

Sexual violence: Understanding the Issue

Definitions

Consent

A voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity. Consent must be clear, informed, voluntary, sober, act and person-specific, ongoing, mutual, active, and come directly from the individuals engaging in the sexual activity.

Coercion

Forcing another person to engage in sexual activity against their will. Force can often include, but is not limited to, acts of violence, threats (physical or emotional), pressure, deception, or guilt.

Non-consensual Photo Sharing

When an intimate or sexually suggestive photo or video is taken, shared, or otherwise used without the voluntary consent of the person in the photo or video.

Sexual Assault

Any form of sexual contact without voluntary consent, including unwanted oral contact (forced kissing), sexual touching, oral-genital contact (forced oral sex), and/or vaginal or anal penetration.

Sexual Violence

An umbrella term that refers to any form of non-consensual sexual behaviour, including sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sex trafficking, and sexual violence facilitated through technology.

To learn more, visit sace.ca/learn

Sexual Assault

85%

can happen
to anyone

of adults know
the person who
harmed them.

When people are believed and supported, healing is possible and even probable.

How Trauma Works

Memories can be missing, disjointed or confusing, so it can be hard for people to remember and/or talk about their experiences.

- People respond to trauma in all sorts of ways: there is no wrong way to respond.

It's **not** your fault.

The only person responsible for sexual assault is the person who chooses to harm.





Creating a Culture of Consent

Rape Culture

A society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual violence (including sexual assault, abuse, and harassment).

Consent Culture

A society or environment in which obtaining consent and respecting boundaries is the norm, for both sexual contact and everyday activities.



Listen. Believe. Support.

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Creating a culture of consent means changing commonly held beliefs about what sexual violence is, why it happens, and who should be held accountable for using abusive behaviours.

By making these choices to act, we can create a society in which **Consent is a priority.**

Here are some ways that we can work together to promote a culture of consent:

- Understand, educate others about, and practice consent in both sexual and everyday encounters
 - Understand how rejection makes you feel and ensure you are responding respectfully to boundaries set by others
 - Address problematic language, victim blaming, and rape jokes
 - Challenge institutions that perpetuate or uphold rape culture
 - Support organizations working to confront the issue by volunteering, promoting, and donating
 - Ask your workplace or school to educate its members about sexual violence
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