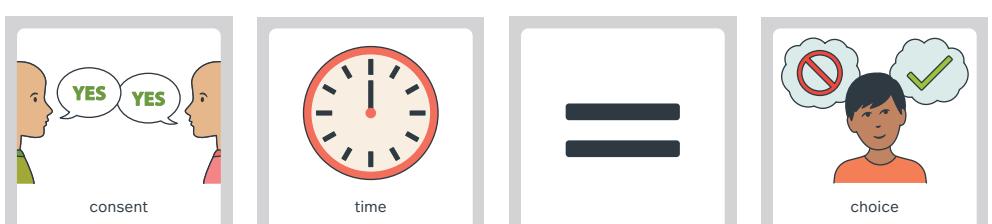
**Consent** is when all people agree to something that they want to happen between them such as touching.

There is no **consent** when you feel threatened or forced.



If a person does not agree to do something then do not do it as there is no **consent**.

If you have given **consent** you can change your mind at any time. If another person has given **consent** they can change their mind at any time.



**Consent** is needed before and during an activity.

# What is consent

**Consent** is a way of sharing, understanding and **respecting** the boundaries of yourself and other people. **Consent** is a process where people agree to do something together. If they do not agree there is no **consent**.

**Consent** helps people be **safe** and comfortable. Everyone should be listened to and feel **respected**. If you indicate that you want something to stop, then the other person should stop immediately. There is no **consent** if you feel afraid or unsafe when doing something with someone. If you feel threatened or pressured, or someone uses **coercion** to try to make you do something, there is no **consent**. Taking drugs or drinking alcohol may affect people's ability to make decisions, so you or other people may not be able to **consent**.

**Consent** is needed before and during an activity. **Consent** is needed in all relationships and activities.

For example, when your support worker or carer wants to help you brush your hair.

## Before

Your support worker or carer can ask if they can brush your hair. When you have given **consent**, they can get a brush.

## During

Your support worker or carer can ask if they can keep brushing your hair. If you tell them you are uncomfortable, they no longer have **consent** and should stop. If you are comfortable, they can continue.

**Consent** is also needed for animals, to show respect for their boundaries.

For example, when you see a dog on the street that you want to pat.

## Before

You ask the owner if you can pat the dog. The owner may answer yes or no. If the owner has answered yes to patting the dog you can reach down towards the dog.

## During

The dog remains where it is or lies down to allow you to pat it. These are signs of **consent**. If the dog is showing teeth or backing away it is not giving **consent** and you should stop and not pat it.

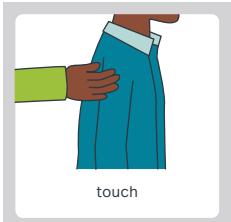


Have you made any **consent** decisions today?

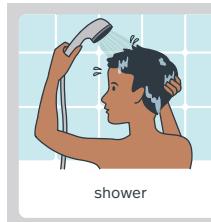
# When consent is needed

**Consent** is needed for many things.

For example, **consent** is needed to:



touch another persons body



help you with your personal care, for example showering



have a medical health check up



take or share another persons photograph



share another persons **private information**



do **sexual activity** or **sexual touch** with other people

You are in control of your body.

You decide what happens to your body.

People need to ask for your **consent** every time to touch your body.

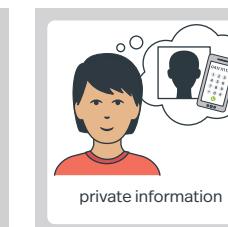
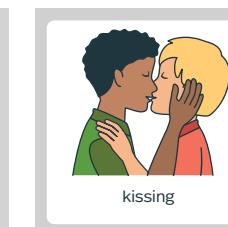
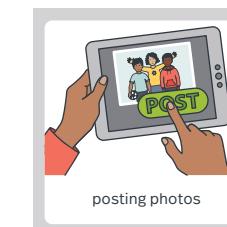


# When consent is needed

**Consent** is needed for many things you do every day. **Consent** is needed when you are doing something that affects another person, or they are doing something that affects you. Everybody has the right to share their boundaries and for them to be **respected**. **Consent** is a way of sharing these boundaries to other people, be offered choices and make decisions about things that affect them.

Some examples of when you need **consent** include:

- sharing photos or videos of people to others online
- touching another person, for example hugs or kisses
- revealing confidential or **private information** about another person.



**Consent** is also important for engaging in **sexual activities**.

When seeing a **health professional**, **informed consent** is needed for you to be given medication, have a healthcare examination, procedure or surgery.

This means that you decide to **consent** or not **consent** after you understand what will happen and what the **health professional** will do during the appointment.

This includes them explaining to you all the risks and benefits.



In an emergency, a **health professional** such as a paramedic will ask for **consent** if you are alert and awake. If you are not awake or alert, they may have to touch you without your **consent** to save your life.



Can you think of another time when you need **consent**?

# Why consent is important

**Consent** is important in all relationships.



**Consent** keeps all people **safe** and comfortable.

It is good to **respect** everybody's yes or no.



**Consent** can happen when all people:

- ✓ know their own boundaries
- ✓ ask questions
- ✓ have their boundaries followed
- ✓ feel **safe** and comfortable.



Boundaries are limits you set about what you do and do not like for yourself and your body. All people have the **right** to set their own boundaries and for them to be **respected**.

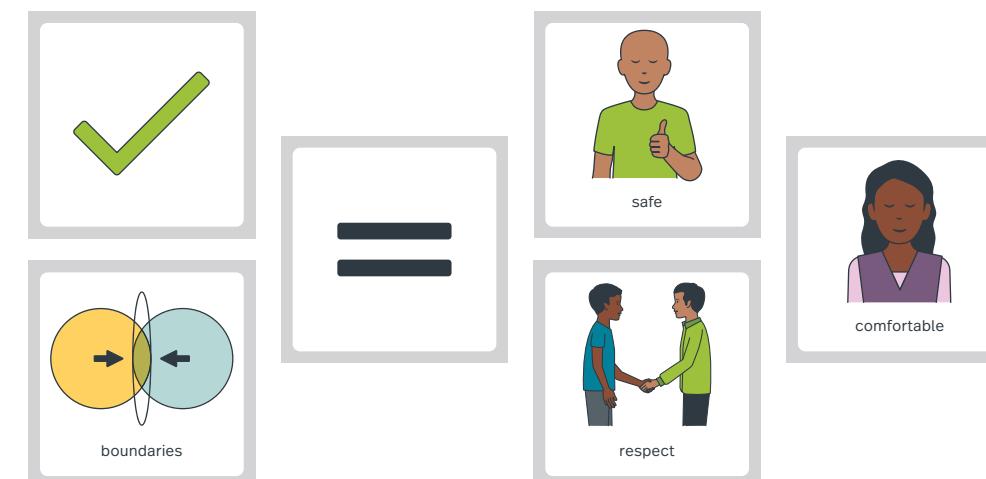
# Why consent is important

**Consent** is important for all people and affects every relationship in their life. **Consent** ensures that all people feel **safe**, comfortable and **respected**.

Boundaries help establish what, how, when, with who, and where you want something to happen. When you know what your boundaries are, then you can share them with other people.

For example, please do not wipe my nose for me, I would like to do it by myself if you can give me a tissue.

When a person shares a boundary with someone else, they should have their choices **respected**. This helps everyone feel **safe** and comfortable.



When a person's decision is **respected**, it can create positive feelings and experiences, including trust, **safety** and kindness.



What other ways might you feel if your decisions are **respected**?

# Elements of consent

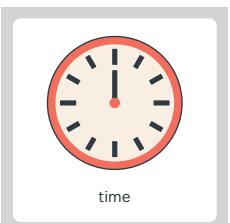
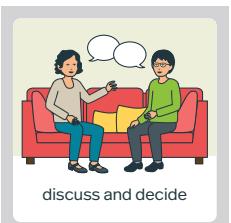


You have the right to make decisions about your body and to have them **respected**.

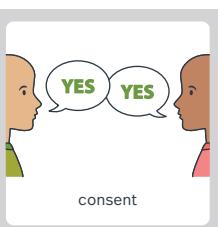


**Consent** needs all people to be:

- ✓ given all the information they need
- ✓ asked what they want to do
- ✓ given time to make their choice
- ✓ included in decision making
- ✓ free to choose yes or no
- ✓ aware of consequences and risks
- ✓ able to change their mind or stop at any time.



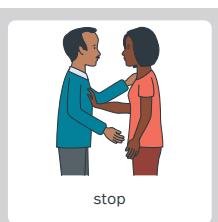
Everyone needs to agree to something for it to happen.



# Elements of consent



It is important not to assume that people **consent**. Instead, you should ask people for their **consent** when you want to do something with them. Other people should always ask you for your **consent** when they want to do something with you. When you are deciding whether to give your **consent**, it is important that you know and understand what you would like to be doing with other people, and what the other people would like to be doing with you. This means that you have all the information about what can happen, good and bad, and have been given time to think about whether you want to **consent**. You should give the other person all the information and time they need to **consent**.



Even if you have given your **consent**, you can change your mind and stop at any time.

If you change your mind and remove your **consent**, the other person should stop.

If someone asks you to stop, you no longer have **consent** and should stop.



If the other person does not stop, it is not your fault. You can seek help from a **trusted person** or **OK helper**.

If all people are free to choose yes or no and all people agree, there is **consent** for that thing to happen. The **consent** is for the specific activity or behaviour discussed and agreed on. If you or another person want to do a different activity or behaviour, **consent** will need to be asked and received for this. Even if you have done an activity with someone before, you still need all people to **consent** every time.



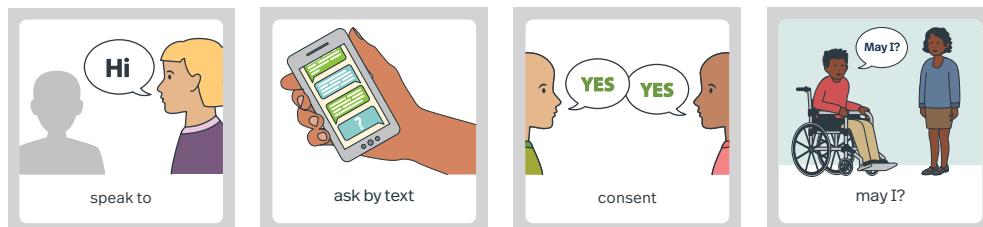
Can you think of a time you asked for **consent**? How did that make you feel?

# How to ask for consent

**Consent** can be asked in different ways.

For example you can speak or write:

- can I borrow your pen?
- may I give you a hug?
- would you like to go to the movies with me?



You can ask for **consent** using gestures:

- pointing at the pen while looking at the person
- put your arms out for a hug and wait for a response
- find the movie you wish to see and show the other person what it is.



In all of these examples you need to wait for the other person to agree before you can do the activity.

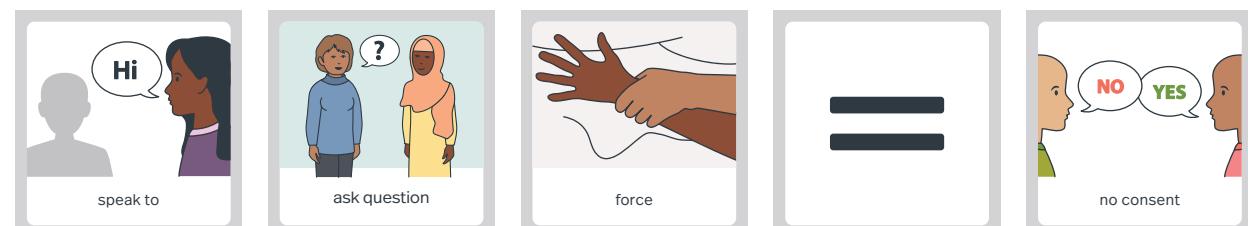
# How to ask for consent

Asking for **consent** can feel uncomfortable. It can help to practice. The more you practice asking for **consent**, the more natural and confident you may feel.

There are many ways you can ask for **consent**. These may be spoken, through sign language, AAC including writing or using a phone, or gestures.

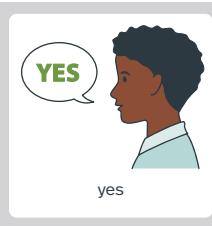


It is important when asking for **consent** that you are specific in what you want. You should also provide others with the time and opportunity to make their own decision. You should not ask repeatedly or attempt to pressure a person to give you a yes. If you do this, you may be forcing or **coercing** a person, and therefore, you do not have **consent**.



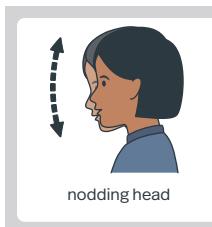
How would you ask for **consent**?

# Yes and no



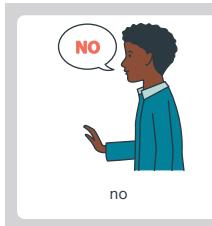
**Consent** can sound like:

- ✓ yes
- ✓ sounds good
- ✓ lets do it



**Consent** can look like:

- ✓ nodding
- ✓ thumbs up
- ✓ smiling
- ✓ moving close



No **consent** can sound like:

- ✗ no
- ✗ I do not want to
- ✗ I am not sure



No **consent** can look like:

- ✗ shaking head
- ✗ folded arms
- ✗ shrugging shoulders
- ✗ silence
- ✗ not moving or moving away



If a person is asleep, they cannot **consent**. If a person is drunk or has taken too many drugs they cannot **consent**.

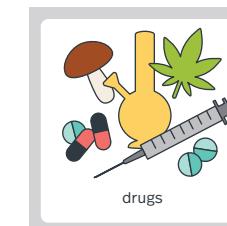
# Yes and no

When considering how to respond to a person asking for your **consent**, it is important to consider how it will be understood by all people involved in the activity or behaviour.

You should try to give another person a yes or no in a clear way so the other person can understand. You can tell another person yes or no using spoken words or phrases. You can also show yes or no through facial expressions, gestures, sign language or body language.



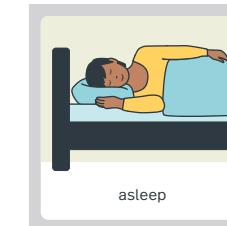
If the answer is not a yes, then the answer is a no.



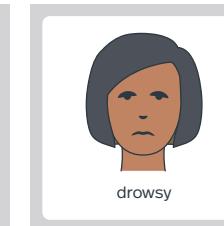
drugs



alcohol



asleep



drowsy



no consent

Other factors that may influence a person's ability to **consent** and mean they are not **consenting** include:

- taking drugs
- drinking alcohol
- being asleep, sleepy or drowsy
- being unconscious.

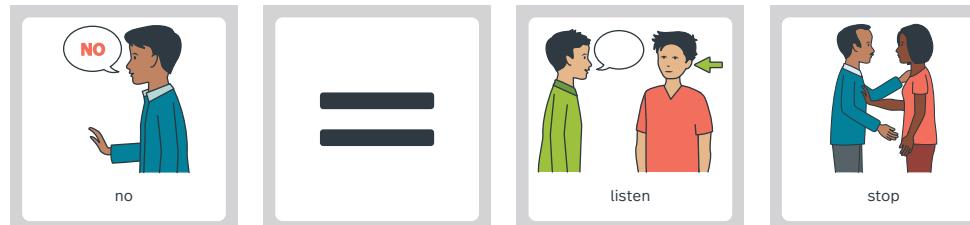


How would you give a yes? How would you give a no?

# When there is no consent

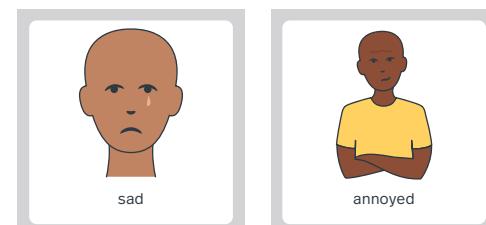
When you answer no to someone asking for **consent** they should listen to you and stop.

When someone answers no to you when you ask for consent you should listen to them and stop.



What you want for your body is your choice.

What the other person wants for their body is their choice.



When someone answers no to you asking for **consent** you might feel sad or annoyed.

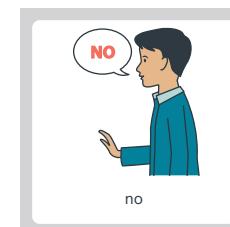
Sometimes the person who asked you for **consent** might get sad or annoyed when you answer no.



If you feel sad or annoyed about the other persons answer you can talk to a **trusted person** or an **OK helper**. It is important not to try to turn another persons no into a yes.

# When there is no consent

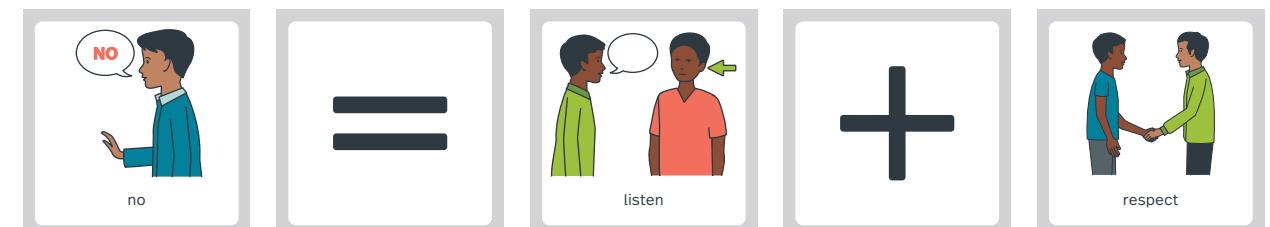
It is important to consider how you would feel or react if other people do not **consent** to you doing something that you want to do.



If the other person answers no or changes their mind, it can make you feel sad or annoyed. That person is sharing what they feel **safe** and comfortable with.

It is important to **respect** their choices about their body and what they want to do. Their no is a full and final sentence.

It is important not to try to turn another person's no into a yes.



How can you show you accept another person's response even when they answer no or change their mind?

## Risk awareness

If you worry someone might do harm to you, themselves or someone else if you do not agree to do something, that is not **consent**.



If you are scared or worried someone may hurt you, you can:

- try to leave the situation
- tell a **trusted person** or **OK helper** and ask for help
- tell a community worker and ask for help.

In an emergency:

- call the police on 000
- use an **emergency no**.



An **emergency no** may mean you yell or act in a way you would not usually to try keep yourself **safe**.



**It is not your fault if a person does something to you without your consent.**

**You have the right to be and feel safe in all your relationships at all times.**

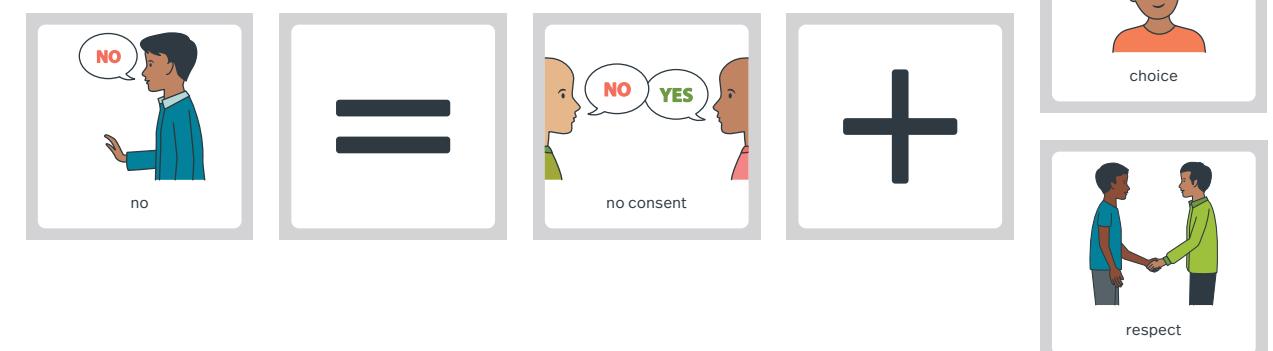
## Risk awareness

**Consent** should always be **respected**, but sometimes it may not be.

A person may try to **coerce** you to **consent** to do something by threatening to harm you, themselves or someone else. If they do this, it is not **consent**.

In a situation where you feel worried, fearful or scared to tell them to stop or answer with a no – you may need help to keep yourself **safe**.

You can always ask other people for help. This may be from a **trusted person** like an **OK helper**, friend, support person, carer, parent or teacher. Everyone has different **trusted people** they feel comfortable asking for help from. It is important to ask for help from a **trusted person** when you do not feel **safe**.

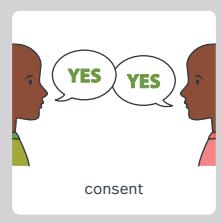


You can use an **emergency no** when you feel threatened, unsafe or when someone is not listening to you. You can use an **emergency no** when you have told or shown other people that you do not want them to do something. If you are worried for your **safety**, using an **emergency no** might mean that you swear or act in a way that you would not usually. For example, you may yell loudly or scream at them to go away.



Can you and your **trusted person** practise an **emergency no**?

# Feeling safe and being safe



**Consent** may be needed by law.

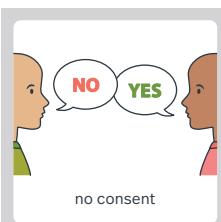
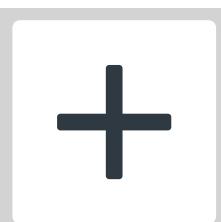
- if you take something and someone has not given you **consent** it is stealing
- if you touch someone and they have not given you **consent** it is assault.



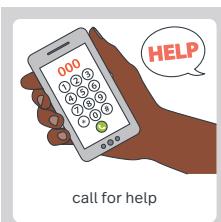
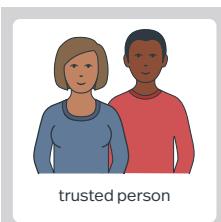
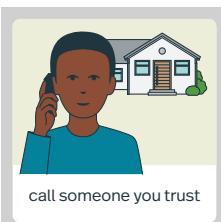
You have the right to be and feel **safe** in all your relationships at all times.

It is not your fault if you are assaulted.

If you do not feel **safe** or in control of what is happening there is no **consent**.



If you do not feel **safe** you can go to a **safe** place or call a **trusted person**. You can also yell to people close by for help. In an emergency you can call 000.



# Feeling safe and being safe

Laws are rules that all people must follow. The police can arrest people who break the law. The law says that:

- taking another person's property without their **consent** is stealing
- touching another person without their **consent** is assault
- showing or touching **private body parts** in a public place is against the law.

It is ok to hold hands with a person you know and kiss your **romantic partner** in public if they **consent**.



Everybody has the right to feel **safe** at all times.

Everybody has the right to feel **safe** at all times. This includes in all your relationships in a private place and public place. If a person does something without your **consent**, it is not your fault.

If you do not feel **safe** or in control of what is happening there is no **consent**.

If someone begins to do something without your **consent** or you are not **safe** you can try to:

- leave and go to a **safe** place
- call a **trusted person** or **OK helper** to help you
- yell for someone close by to help.

If it is an emergency you can call the police on 000 for help.

If it is not an emergency you can call the police on 131 444.

If something has happened to you that has made you feel unsafe or you did not **consent**, you can tell your **trusted person** or **OK helper** who can support you.



When do you feel **safe**? When do you feel unsafe and who do you tell?

# Public and private

Examples of public

Examples of private



## Examples of public

A public place is somewhere other people can see you or hear you.

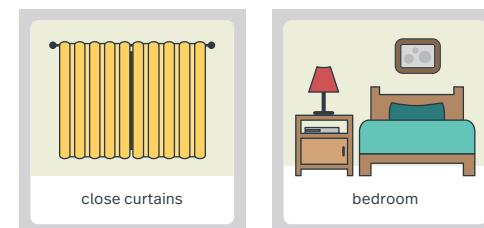


## Examples of public

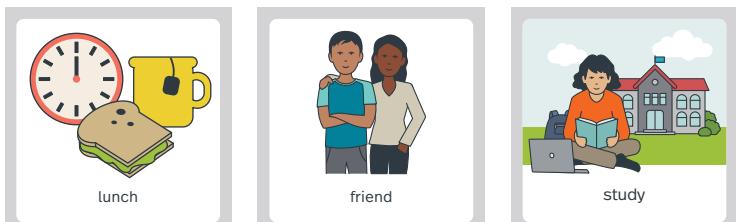
A public place is somewhere that other people can see you or hear you. You are not alone in a public place.

Public places are public because anyone can be there and you cannot control who comes and goes from the place.

Some places may always be public places, like school, playgrounds, swimming pools, shopping centres and public bathrooms.



Other places may be public because there are people there. If all people leave and you cannot be seen or heard, it would be a private place. For example, your bedroom.

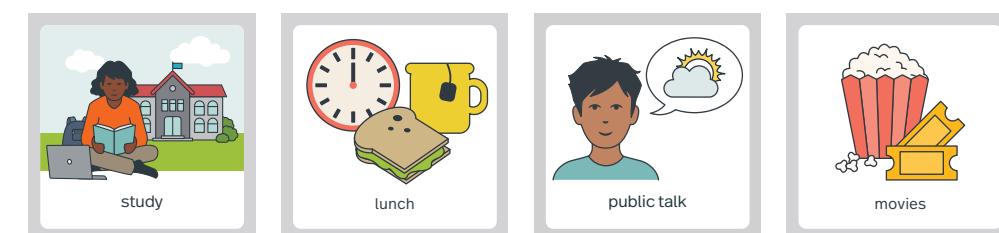


In a public place you can do public behaviours like:

- eat food
- meet friends
- study.

You can do public behaviours in a public place. For example, going to the movies, doing study or eating a meal. You can also do public talk in a public place.

You cannot do **private behaviours** in a public place, such as show any **private body parts**. This is because people in a public place do not **consent** to these behaviours.



A public place is still public even if no one else is there. You can only do public behaviours in a public place.



What other public places do you know?

## Examples of private

A private place is somewhere other people cannot see you or hear you and you control who can come in.

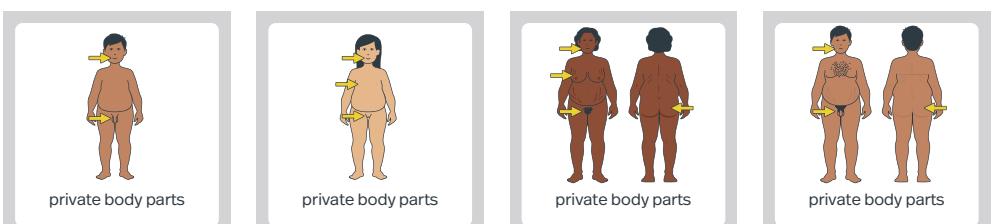
For example, in your bedroom in your house with the bedroom door and bedroom curtains closed.



You can do **private behaviours** in a private place.

Your **private body parts** may also be showing in a private place.

For example, when you change your clothes or use the toilet.



**Consent** is needed for another person to touch any part of your body. **Consent** is needed for you to touch any part of another persons body.



**Consent** is needed to share **confidential** or **private information**.

## Examples of private

Private things can be places, behaviour, talk, body parts and types of touch.

You are in a private place if you are where no one can see or hear you, and no one is expected to be there. You should also be able to control who comes and goes from the place. If you cannot, then it is a public place.

You are able to do **private behaviours** in private places such as change your clothes, have a shower or do **sexual activities**. You can only do **private behaviours** in private places otherwise it is against the law.

**Private talk** or information should only be discussed if all people **consent**. Often **private information** is needed by **health professionals**. They should be able to tell you what **private information** is needed and why.

**Private body parts** are generally those body parts involved in **sexual activities** and should only be seen or touched with **consent** (for example, the penis or vulva) and **private body parts** that can only be touched with **consent** (for example, the mouth). There are times where a **health professional** may be required to touch a **private body part**. For example, a doctor may ask you to lift your shirt to do an examination or listen to your heart.

If someone wants to touch any part of your body, including **private body parts**, they should ask you for **consent** to do this.

In an emergency, a **health professional** such as a paramedic will ask for **consent** if you are alert and awake. If you are not awake or alert, they may have to touch you without your **consent** to save your life.



What other private places do you know?

# Touch

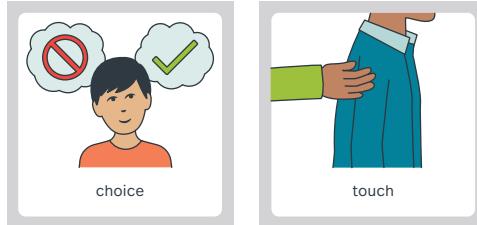
Different types of touch

Touch for helping and personal care

Touch for affection and sexual touch

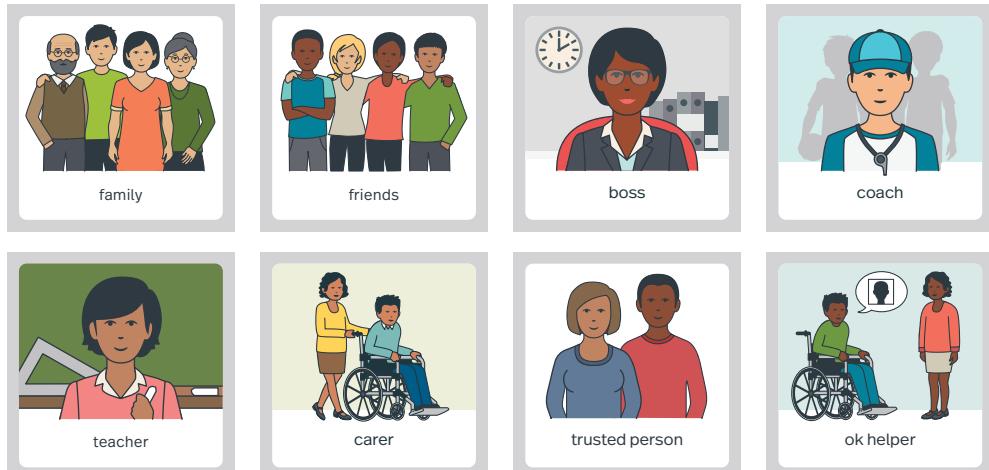


# Different types of touch



It is your **right** to decide if someone can touch you. Your body belongs to you. You can change your mind at any time.

All the people in your life fit into different relationship types.



It is good to know your boundaries about who can touch you and how. For example, you may cuddle your family and give your friends side hugs.



Different people and relationships cannot do all types of touch.

# Different types of touch

You have the **right** to decide if you are touched, how you are touched and who can touch you. Touch can be nice if everyone being touched **consents** and is happy and comfortable.



When you set boundaries about touch you should consider the relationship type of the people in your life. Then you can set boundaries for all the people in your life.



It is important for people to **respect** your boundaries and for you to **respect** other people's boundaries.

Sometimes you may not want to be touched at all. That is your choice and other people can make the same choice for themselves.

Types of touch include greeting someone with a handshake, patting someone on the back, high-fives, side hugs, cuddles, holding hands and **sexual touch**.

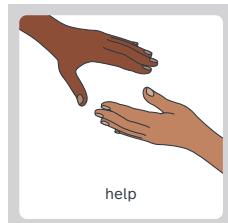


What types of touch do you like?

# Touch for helping and personal care

Sometimes you may need help to do **private behaviours**.

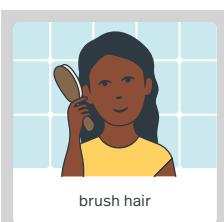
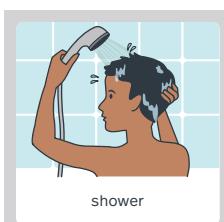
You can ask an **OK helper** or a **trusted person** to help you.



You and your **OK helper** or **trusted person** must **consent** to the touch before it happens.

They could help you:

- go to the toilet
- have a shower
- brush your hair.



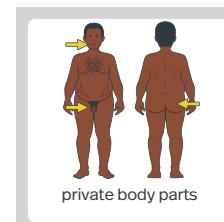
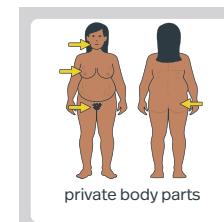
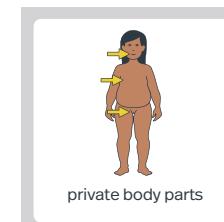
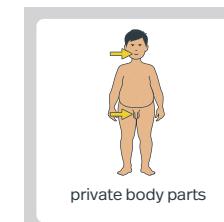
Your support worker, carer or **OK helper** are not allowed to do **sexual touch** with you and you are not allowed to do **sexual touch** with them.

# Touch for helping and personal care

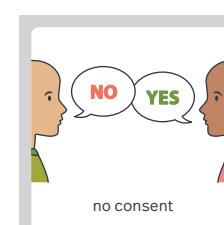
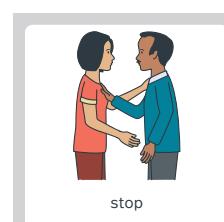
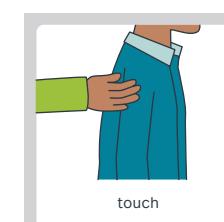
There may be times when you are unable to do an activity by yourself.

This could include activities that involve **private behaviours**.

You can ask an **OK helper** or a **trusted person** to help you do the activity. This could involve them touching you or your **private body parts** for personal care.

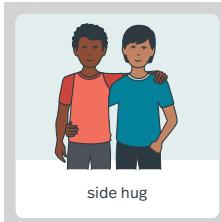
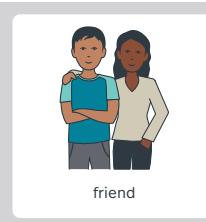


You and your **OK helper** or **trusted person** need to **consent** to the touch before it can happen. You can change your mind at any time and ask them to stop. When you let them know that you want them to stop, they should stop the touch immediately as they no longer have **consent**.

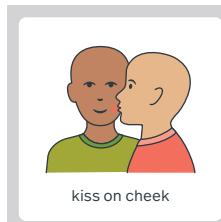
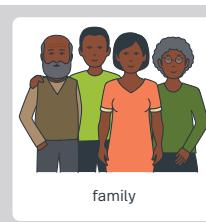


What activities might you need help with?

# Touch for affection and sexual touch

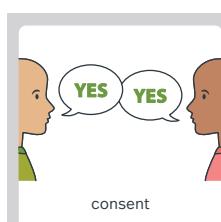
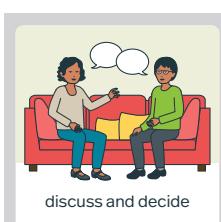
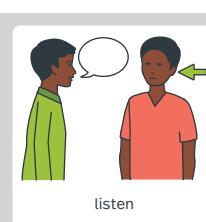
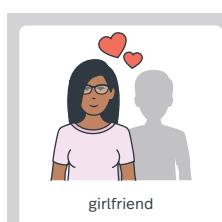


You may want to give or get a hug from a friend on special occasions.



Sometimes you may want a cuddle or cheek kiss from a family member.

Sometimes you may want a kiss, sexual cuddle or **sexual touch** from a **romantic partner**.



If you and the other person **consent** to a type of touch then you can do this touch.



Sexual cuddles and **sexual touch** are **private behaviours** that you can do in a private place.

# Touch for affection and sexual touch

There may be times when you would like to do different types of touch. You can do these types of touch with different relationships.

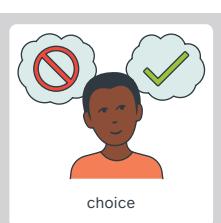
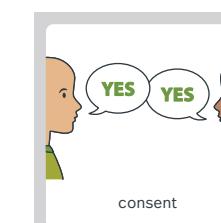
For example:

- you and a friend may side hug
- you and a family member may cuddle or cheek kiss
- you and a **romantic partner** may do **sexual activities**, such as kiss, sexual cuddle or **sexual touch**.



People have different boundaries about what happens to their body. People also have a right to say what happens to their body. All types of touch need all people to **consent**.

If you have given **consent**, you can change your mind at any time. If someone else has given **consent** they can also change their mind at any time.

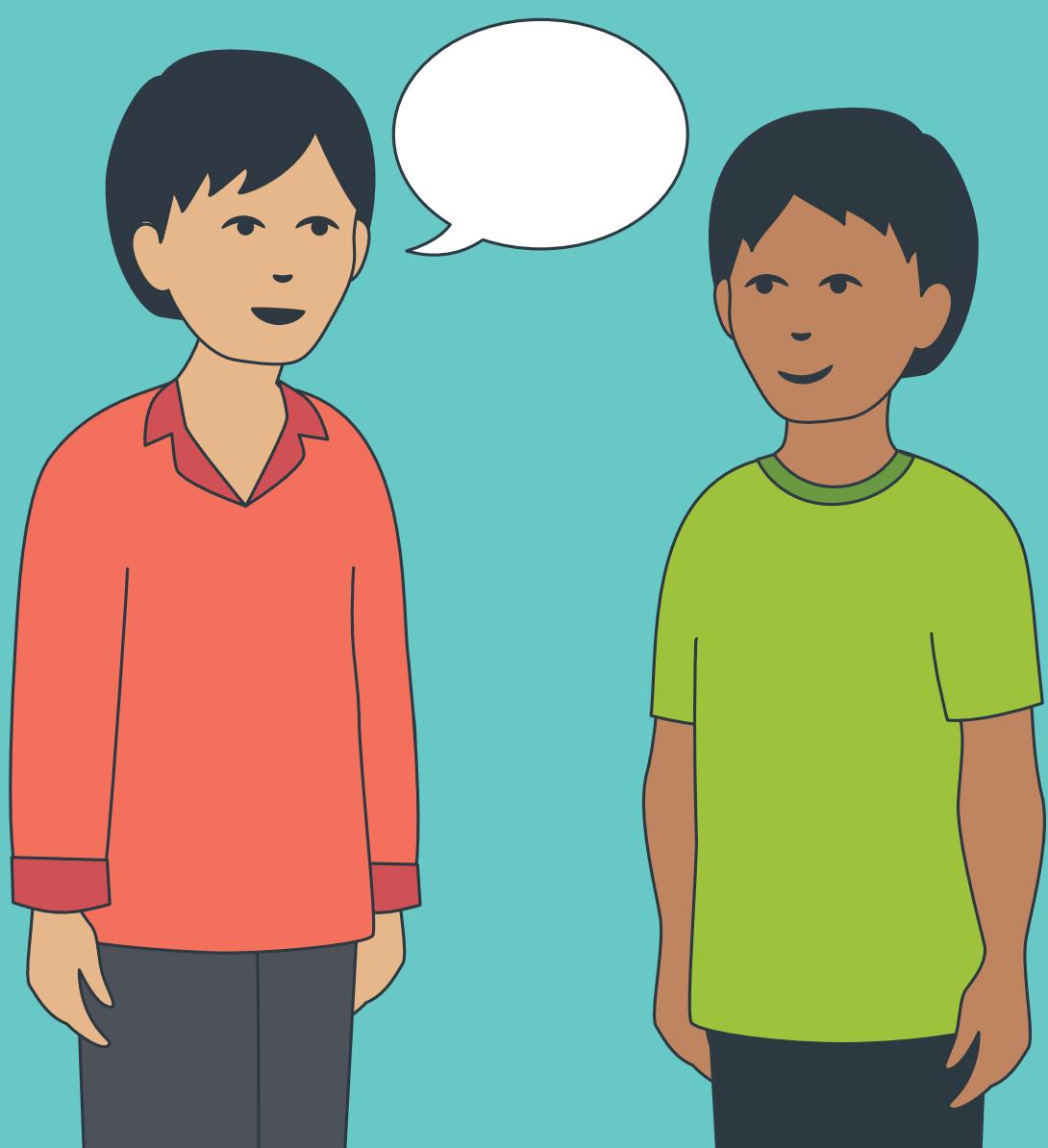


Just because you have given **consent** before, does not mean you have to give **consent** again. You are in control of your body. You decide what happens to your body. People need to ask for your **consent** every time to touch your body.



Who can you tell if someone did something without your **consent**?

# Glossary



# Glossary

## Body autonomy

**Body autonomy** means that your body belongs to you. You have the right to make choices about your body. This includes:

- ✓ the food you eat
- ✓ the exercise you do
- ✓ how you wear your hair
- ✓ the clothes you wear
- ✓ how you are touched.

## Coercion

**Coercion** means that someone has used force, threats or pressure to try and change someones mind or to make someone else do something they did not want to do.

## Consent

**Consent** is when all people agree to something that they want to happen. This can also be called giving permission. Everybody has the right to communicate their boundaries and for them to be **respected**. **Consent** is a way of sharing these boundaries with other people. **Consent** can happen when you have options and can make a decision about things that affect you. **Consent** is needed before and during an activity.

## Confidential

**Confidential** means that a person, a business or a **health professional** must keep personal information private and protected. This means that they cannot tell anyone **private information** unless they have been given **consent** or it may be against the law.

## Emergency no

An **emergency no** is the no you can use if you feel threatened or unsafe. An **emergency no** can be used if you have told or shown someone that you do not want them to do something and they will not listen. It is usually loud so others can hear you and help. This may mean you swear or act in a way that you would not usually.

## Health professional

**Health professionals** are people who are trained to help others with their physical, mental and **sexual health**. **Health professionals** give advice and can answer questions about your body, feelings or relationships. There are lots of different types of **health professionals**. Some types of **health professionals** are:

- ✓ doctors
- ✓ nurses
- ✓ physiotherapists
- ✓ dentists
- ✓ psychologists
- ✓ pharmacists
- ✓ midwives.

## Informed consent

**Informed consent** is a type of **consent** used by **health professionals**. This type of **consent** means you have the right to understand all the risks and benefits of a medical treatment or procedure before you provide your agreement.

## OK helper

An **OK helper** is a **trusted person** who you can ask for help when you are scared, sad or need help.

## Private behaviours

When you are on your own in a private place, you have the right to touch your body how you choose. This might mean going to the toilet, showering or taking your clothes off. These actions are **private behaviours**. Sometimes people we trust need to help us shower or go to the toilet. They still need your **consent** to help. Sometimes people may do a **private behaviour** such as **sexual activity** in a private place if all people are over the age of **consent** and have given **consent** to the **sexual activity**.

## Private body parts

**Private body parts** are generally kept covered by clothing in public venues or may be involved in **sexual activities**. This includes **private body parts** that no one is allowed to touch without **consent** like the mouth. This also includes **private body parts** that no one is allowed to see or touch without **consent**:

- testicles
- penis
- breasts
- bottom
- anus
- vulva
- vagina.



People can use different names for these body parts. This may be for cultural reasons or to feel more comfortable in their gender. It is important that people also know the anatomical name. This helps you ask questions or share worries with **health professionals** or a **trusted person**.

## Private information

**Private information** is any information about **private body parts**, **private behaviours** or information about yourself that people cannot know by just looking at a person.

For example:

- your full name
- your phone number
- your birth date
- your health information.

You may not want to share your **private information** with other people. Sometimes **health professionals** need your **private information** to be able to help you. **Health professionals** should be able to tell you what **private information** is needed and why.

## Private talk

**Private talk** is conversations about **private body parts** or **sexual activities**. If you need to talk about a **private body part** or **sexual activity** it is best to talk to a **trusted person** in a private place.

## Respect

**Respect** is a positive feeling towards someone or something you care about. It is shown through behaviours like:

- ✓ being fair
- ✓ showing you care
- ✓ listening
- ✓ being kind
- ✓ helping people.

## Rights

**Rights** are like rules about what a person is allowed to be, to do, to have or to experience. They are things the law says you are entitled to as a human being. There are many different types of **rights**. All people have **rights**.

## Romantic partner

A **romantic partner** is a person that you feel very strongly for in a way that is intimate and they feel the same. It is closer than a friendship. You may be in a sexual relationship with them and call them a partner, boyfriend or girlfriend. Someone who is in your family cannot be a **romantic partner**.

## Safety

**Safety** can be a positive feeling or experience you have. Safety can happen when you have your boundaries **respected** by others and when you **respect** other people's boundaries. You can feel **safe** or be **safe** with yourself, another person, a thing or a place. When you feel **safe** is a different idea to when you are **safe**. When you feel **safe**, that is your experience. It is how you feel. When you are **safe**, that is the world around you. It is the people you are with and the places you are in. Sometimes when you feel **safe** and when you are **safe** match. Sometimes they do not match.

## Sexual activity

**Sexual activity** can be lots of different things. It can mean any kind of sexual touch between any **private body part** and a person or sexual aids. You must **consent** to **sexual activity**. You can stop **sexual activities** at any time. **Sexual activity** should feel good.

## Sexual health

**Sexual health** is a part of your overall health. **Sexual health** includes your relationship to yourself and others, **sexual health** checks and having safer **sexual activities**. Everybody has **sexual health** whether they have been involved in **sexual activities** or not.

## Sexual touch

**Sexual touch** is a type of touch that happens when you are feeling sexual. You may touch yourself or touch another person with **consent**.

## Trusted person

A **trusted person** is an adult that you know well, that you like and that helps you. **Trusted people** are those you have chosen and they have agreed with you to have **private talks** together.

All people who may have difficulty speaking or understanding English have the right to request support services. This includes when talking to police officers or health professionals. To arrange for a qualified interpreter to help, you can use:

**TIS National Interpreter Service**

[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

131 450

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**National Relay Service**

[www.accesshub.gov.au](http://www.accesshub.gov.au)

1300 555 727

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**National Auslan Interpreter Booking and Payment Service**

[www.nabs.org.au](http://www.nabs.org.au)

1800 246 945

**Book 1 of 2**



This book is managed by SHFPACT as part of their Safer Girls Safer Women project in collaboration with SECCA. It is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. There are two books in this series. This is the first book on consent. The second book is on sexual consent.

This book will help you feel comfortable with boundaries and consent. To learn about sexual consent, please read Book 2 in this consent series: Introduction to Sexual Consent.

**Consent Resources**

You can find more information about both books at [secca.org.au](http://secca.org.au) or [safergirlssaferwomen.com.au](http://safergirlssaferwomen.com.au)

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