Consent: It Goes With Everything

A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

TARGET GRADE: Grade 8

TIME: 50 Minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Laptop
- Screen
- Projector
- Speakers
- Consent: It Goes with Everything Prompts - one copy

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Define sexual consent [Knowledge]
2. Define sexual agency [Knowledge]
3. Identify at least two factors that can impact a person's ability to give consent [Knowledge]

LESSON RATIONALE:

Consent is a key skill that all people need to learn and practice in order to respectfully ask, receive, or respond to rejection. A skill indicates that the act of asking for and responding to consent requests and responses can be practiced. This lesson provides a clear explanation as to what consent and sexual agency are and then gives students the opportunity to determine what factors impact a person's ability to give consent.

ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Prior to the lesson, please access the AMAZE video on the school wifi network to ensure the video can play with no issues. Keep video cued for ease of access during the lesson. Cue up the Consent Goes With Everything power point presentation prior to the start of class. Make a copy and cut apart the "Consent: It Goes With Everything" prompts so each group can receive a prompt.

PROCEDURE:

STEP 1:

"Today we are going to discuss consent which is an important skill to not only understand but be able to do in any situation. To start today's class I'm going to place you into six large groups. I will distribute a marker and a piece of chart paper to each group and ask that you all write as many answers as you can think of to your assigned sentence prompt as you possibly can. We will then come together as a group to share."

Distribute the Consent: It Goes With Everything prompts so each group has a different prompt:

- "Consent is….";
- "Consent is not…..";

- "You know for sure someone has given consent when…..";
- "It can be hard to know if someone has given consent when….;"
- "A person needs to get consent when……;"
- "If a person does not get consent before doing something the following consequences can happen….".

Allow the groups about 5 minutes to list as many answers as possible on their paper. While the students are completing the activity write the six sentence prompts on the board in order to tape the chart paper under each prompt.

As groups finish, tape their chart paper of answers under their assigned prompt and review as a large group. Afterward say something like, "**These are great explanations as to what consent is and isn't, what it looks like to receive or not receive consent, and what could happen if a person does not receive consent but continues anyway. Consent is a skill where a person asks permission to interact with another person's space or body.**

What we are looking for is affirmative consent where unless the other person provides a complete yes the answer is no. This means that silence, not saying no, or saying maybe would all be a NO to the request. Consent can be applied to any ask that a person would make but today we are going to look at sexual consent."

Ask a student from each group to retrieve their respective chart papers and return to the group. Then add the word sexual directly before the word consent in their original prompts used for the previous activity by writing them on the board.

The new prompts should read as

- "Sexual consent is….";
- "Sexual consent is not";
- "You know for sure someone has given sexual consent when…..;"
- "It can be hard to know if someone has given sexual consent when….;"
- "A person needs to get sexual consent when……;"
- "If a person does not get sexual consent before doing something the following consequences can happen….".

Distribute sticky notes to each group and say something like, **"Take the next five minutes to add to your list of answers now that the question has been specified even more to focus on sexual consent."**

Once each group has added all of their answers to their papers ask them to re-tape their papers to the board under their assigned prompt and review as a large group.

Using the provided power point presentation, facilitate a group discussion with the following discussion questions:

"How did you tell the difference between consent and sexual consent?

Push for responses that highlight the difference as being the type of interaction a person is asking to engage in with another person. Consent is asking for permission to interact with another person's space or body and sexual consent is asking for permission to interact with another person's space or body for a sexual purpose.

Why is sexual consent important?

Look for responses that include sexual consent as being important because it shows respect to our partner or the other person and it is illegal to coerce or force someone to participate in a sexual act or interaction against their will.

How would you explain sexual consent to a peer that isn't in class?"

Motivate students to explain sexual consent as asking another person to interact with them in a sexual nature.

(20 minutes)

STEP 2:

After the discussion, tell the class that you are going to show a short video on sexual consent and press play on the **Amaze: Consent Explained, What Is It?** video.

Following the video, ask the students to independently complete the following stem sentence: "Sexual consent is…." Allow approximately 5 minutes for individuals to complete their sentence and then ask for volunteers to share with the class. Look for answers that are similar to 'Sexual consent is when both people are willing to engage in a sexual behavior and express that consent by saying yes.'

(8 minutes)

STEP 3:

After allowing the students to define sexual consent present the following question to the class, **"How is a person able to give sexual consent?"** Allow the class to brainstorm and share answers as a full class. Take notes on the board as students provide answers to the question. Motivate students to think critically and aim for answers such as: think clearly, no drugs and/or alcohol, understand what the behavior is, trust, respect, knowing what works best for their body.

Say something like, **"All of these words come together to begin describing sexual agency."** Advance the consent slide deck to slide five which provides a visual definition

of sexual agency and an example. Ask a student volunteer to read the definition and say something like, **"Okay that definition is detailed and a lot to take in. To simplify the definition to one sentence would be to say that sexual agency is when we believe that a person should and can make the best decisions for their own bodies. Let's look at a couple of examples to make sure we understand what it can look like to respect or disrespect someone's sexual agency."** Using the slides in the power point, read the scenarios shared in the notes and then allow the class to decide whether or not each of the two scenarios respects the person's sexual agency.

> **Scenario #1:** Nina is at her annual check up with her healthcare provider when she communicates that she would like to start birth control. The nurse practitioner ask Nina if she would like to get an IUD to prevent unintended pregnancies. Nina is not interested in an IUD and would prefer birth control pills. The nurse practitioner rolls their eyes and says "You are young and forgetful. If you take birth control pills it will not work as well because I am positive you will forget to take them. Just get the IUD because I can't trust that you are responsible enough for birth control pills." Nina leaves the appointment frustrated. Does this scenario respect Nina's sexual agency?
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> **Scenario #2:** Len is at their family reunion hanging out with the cool cousins and having a great time. Len's uncle walks over and angrily says, "Your mom told me to use they/them pronouns when I talk to you and I think that is silly. You aren't old enough to make those kinds of decisions and it is irresponsible for your mom to allow you to think so." Len's cousins all come to their defense and the uncle backs down and walks away. Len's cousins all support them by saying how much they respect their decision to be who they are.
>
> Is Len's uncle respecting their sexual agency? Are Len's cousins respecting their sexual agency?

ANSWER KEY:

> **Scenario #1:** Does not respect the person's sexual agency.
>
> **Scenario #2:** The uncle does not respect the person's sexual agency. The cousins do respect the person's sexual agency.

(7 minutes)

STEP 4

Say something like, **"Now that we have an understanding of what sexual consent and agency are lets assess what factors can influence a person's ability to provide sexual consent and exercise their sexual agency. Working with an elbow partner, each set of partners will receive a game board and pieces. The game board is separated into two columns: Influences vs. No Influences. You will also receive game pieces that you will then as partners have to decide if each factor does or does not influence whether a person is able to provide sexual consent. Let's do a factor as a class, would you all**

say that age does or does not influence whether a person is able to provide sexual consent? Yes, age does influence whether a person is able to provide sexual consent. Each state sets an age that by law a person under that age are not capable of providing sexual consent. For example, if the age of consent is 15 no one 14 and under is able to provide sexual consent and any sexual interaction would be considered against the law.

Now you will do the same thing with the factors listed on your game pieces. What kind of questions do you have?"

Clarify any misconceptions and answer all questions asked before letting the students begin the activity.

NOTE TO TEACHER: *If you have a class that enjoys competition, this activity can be timed or there can be a winner of who completes the activity first. You can provide a prize or treat to the winning group.*

Allow the class approximately five minutes to complete the activity and then review the answers as a class. Clarify any misconceptions or confusion as needed.

NOTE TO TEACHER: *All of the factors influence a person's ability to provide consent or exercise their sexual agency.*

(13 minutes)

STEP 5

Say something like, "**You all did a great job critically thinking and applying the skill of consent. Remember, consent means that both people are able and willing to provide a yes to the ask. Silence or the absence of a no is never consent and a person who is under the influence can never provide consent. Thank you for your hard work today."**

(2 minutes)

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

Objective 1 is completed in Steps 1, 2 and homework; Objective 2 is completed in Step 3 and homework, and Objective 3 is completed in Step 4.

OPTIONAL HOMEWORK:

Write a script for a new Amaze video on "What is Sexual Agency? AMAZE is a resource for young people in middle school to learn about all kinds of topics related to their health and well-being. These short, animated videos are funny and informative ways to get information into the hands of 11-14 year olds. In today's class, you watched an AMAZE video on consent but there is currently no video on sexual agency. Write a script for an AMAZE video that explains what sexual agency is to middle school students.

Consent: It Goes With Everything Game Board

INFLUENCES	NO INFLUENCES

Consent: It Goes With Everything Game Pieces

DRUGS	ALCOHOL
SEXUAL OR ROMANTIC PARTNER	CULTURE
BODY IMAGE	SELF-ESTEEM

Consent: It Goes With Everything Prompts

Each group will complete a different prompt. Please print and cut the prompts out to distribute to each small group.

"Consent is…."	**"You know for sure someone has given consent when….."**
"A person needs to get consent when……"	**"Consent is not….."**
"It can be hard to know if someone has given consent when…."	**"If a person does not get consent before doing something the following consequences can happen….".**