

Safe@HavenHigh

How to Talk to Teens About Sex and Enthusiastic Consent



The best example we have found to explain consent to teenagers is the cup of tea video by Blue Seat Studios. Look out for the clean version on youtube [Tea Consent \(Clean\) \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TeaConsent)

It can be awkward for some parents to know how to talk to their child about sex and consent, but these are important conversations to start having **before** your child becomes sexually active. This sheet is to help with those conversations at home, when you feel the time is right

Children need to understand that consent must be explicit, it needs to be given repeatedly as a sexual encounter becomes more intimate and can be withdrawn at any time, for any reason. While that concept might seem simple, many teenagers find it awkward and difficult to ask, grant or withhold consent.

Talk About Pressure

The stereotype of non-consensual sex includes a woman repeatedly saying “No,” and a man who ignores what she says and acts, perhaps violently. While that can happen, the reality isn’t usually like that. In fact, non-consensual sex often involves coercion, manipulation and pressure rather than violence and struggle.

- It’s never okay to pressure someone to engage in any kind of sexual or romantic activity.
- Talk about what coercion is and what it looks like. The Tea Consent video will help.
- Peer pressure can also play a role. Kids feel pressure to do things they’re not ready for to win approval.
- If someone is applying pressure, teach your child to not stay quiet. Say “You’re making me feel uncomfortable” or “I don’t like that” or “Stop” or “No”, or anything else that makes your feelings clear.

Verbal & Non-Verbal Consent

We want teens to remember that only a resounding “yes”, with obvious enjoyment shown in body language equals consent. This is sometimes called “enthusiastic consent”. It’s not uncommon for people to say “I’m fine” when they’re not, so noticing non-verbal signs matters too.

Substance Use & Consent

We must acknowledge that a lot of non-consensual encounters happen in situations where one or both parties are intoxicated. Talk frankly with your child about the role of drink or drugs on consent, but focus on the role it plays in a person’s ability to give, or get, consent.

Talk To Your Boys

Don’t mince words. Talk frankly with your son about the emotional, personal, social and legal consequences of sexual misconduct. Be direct – sexual contact without consent is called rape or sexual assault. Children commit around half of the child sexual abuse offences reported to police. Boys are being prosecuted for sexual encounters without enthusiastic consent. Boys not understanding consent can have lifelong effects.

It is especially important for boys to hold one another accountable. We would like to see the boys at Haven High Academy highlighting and calling out the unacceptable behaviour of other boys and men.

Please get in touch with the Safeguarding Team if you have questions about this topic.



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