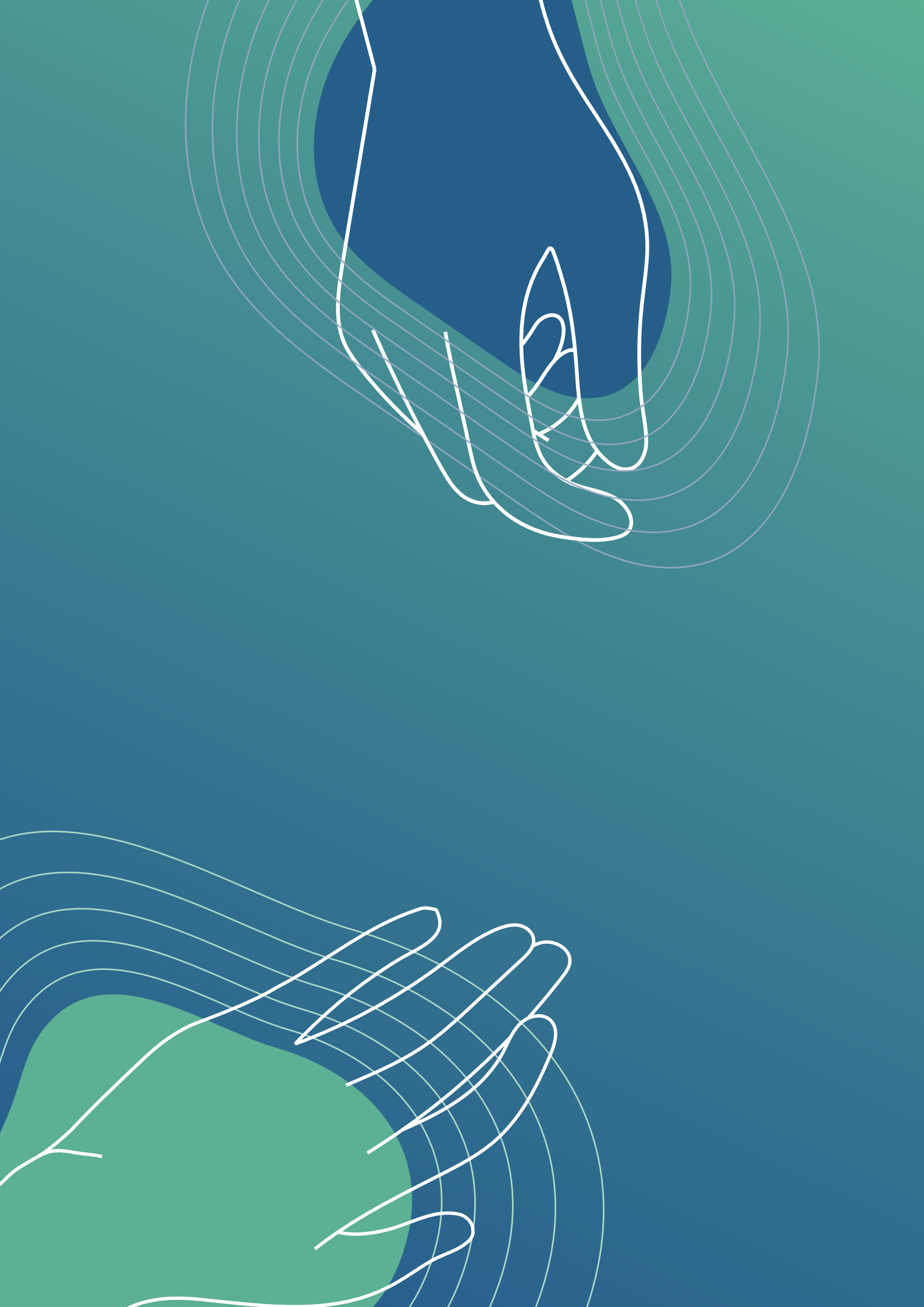




The Consent-Ed Toolkit

Senior Cycle





These lessons have been developed through the partnership and collaboration of the Tusla Child and Family Agency, Galway Rape Crisis Centre.

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Foreword

'Consent' is a term that has gained greater attention in recent years. Consent is necessary not only to stay within the bounds of legality, but also to foster respectful sexual relationships. Consent is not only a vital element within sexual relationships, but is an aspect of all interpersonal relationships.

This programme seeks to reduce sexual violence through culture change. It is within culture that we create norms about life, what is acceptable and what is not – this is profoundly true regarding consent and the gendered social expectations of females and males. Within society, we have created certain 'norms' that influence the society we live in. We hold these norms to be true and, in turn, reinforce them. However, history also teaches us that we have the capacity to change, as a culture and a society. To do this, we must first become aware of what requires change, after which we can create a pathway towards that change. This programme is one part of many initiatives designed to raise young people's awareness about the importance of consent as a foundation to healthy relationships and to help change our society's expectation around gendered stereotypes and sexual behaviour.

It is important to acknowledge Ms Manuela Riedo, whose short life was the catalyst for the development and emergence of the original Manuela Programme. The Manuela Programme was developed by a national consortium of passionate people from the Rape Crisis sector of Ireland to help challenge and change the sexual landscape for young people in the country. Through this movement, the Manuela Riedo Foundation Ireland was founded to commemorate and celebrate the life, memory and legacy of Manuela Riedo, and to continue work to make Ireland a safer place for all.

Introduction

This resource aims to support SPHE teachers in fostering positive ideals and behaviours around consent and respect within relationships. The following introductory pages of this resource outline the prevalence of sexual violence in Ireland, the research underpinning effective consent education, and theories that help to inform the methodologies used for effective engagement with young people.

There is a growing awareness of the importance of gender equality and consensual sex in Irish society. The #MeToo movement highlighted the prevalence of sexual violence and harassment nationally and internationally. Society is ever-changing, with emerging trends becoming norms that are then woven into the fabric of young people's everyday life, placing different codes of expected behaviours into their reality. Sexual violence is a public health issue, and the long-term negative consequences of sexual violence of all types indicate the necessity of effective prevention programmes. The Consent-Ed Toolkit relies on interactive techniques that enhance critical thinking which supports the personal and social development of young people to increase levels of confidence in negotiating consent healthily and to reduce levels of sexual violence. This is done through engagement of young people in dialogue that challenges attitudes, knowledge, and skills in relation to consent, sexual violence and harassment.

Sexual violence against children, which includes anyone under the age of 18, is one of the largest silent global pandemics of our time, occurring in countries at all levels of development and affecting children of all ages. Sexual violence consists of a range of sexual acts against a child, including but not limited to child sexual abuse, incest, rape, sexual violence in the context of dating/intimate relationships, sexual exploitation, online sexual abuse, and non-contact sexual abuse.

(Hart et al., 2019, p. 3)

Consent education is vital for creating healthy and respectful relationships across many spheres in one's life and is not limited to sexual behaviour or activity. Creating a safe and structured space where children and young people can explore their understanding of their own rights, responsibilities and boundaries is crucial in promoting their own ability to partake in healthy relationships.

The Consent-Ed Programme is founded upon key ethical pillars which include **AWARENESS, CONSENT, RESPECT, DIGNITY, BOUNDARIES, THE RIGHT TO BE DIFFERENT, THE RIGHT TO SEXUAL HEALTH** and **THE RIGHT TO OPT OUT**. Facilitators of the Consent-Ed Programme are in an ideal position to act as a catalyst to create cultural and social change.

The Context

Irish Adolescents' Experience of Sexual Violence

In 2021, a research study released by RCNI ("Storm and Stress": An Exploration of Sexual Harassment Amongst Adolescents', Walshe 2021), explores the rates of sexual harassment and violence experienced by Irish young people today. This study found that 80%, of young people who took part in the study had been subjected to some form of sexual harassment in the past year. It found that girls were 2.11 times more likely than boys to report that they experienced unwelcome sexual comments, and 2.49 times more likely to have experienced unwanted sexual touches. In contrast, boys were 1.92 times more likely to be exposed to homophobic name-calling than girls, and 68% of those who identified as LGBT+ experienced serious sexual harassment compared with the whole of the study. Older Irish adolescents (16-17) were 2.71 times more likely to report that they had been forced to do something sexual against their will when compared with younger adolescents (13-15).

Further findings from this study located within Irish schools, pointed out that it is vital that all young people are educated as early as possible on the importance of consent, respect and personal responsibility to ensure one is behaving consensually and positively towards another person, regardless of their gender or sexuality.

Third-Level Context

The Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) 2020 was carried out by Active* Consent and the Union of Students in Ireland and completed by 6,026 students at Irish higher education institutions (HEIs). These findings point to a high level of exposure to unwanted sexual experiences across the student population.

Rates of sexual harassment identified in the SES were similar to a survey of students at NUI Galway (MacNeela et al., 2018), which identified sexist and sexual hostility as posing particular issues. 75% of students in Year 3 or higher described experiencing sexist hostility at some point since starting college. Similarly, the SES found that 61% of male, 69.9% of female and 82% of non-binary students reported experiencing one of the following: sexist hostility, sexual hostility, attempts to establish unwanted sexual relationships, or harassment via electronic communication. The rates of sexual misconduct and harassment are higher than comparable studies in the US. The greatest area of vulnerability identified in the SES was around socialising at night, with a mere 24% of female students reporting feeling safe while socialising at night, dropping to only 13% of females who had previously experienced sexual misconduct.

The Wider Irish Context

Statistics taken from the Sexual Violence Survey (SVS) 2022 conducted by the Central Statistics Office indicate high rates of sexual violence in Irish society. The SVS found that 4 in 10 adults (40%) had experienced sexual violence at some point in their lifetime. The levels were higher for women, with 52% having experienced sexual violence, but still significant for men, with 28% reporting having experienced sexual violence at some point in their lives.

Younger men aged 18-24 experienced sexual violence in their lifetime (39%) at almost double the rate of those men aged 65 and over (17%). Similarly, younger women aged 18-24 experienced sexual violence in their lifetime (65%) at a far higher rate than those aged 65 and over (35%). 1 in 5 women in Ireland reported experiencing sexual violence, with women experiencing four times the rate of non-consensual sexual intercourse (21%) than men (5%) over their lifetime. Most adults (78%) who experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime knew the perpetrator. About half of adults (47%) who experienced sexual violence in their lifetime told someone about it, meaning the majority kept the experience to themselves.

Relevance to Third National Strategy

This resource seeks to support SPHE teachers in addressing important learning that is not only set out in the SPHE curriculum, but is also set out in government policy. The Department of Justice's 'Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual & Gender-based Violence for 2022–2026: Zero Tolerance' seeks to create a society in which there are zero instances of domestic sexual or gender based violence through education and awareness-raising.

In accordance with the Department of Justice's Zero Tolerance strategy, the NCCA revised the Senior Cycle SPHE curriculum to align with the Prevention Pillar named in the strategy. This curriculum provides schools with guidance on ways to foster a partnership approach with parents to end domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.

This toolkit intends to support this curriculum in nurturing these attitude-changing conversations. Based on the idea of a culturally accepted 'no tolerance' policy towards sexual violence, these learning outcomes seek to make effective and lasting cultural change through educating young people on consent, healthy boundaries and relationships, and, furthermore, the harms of gender stereotypes and the social structures that hold up rape culture and perpetuate gender-based and sexual violence.

What is Consent?

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, which amended The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006, defines consent in Ireland as involving both the internal desire to engage in intimacy (a feeling of willingness) and the external act of communicating one's consent through verbal or nonverbal signals. The 2017 Act also provides a non-exhaustive list of situations where consent will be deemed to be absent and in Section 48 it defines consent as the following:

'A person consents to a sexual act if he or she freely and voluntarily agrees to engage in that act'.

The legal definition is not dissimilar from Hickman and Muehlenhard's (1999) definition of sexual consent which is:

'The freely given verbal or non-verbal communication of a feeling of willingness to engage in sexual activity'.

Verbal and non-verbal behaviours range from direct, affirmative behaviour (e.g. talking to a partner about intimacy, asking for consent) to indirect behaviours (e.g. touching the other person or removing clothing), and passive behaviours (e.g. not resisting the other's person's advances). Passive consent can be seen as problematic because a person who is in fear or in an intoxicated state may not resist while still not expressing the desire to have intimacy.

Defining Sexual Consent

Although it may at first seem obvious, the definition of consent is, unfortunately, not always so. In the above definition of consent, 'freely given' denotes that an individual's sexual decision-making is free from factors that constrain the ability to make autonomous sexual choices. These constraints, or barriers, to freely given consent include social, interpersonal and contextual controllers, such as alcohol consumption, physical or emotional coercion, deception, perceived social norms and obligations, and gender-based inequities (Muehlenhard et al., 2016).

Consent can also be defined in sequential terms, because consent is an ongoing process. Understanding consent as an ongoing process means that an agreement to perform a certain sexual act does not imply consent for further acts or future periods of sexual contact. This also means that consent can be retracted at any stage. However, early research is already suggesting a divergence in the (binary) gendered understanding of consent: men are more likely to view consent as a discrete event while women are more likely to regard it as an ongoing process (Humphreys, 2004; Humphreys & Herold, 2007).

Consent Challenges Harmful Beliefs

Rape myths can shape young people's understandings of sexual consent and the acceptability of sexual violence. Rape myths are false narratives about rape that seek to divert responsibility for violence from a perpetrator towards the victim (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Common rape myths include the belief that the perpetrator 'did not mean to commit the act' or that the victim 'did not say no' and so the situation cannot be identified as rape. Such views outline a particular perspective on sexual scripts and roles. Measures of rape myth acceptance assess the degree to which these beliefs are endorsed by individuals.

Rape myth beliefs are associated with perceptions that rape can be the outcome of miscommunication, and that it is a victim's responsibility to clearly communicate their sexual desires, as opposed to the potential perpetrator's responsibility to make sure consent is given before engaging in the behaviour. There is some support for this 'miscommunication theory' as one potential cause of non-consensual sex. For instance, research has found that in certain instances, such as those involving alcohol consumption, people may overestimate their partner's signals of

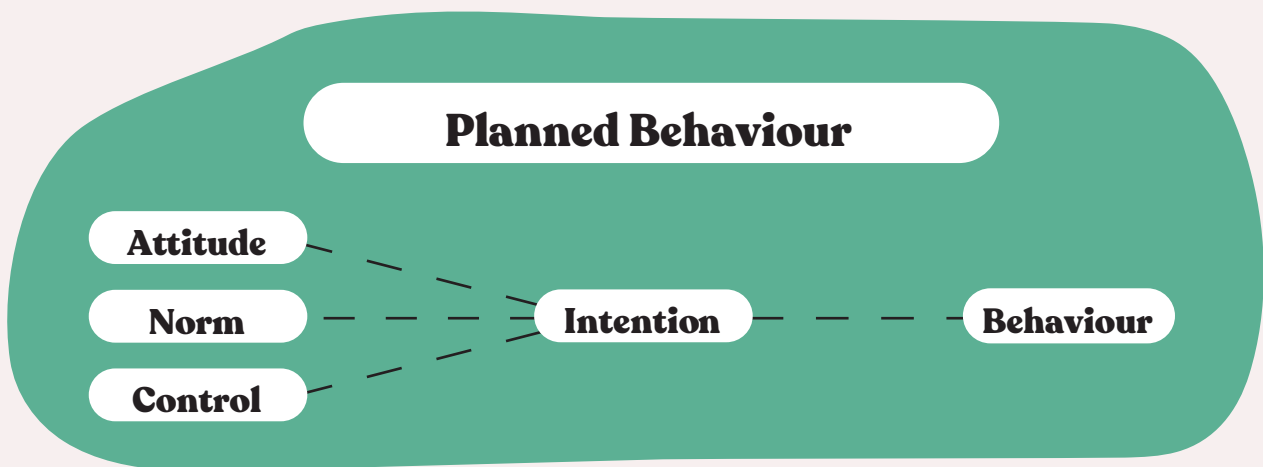
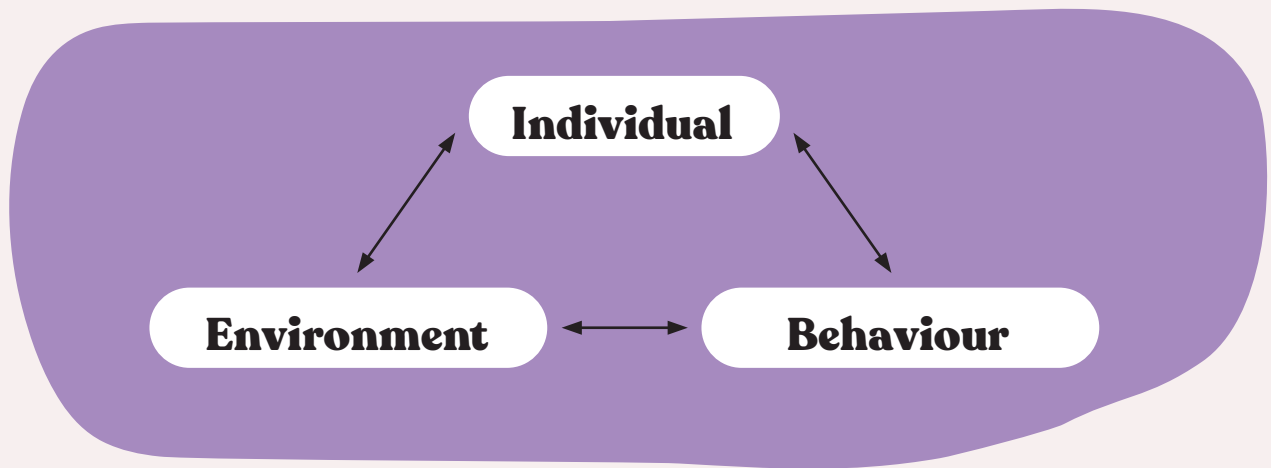
interest. Some may also proceed with their sexual advances following their partner's initial refusals under the assumption that they are engaging in 'token resistance', i.e. resisting so as not to appear sexually available (Muehlenhard et al., 2016).

While in the past, perpetrators may have used miscommunication as an excuse for more intentional sexual violence (Beres, 2010; Beres et al., 2013; O'Byrne et al., 2006, 2008), new reforms to Irish law under the General Scheme of the Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill 2022 require an accused perpetrator to reasonably prove what steps they took to ensure that their accuser was consenting to a sexual act before this can be used as a defence in a criminal investigation. In any case, the assumption or mistaken belief that a partner wants to engage in intimacy can be discussed, rather than being simply acted upon.

Theoretical Underpinning of Consent-Ed Approach

Taken together, the consent research literature describes active consent as an important supportive element of positive sexual development. The research highlights factors which can serve as barriers to effective consent communication and can contribute to sexual violence and misconduct. Although there has been limited development of consent education interventions, sexual education programmes have an important role in supporting young people to balance a norm of affirmative consent communication with the capacity to challenge the sexual script norms and power inequities linked to non-consensual behaviour. Programmes that help participants to build the skills to interpret one another's sexual cues, alongside the practising of self-control and responsibility for being proactive in consent-seeking no matter one's gender, would go a long way towards reversing these assumed sexual scripts.

To achieve this, 'Primary Prevention', i.e. whole-community intervention before abuse occurs, has been shown to be an effective method to prevent the development of risk factors associated with sexual violence and to promote the factors that protect against it (Julich et al., 2015). The Consent-Ed Programme is underpinned by key theoretical composites that consider the complexity of the learning process, and how best to engender positive behaviour change. The role of social norms in the behaviour change process has been analysed using both the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985) and the Theory of Normative Social Behaviour (TNSB) (Berkowitz, 2013). These theories posit that once one perceives oneself as capable of behavioural control, and believes that there are environmental expectations for appropriate and respectful behaviour, one will reduce volitional behaviours towards others.



In designing Consent-Ed as an educational intervention for young people, several theories of learning were considered: Vygotsky’s Theory of Social Development (1978), Dewey’s Experiential Learning Theory (1938) and Lave’s Situated Learning Theory (2009). These three theories emphasise the need for an educational approach that allows young people to participate actively in their own learning around relationships and consent, to learn from interactions between them, and to become a community of learners, which will help them reinforce positive attitudes and behaviours among themselves.

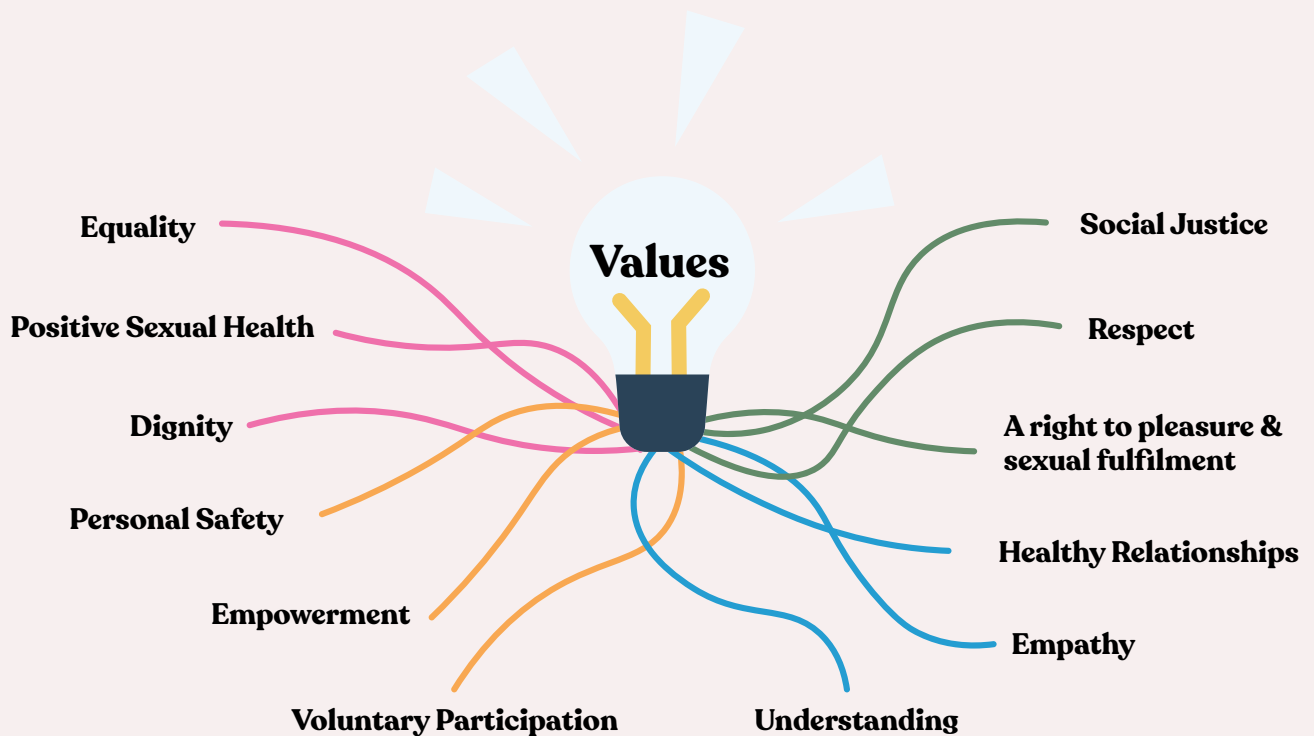
The culmination of this theoretical foundation in the Consent-Ed programme has been to endeavour to facilitate an open and safe learning environment while harnessing the opportunity for individual outcome attainment and new knowledge acquisition. Greathouse et al. (2015, p. x) pinpointed that ‘a smaller number of studies have also identified a link between sexual assault perpetration and perceptions of peer pressure to engage in sexual activity’. Therefore, it is critical that this programme highlights the opportunity for new learning and encourages learners to embrace and engage in this learning process in the context of their peers.

Toolkit Aim, Values & Principles

Aim

This toolkit aims to create dialogue around relationships, sexuality, consent and sexual violence to support young people in healthy decision making.

Values



Principles

- ▶ A human rights-based approach – young people have a right to be informed.
- ▶ Facilitated in a safe and supportive setting.
- ▶ Sexuality education is age-appropriate, in line with the young person’s level of development and understanding, culturally and socially responsive, and gender-responsive. It corresponds to the reality of young people’s lives.
- ▶ Recognises that young people are active participants in their own lives and that they play an important role in changing attitudes and raising awareness about ending violence.
- ▶ Acknowledges gender inequality as a cause and consequence of violence.
- ▶ Adopts a non-formal education approach, based on a holistic concept of health and wellbeing.
- ▶ Utilises a syllabus that is adaptable, relevant and culturally appropriate for young people, recognising that sexuality is a central part of being human.
- ▶ Works in partnership with communities, building relationships with young people, parents, schools, support services and other relevant organisations working towards a fair and compassionate society by empowering individuals and communities.

- Acknowledges that men and boys, along with non-binary and queer people, experience non-consensual behaviour and sexual violence, and actively encourages all students to think of consent as a vital part of everyone's safe sex experience, regardless of background or identity.
- Engages with experiences of men and boys, acknowledging that men and boys play an active role in stopping violence. It creates safe spaces for all participants to think about and challenge gender inequality and violence and encourages them to take an active role in preventing and ending violence.
- Delivers a survivor-centred approach that respects the privacy of survivors.
- Takes an evidence-based approach informed by initiatives in violence prevention around the world.
- Supports the attainment of knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills required for healthy sexual expression.

Group Guidelines

Why are group guidelines important?

Group guidelines are important in all group facilitation but are of particular importance in sexual violence prevention work as they ensure that boundaries are kept and that the place where the session is facilitated remains a safe place. Group guidelines enhance respect and give students a sense of safety when discussing such sensitive topics. Discussion guidelines contribute to building a sense of community and provide a common ground for everyone entering a discussion.

Examples of Group Guidelines

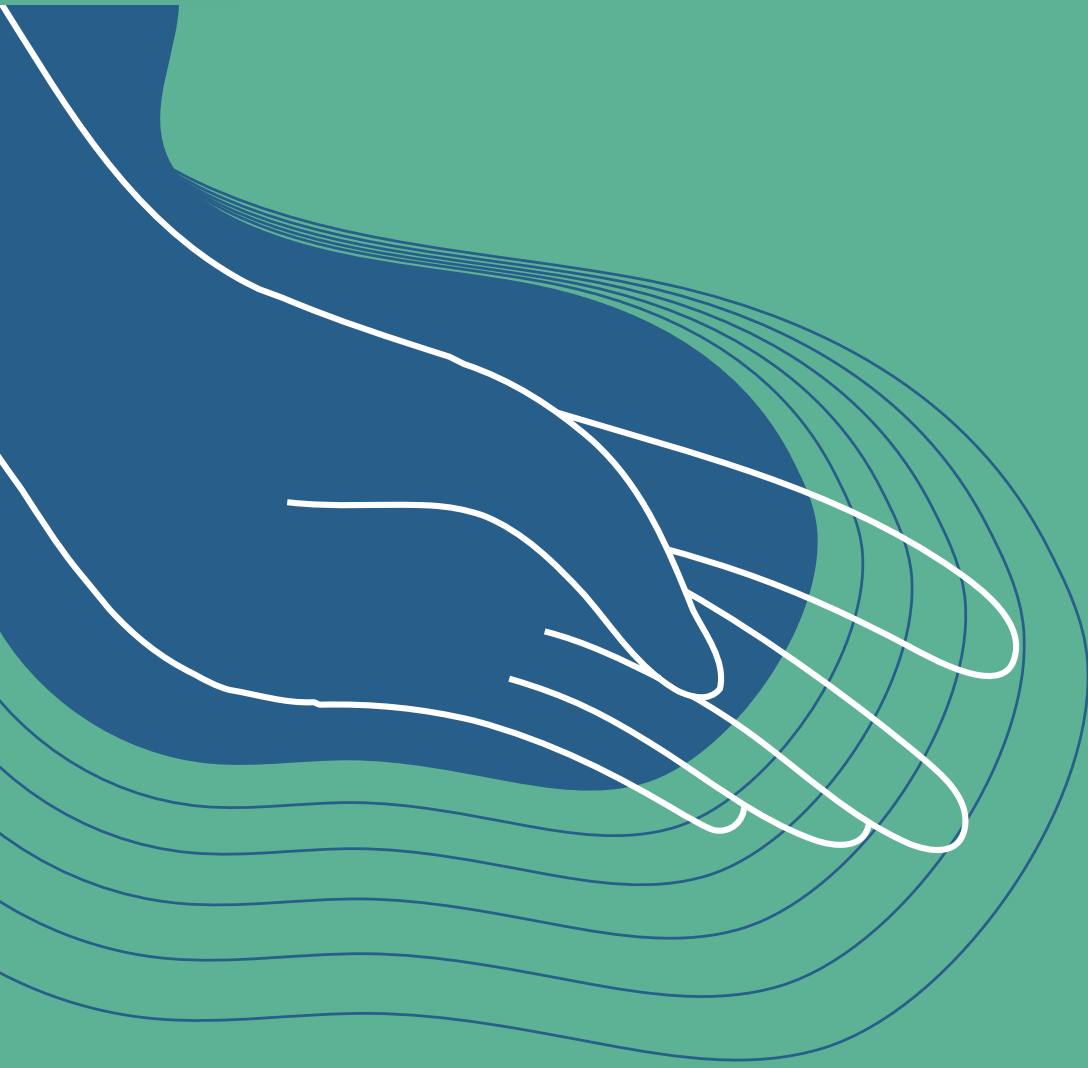
- **Have fun!** (Wherever possible, enjoy the programme).
- **Participation** (Engage at your level of comfort – you can always choose to opt out if you are not comfortable). Everyone is welcome to have a say.
- **Inclusiveness and non-judgemental** (Be mindful of each other and inclusive of all genders, relationship types and sexualities).
- **One voice** (Supporting one speaker at a time).
- **Opinions** – Only represent your own opinion, use the term I rather than we when speaking your own opinion. Respect those who may disagree with your opinion
- **Listen to each other** (You have great ideas and knowledge to share).
- **Be open** (To the session topics and having a conversation about them).
- **Mobile Phones** (Give them a break, put them on snooze).
- **Respect** (Everyone, their opinions, surroundings. Jokes about rape, child abuse, or sexual violence will not be tolerated. We do not know what is going on in anyone’s life at any given time and such jokes can cause further hurt and harm. Put yourself in a victim’s shoes - would you like to hear such jokes?)
- **Confidentiality** (What is said in the group belongs in the group. No gossiping after the sessions about what someone said. However, state clearly that there is a limit to confidentiality and if something is said that the facilitator believes may mean that a young person is in a harmful situation, may harm someone else, or they directly disclose something, under Irish Law and Child Protection the Education Worker/Facilitator must share this information with a Designated Liaison Officer (DLP) - this is for everyone’s safety). Nothing that is said or disclosed in the session should be discussed outside the group.
- **Supports:** Signpost in-school supports to students, and encourage them to take note of the support services mentioned in the sessions.

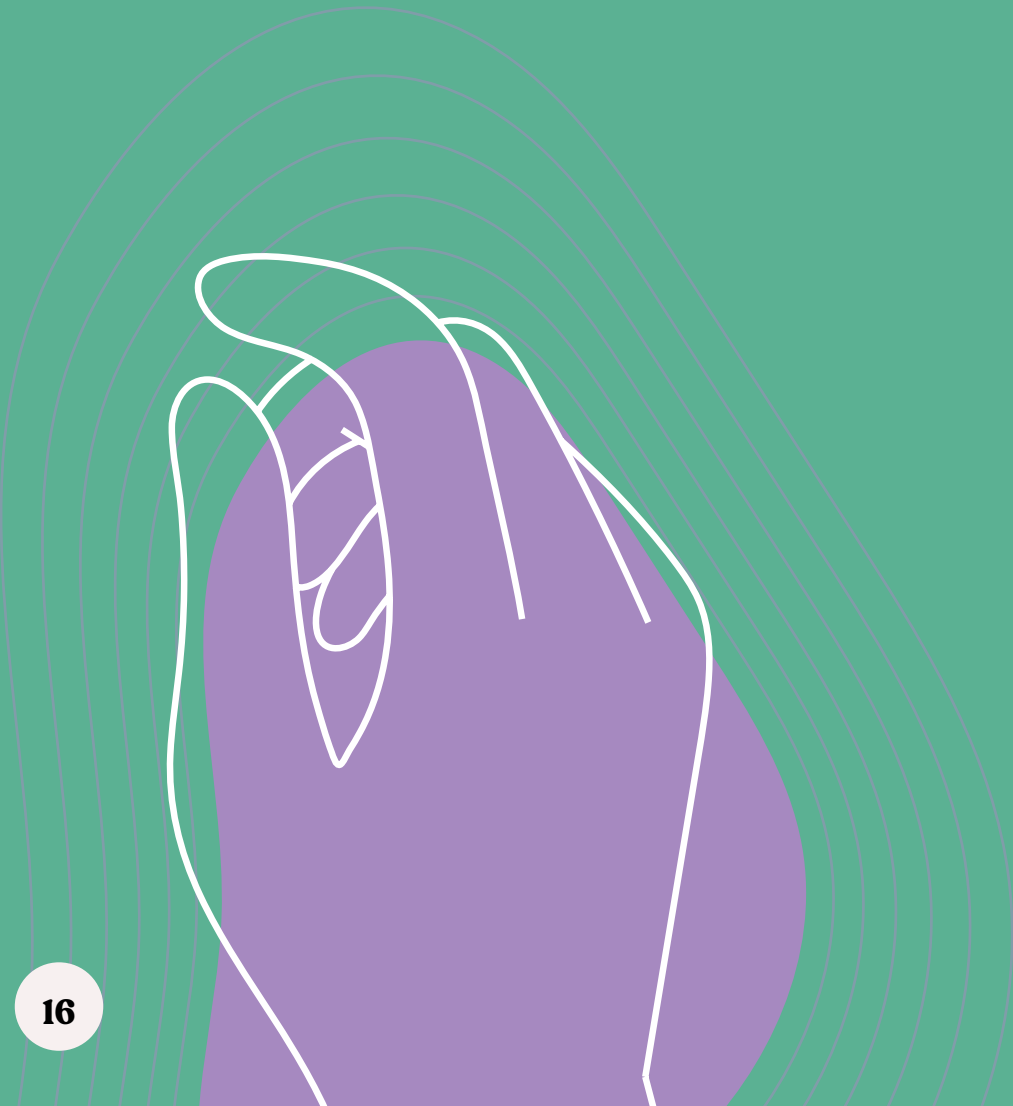
Facilitating Group Guidelines

- Explain to the group the importance of group guidelines for sessions like these.
- Use a large piece of poster paper and a marker to draft the guidelines, with input from the group, and then display the guidelines where the group can see them.
- Define confidentiality and explain the importance of it when discussing topics in this course.
- Ask students to give a thumbs up to show that they agree with the guidelines.
- Remember, it is important to recap the guidelines at the beginning of each session.

Facilitation Skills

For more guidance on facilitation, see [NCCA’s resource](#).





Session 1

Healthy Relationships

Lesson Plan

This session focuses on healthy sexual exploration, sexual expression and sexual harassment.

Session 1 begins with the exploration of healthy and unhealthy relationships. This session will discuss relationships and allow participants to explore healthy, unhealthy and abusive characteristics of relationships. The activities support students to independently identify 'red flags', have a clear understanding of how a healthy relationship should look and feel, and have knowledge of the supports around them.

Learning Outcomes

- Differentiate between healthy and unhealthy relationships.
 - Recognise and act on negative/undesirable behaviours including 'red flags' and be cognisant of positives in relationship types.
 - Establish respectful and healthy relationship boundaries.
-

Materials Needed

- Relationships Up Close Activity
 - Relationship Continuum Activity
 - YouTube Video
 - Healthy Relationships Presentation
 - Handouts
-

Procedure

Getting started: Options to ice-break, capture base knowledge and views to prepare the mind for learning.

1. Introduction:

- Introduce the learning outcomes and topics covered.
 - Discuss why pupils are learning about these topics.
 - Encourage questions.
-

2. Group Guidelines:

- Clearly outline to the group that there are a set of guidelines for these sessions.
 - Engage participants to contribute to the group guidelines.
 - These can be displayed each session.
-

3. Relationships Close Up:

- Ask participants to verbally identify different relationships.
- In small groups, participants list all the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships they can think of on to the relevant sheets.
- Participants feed back to class.
- Hand out 'Relationship Behaviours' list, discuss with participants if there are any on the sheet that they were missing, allow an opportunity for them to add them in.

Discussion Points:

- How important is it to have a healthy balance of behaviours in any relationship?
 - What boundaries are essential or non-negotiable in a healthy relationship?
 - Where does compromise fit into the behaviours listed?
-

4. Video Presentation:

- Introduce the differences between healthy and unhealthy love.
 - Within each section of the presentation, play the short video.
 - Then ask the question on the slide to guide full-class discussions.
-

5. Relationships Continuum:

- Introduce concept of 'abusive behaviours'.
- Re-group original activity groups.
- Hand out 'Relationships Continuum' activity and ask groups to sort the statements into the relevant categories.
- Feed back to the wider class and discuss.

6. How We Feel and How We Deal:

- Discuss with participants how an unhealthy relationship may make us feel and what effects it could have on our life.
 - Optional - invite participants to make a graffiti board on a whiteboard or flipchart paper.
 - Ask participants to identify relationships in their life they could turn to for support, i.e. friends, teachers, parents, etc.
 - Discuss and share support services information.
-

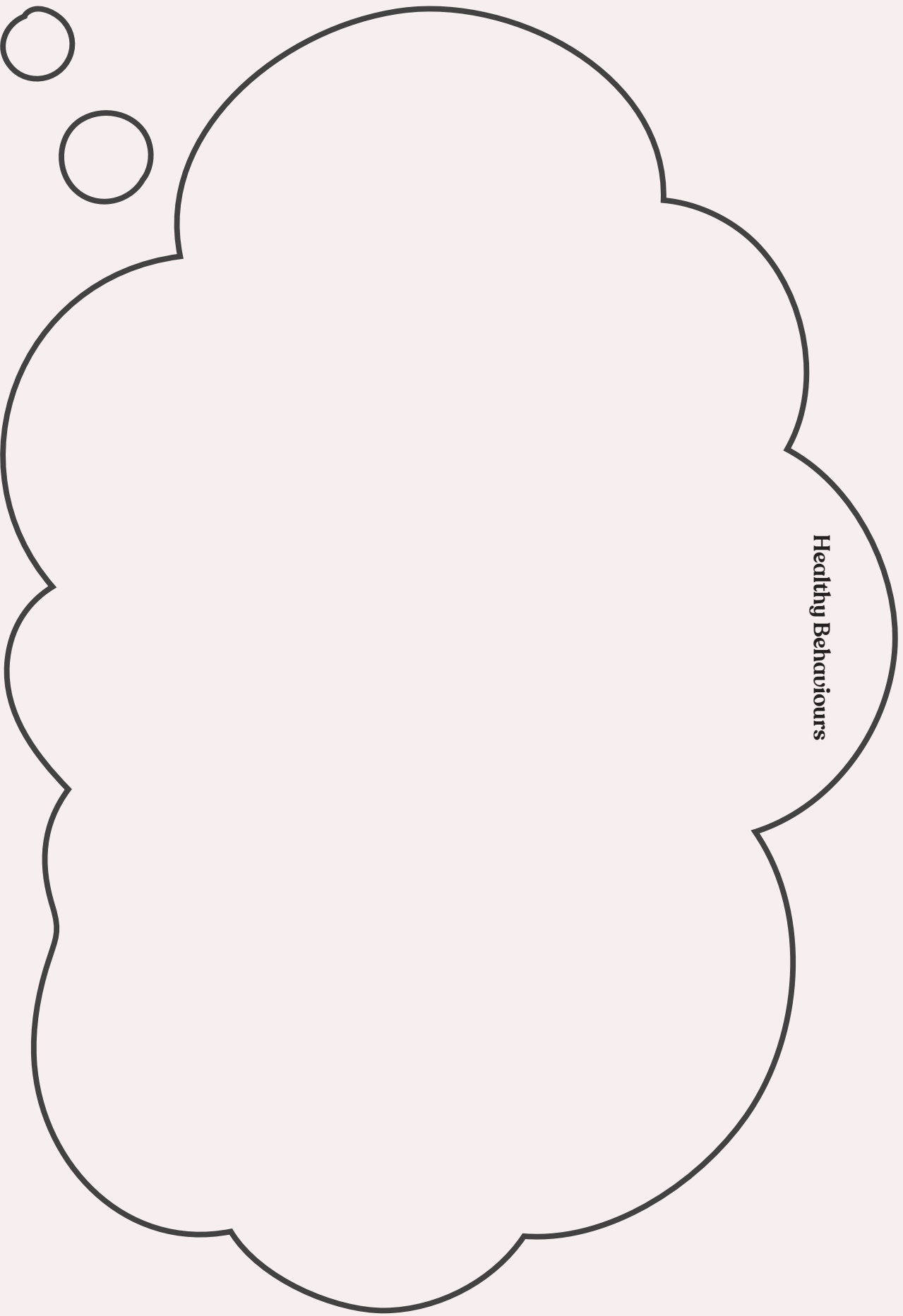
7. Summary Presentation:

- Healthy Relationships PowerPoint.
 - Discuss each section with participants.
 - Questions around session.
 - Close.
-

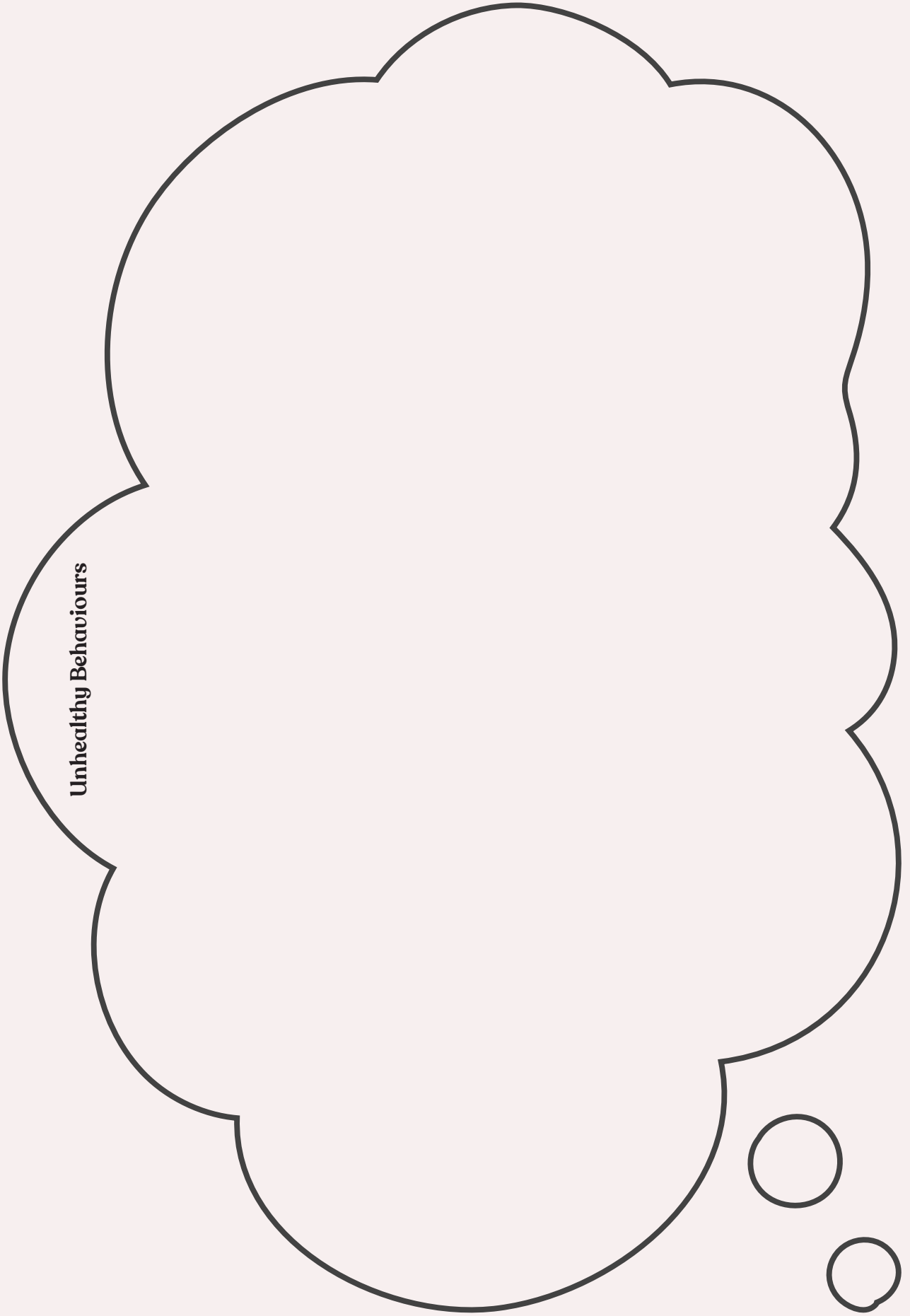
8. Optional Extension – Poster:

- Details available in Teacher Guidance.

Healthy Behaviours



Unhealthy Behaviours



Relationships Close-Up

Trust	Control	Respect	Belittling
Honesty	Trapped	Compromise	Intimidation
Communication	Intensity	Compassion	Possessiveness
Comfortable	Unpredictable	Independence	Jealousy
Financial Control	Sexual Violence	Equality	Dependence
Isolation	Fun	Consent	Manipulation
Safety	Sabotage	Betrayal	Loyalty
Boundaries	Stealth	Commitment	Happiness
Hitting	Gaslighting	Kissing	Encouragement
Support	Love Bombing	Empathy	Love

Relationships Continuum

Healthy	Unhealthy	Abusive

Relationships Continuum

<p>Checking your partner's phone.</p>	<p>Expecting to always know where your partner is and what they are doing.</p>	<p>Encouraging your partner to enter a school competition.</p>
<p>Calling your partner names.</p>	<p>Discussing with your partner when you are upset with them and why.</p>	<p>Pressuring your partner to send you nudes.</p>
<p>Making decisions together.</p>	<p>Making your partner feel guilty when they have plans with friends.</p>	<p>Pushing your partner to do something they are unsure of.</p>
<p>Your partner gets jealous when things are going well for you.</p>	<p>Threatening your partner.</p>	<p>Accusing your partner of cheating because they don't want to have sex with you.</p>
<p>Your partner denies their bad behaviour or blames you for it.</p>	<p><i>Make your own</i></p>	<p><i>Make your own</i></p>

Session 1

Teacher Guidance

- Introduction
- Group Guidelines
- Relationships Close Up
- Video Presentation
- Relationship Continuum
- How We Feel and How We Deal
- Summary Presentation
- Optional Extension - Poster

1. Introduction

Introduce the session topics to participants and discuss that these four lessons aim to raise awareness and reduce the prevalence of any harmful and abusive sexual behaviours. Through the sessions participants will cover relationships, consent and sexual violence both online and offline, as well as contextual issues that perpetuate sexual violence, abuse and rape culture. The learning should model and promote healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships and sex.

2. Group Guidelines

All guidance on making a group contract is to be found on page 16. This is an important piece in starting the lessons, to support young people in feeling they are in a safe space throughout delivery.

3. Relationships Close Up

Begin this activity by asking participants to identify different relationships they have in their lives: these may be friends, romantic partners, immediate and extended family, acquaintances, etc.

Ask participants to now work in pairs or small groups. Hand out the two 'Cloud' sheets in the activity pack titled 'Healthy Behaviours' and 'Unhealthy Behaviours', and ask students to list all the behaviours and actions they can think of that happen in relationships, on the appropriate sheet. Participants can then feed this back to the wider group.

Then hand out the provided list of behaviours within the activity pack and either discuss these with the group or ask participants to discuss them within their pair or group. Allow an opportunity for participants to add these to their 'cloud' sheets.

- Relationships are made up of a range of behaviours which can be characterized as healthy, unhealthy or abusive but, in general, should be mostly healthy.
 - These behaviours or traits may look dissimilar for different people: what is unhealthy for one person may be abusive or healthy for another.
 - Negative relationship traits or behaviour are not okay for anyone to experience, especially when they become controlling, harmful and disrespectful of boundaries.
-

4. Video Presentation – ‘The Couplets’

This presentation is based around short, animated clips made by an organisation called One Love, which aims to reduce intimate partner abuse among teenagers. ‘The Couplets’ show healthy and unhealthy versions of relationship behaviours so that participants can begin to identify ‘red flags’ within relationships. The discussion points for each part are included in the slides.

It may be very helpful for the facilitator to watch the following [Ted Talk](#) by Katie Hood from One Love in advance of the session. This Ted Talk showcases the ‘Couplets’ series of animations and gives insight into the theme.

5. Relationships Continuum

One Love, Having discussed Healthy and Unhealthy Behaviours within the previous activities, introduce the concept of abusive behaviours, and that some of the behaviours we have seen could be categorised as such. Have the short statements from the activity pack cut up in advance of the session. Hand out the Relationships Continuum page and the set of statements to each pair or small group and ask them to position each statement in the relevant category: ‘Healthy’, ‘Unhealthy’ and ‘Abusive’. Participants can then feed back to the wider group for discussion.

The likelihood is that participants may have categorised behaviours differently. The discussion can highlight that when some behaviours occur in isolation, they are unhealthy; however, repeated displays of these behaviours can be abusive. There are opportunities within this activity to begin to introduce upcoming topics such as consent and online sexual harm.

6. How We Feel and How We Deal

Impacts of Abusive Relationships:

Physical Effects

- Bruises
- Bruises on or around the eyes
- Red or purple marks at the neck
- Sprained or broken wrists
- Chronic fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle tension
- Involuntary shaking
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Sexual dysfunction
- Menstrual cycle or fertility issues in women

Mental Health Effects

- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), including flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety and uncontrollable thoughts
- Depression, including prolonged sadness
- Anxiety
- Low self-esteem and questioning sense of self
- Suicidal thoughts or attempts
- Alcohol and drug abuse

Emotional and Spiritual Effects

- Hopelessness
- Feeling unworthy
- Apprehensive and discouraged about the future
- Inability to trust
- Questioning and doubting spiritual faith
- Unmotivated

Common effects on children who witness domestic violence

Whether children witness or experience abuse, it can take a toll on their development. Domestic violence victims are not only intimate partners. Children are at an increased risk for emotional behavioural problems regardless of whether they were directly abused or not. The effects include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Academic problems
- Fearfulness

It is important to note that most relationships are healthy and productive but within some relationships negative behaviours can be present which impact directly on a victim and possibly their support network too.

Sometimes the warning signs are obvious, but unfortunately there are times when abuse is more hidden and harder to see or detect by either a victim, their family or friends.

Support Services

It may be useful to ask participants to research support services covering national and local organisations. They can look for relevant websites that offer advice, organisations that offer phone and text numbers for contact, as well as local youth organisations that might be able to offer support to any young person. This may offer the most widespread option of support services. Alternatively, facilitators can research this piece in advance to add local support organisations in addition to the relevant national supports provided.

7. Summary Presentation

The summary PowerPoint presentation includes aspects of a healthy relationship, and what that may look and feel like. This focuses on healthy boundaries, respect, kindness, empathy, safety and consent. Use the slides to discuss each part with participants. Explore these words and what they make look like in a healthy relationship. The session finishes on consent so the teacher can introduce the next session: this may be an opportunity to capture the base knowledge of the group. Reminder to students - From a prevention perspective, unhealthy relationships and behaviours are very detrimental for a person and can lead, in some cases, to sexual, domestic and gender-based violence. However, there are hugely positive aspects to relationships which include being fun, fulfilling, respectful, and caring. It is very possible to have meaningful and happy relationships whether romantic, sexual or platonic. The different types of relationships we have with family and friends can be key to us living happy and contented lives.

ALWAYS REMEMBER to trust your gut!

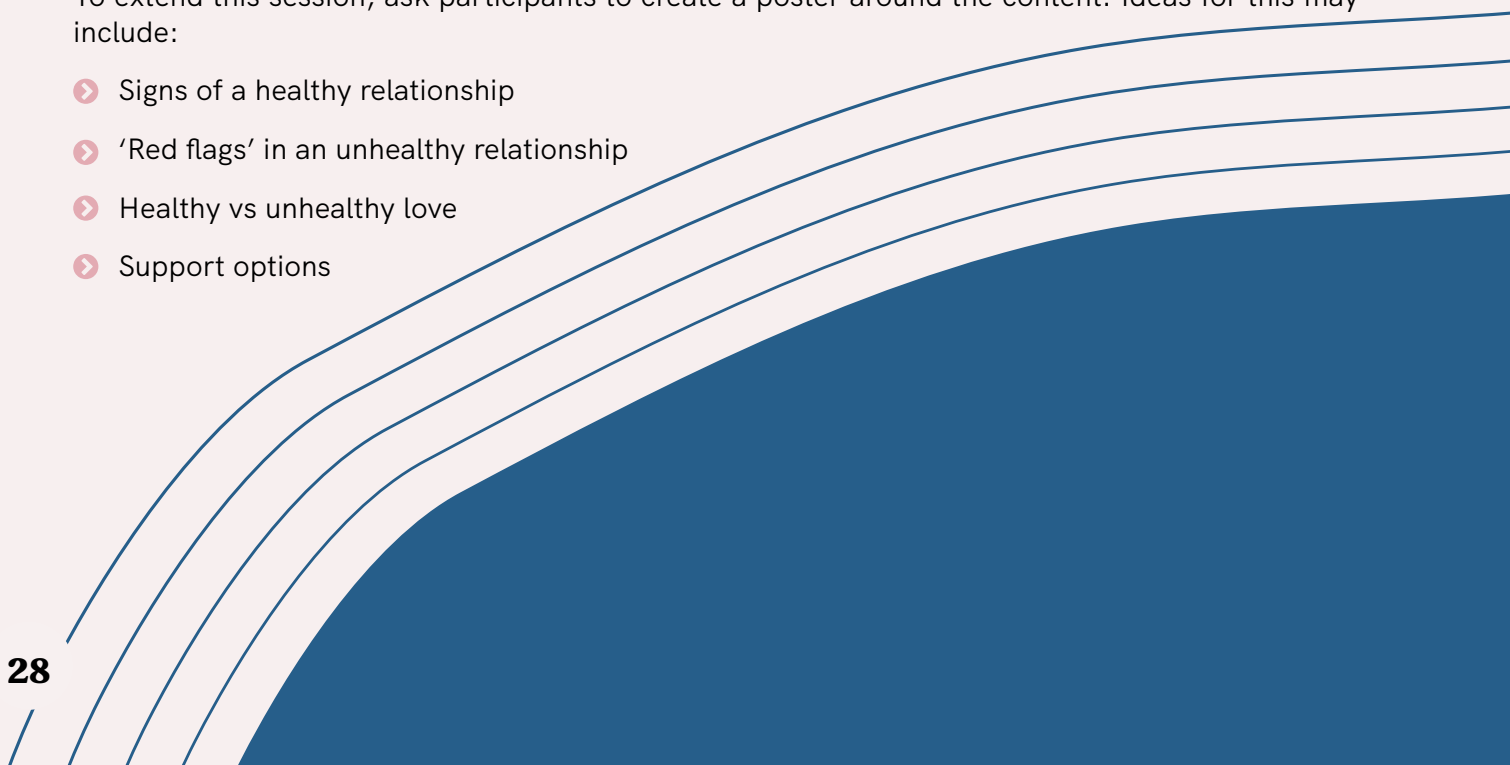
Boundaries can help you define what you are comfortable with and how you would like to be treated by others. Establishing mutually agreed boundaries in any relationship, and especially in a sexual relationship, has a number of benefits. Here are some examples:

- ▶ Honesty, seeking permission.
- ▶ Taking the other person's feelings and emotions into account.
- ▶ Showing respect for differences in opinions, feelings and preferences.
- ▶ Helping to support a positive experience and relationship.
- ▶ Supporting consistent respect and communication.
- ▶ Provide clarity and safe expectations around behaviours.
- ▶ Set out what is okay and not okay.

Such boundaries are especially important when negotiating consent for sexual activity

8. Optional Extension – Poster

To extend this session, ask participants to create a poster around the content. Ideas for this may include:

- ▶ Signs of a healthy relationship
 - ▶ 'Red flags' in an unhealthy relationship
 - ▶ Healthy vs unhealthy love
 - ▶ Support options
- 

Additional Information For Facilitator

Healthy Relationships

A healthy relationship is a relationship in which both people are able to maintain their individuality while still being committed to each other. A healthy relationship is important for the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of both partners. It is characterized by mutual respect, trust, honesty, commitment and empathy.

A healthy relationship should be rooted in the belief that both parties deserve to be treated with kindness, dignity and respect. There are many types of relationships that could be considered 'healthy'. Each type of healthy relationship has different characteristics that make it unique. For example, a healthy romantic couple would have a strong sense of intimacy and communication with one another, while platonic friends would have an understanding of boundaries and respect for one another's personal space.

Unhealthy Relationships

In general, an unhealthy relationship is one where one person is more invested in the relationship than the other. It is a situation where there is more love and care from one side than the other.

The person who cares less will often be emotionally or physically abusive to their partner. They might make their partner feel guilty for simply talking to someone else, they might refuse to listen when their partner talks about how they feel, and they might refuse to do things that make their partner happy.

Relationships can become unhealthy if one person takes on a parental role and tries to control everything that the other does. This type of controlling behaviour can lead to depression and anxiety in the victim of it. Overall, if the relationship is not one of mutual honesty, communication, and respect, there is a good chance it is an unhealthy relationship, in which case either it needs to be dealt with through therapy, communication and change or the relationship needs to end.

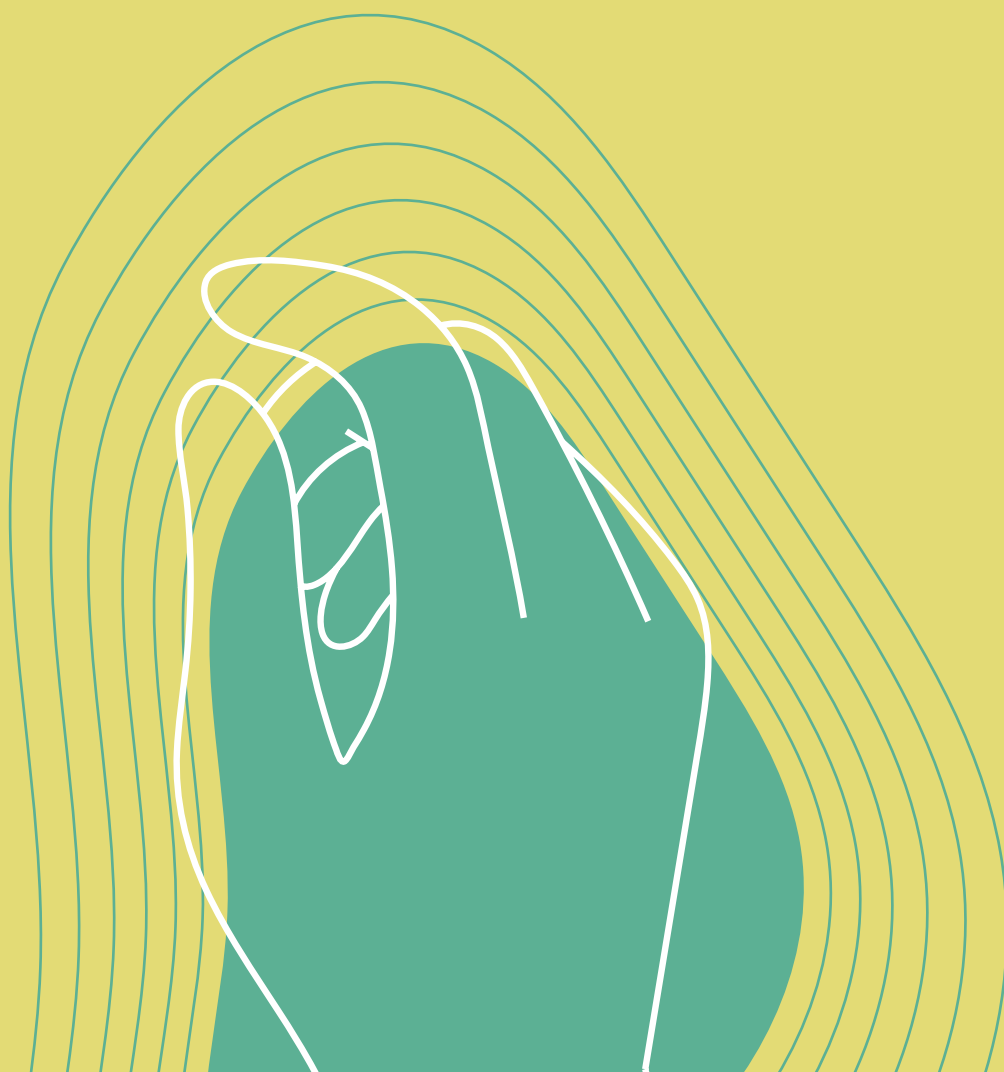
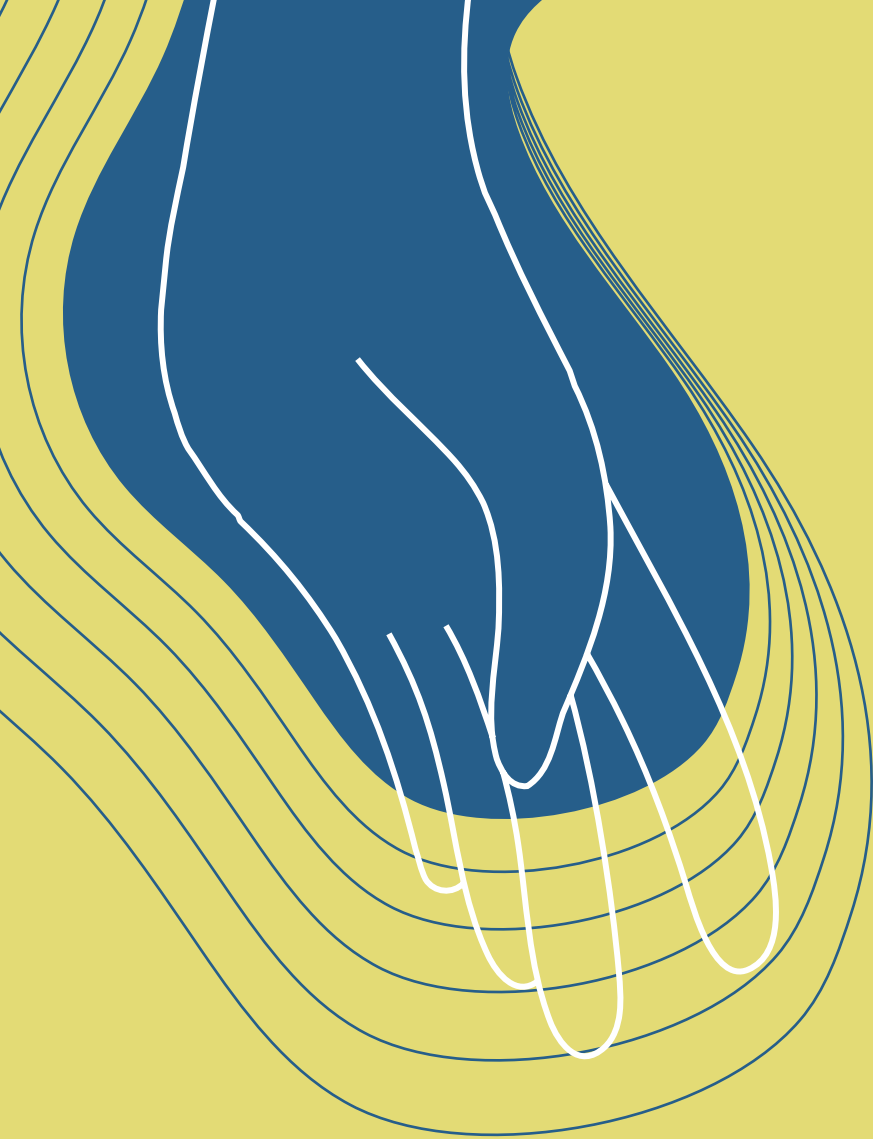
The first step in healing or exiting an unhealthy relationship is to recognise that one or more behaviours that either party is engaging in are unhealthy. If an unhealthy relationship is one where there is a cycle of abuse, shame or adultery, with no remorse from the offending party, it is a good time to seek help and end the relationship.

Abusive Relationships

While there are clear abusive behaviours, unhealthy behaviours can become abusive when a partner does not correct them, is exhibiting several unhealthy behaviours and/or has a pattern to their unhealthy behaviours. Abuse can be physical, emotional, financial, spiritual and/or religious in nature. Different forms of abuse can occur in tandem.

Examples of abuse can include: When a partner displays any form of physical violence or aggression (hitting, slapping, punching, biting, hair-pulling, etc.), forces you to engage in sexual activity, forces you to drink or do drugs, name calls, puts you down, diminishes your self-confidence and self-worth, controls your finances and spending- these are some examples of the different types of abuse, but there is a huge spectrum.

For example, financial abuse may be about controlling your finances, but it is also emotional or verbal in nature. However, physical abuse may be easier to notice as compared to other forms, because of its nature. Abuse centres around one person having power and control over the other. An abusive person does not want to have, or restore, equality in the relationship and will manipulate their partner and their partner's actions to gain and maintain power and control. The Power and Control Wheel provides additional examples of abusive behaviours.



Session 2

Sexual Consent and the Law

Lesson Plan

Session 2 follows the learning from Session 1 - Healthy Relationships, by examining consent and what that means in the context of a sexual relationship. Participants will explore the nuances of consent, and Irish laws related to consent. This session highlights the skills and knowledge needed to establish healthy, consensual sexual relationships. This session also gives students an awareness of sexual violence, and the support services available to them.

Learning Outcomes

- ▶ Participants will be able to **DEMONSTRATE** a clear understanding of consent and the law.
 - ▶ Participants will **RECOGNISE** that mutual consent is required for any sexual activity.
-

Materials Needed

- ▶ Copies of Zac & Zena scenario.
 - ▶ Brainstorm activity.
 - ▶ Consent presentation.
 - ▶ Facilitator-led piece and relevant information.
 - ▶ Additional Zac & Zena scenario statements.
 - ▶ Scissors (if Zac & Zena statements have not been cut out beforehand)
 - ▶ Consent quiz.
 - ▶ Support services.
-

Procedure

1. Elbow bump activity

- ▶ Instruct the group that they have two minutes only to get consent to 'elbow bump' as many people as they can in that time without talking.
- ▶ You must ensure you have the other person's permission to do this and both must agree to 'elbow bump'.

Discussion Points

- ▶ How did it feel not being able to speak to the other person?
- ▶ Was it easy or difficult to understand their body language?
- ▶ What did or did not help this work between you?
- ▶ Can you see how non-verbal cues and body language are linked to consent and boundaries?

2. Zac and Zena Scenario

Hand out the Zac and Zena scenario to small groups to explore together. Groups to feed back to the wider class based around facilitator prompts:

- Having read the scenario, has anything struck you?
 - What do you think happened after this scenario?
 - What is the legal age of consent?
 - Do you think each person's boundaries were clear here?
-

3. "What is Consent?" Brainstorm Activity

Instruct the group to form pairs, providing each with one of the following questions:

- When you hear the word consent, what does it mean to you?
 - List some examples of when we need consent in life?
 - How would you describe Consent?
 - Did you know there is a legal definition of consent in Ireland
 - What is a boundary?
 - Where/why do we have boundaries?
 - What are examples of boundaries in our lives? - Personal? Social? Societal? Legal?
 - Who sets boundaries?
 - Invite participants to share some of their answers.
-

4. Definition of Consent

- Show presentation.
 - Facilitators are invited to devise their own method of how best to deliver the additional information.
-

5. Revised Zac and Zena Scenario

- Instruct participants to get back into their original pairs
- Hand out copy of the Zac and Zena scenario and the additional statements with scissors.
- Groups to explore the scenario again and place statements where they are relevant.
- Feedback among the wider group

Opportunity for facilitator-led reinforcement:

- Was consent negotiated?
- Did Zac and Zena discuss their boundaries?

- › What communication methods were used?
 - › How do we establish clear boundaries in sex?
 - › What other non-verbal cues might indicate whether consent is present or not?
-

6. Video resources

Show one (or both) of the following videos to students, time allowing:

- › '[Learn the Basics of Consent](#)' (2020) (1 min 53 secs) (NSVRC, National Sexual Violence Resource Centre founded by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape.)
- › '[Consent Explained - What Is It?](#)' (2016) (1 min 46 secs) Or: AMAZE Org.

Questions

- › What are your thoughts on the videos?
 - › Is there anything that stood out to you?
-

7. Quiz

- › Hand out "How well do you understand CONSENT?" Quiz worksheet to each student

OR

- › Facilitator controls quiz on projector and completes with the whole class (This can be an opportunity not only for consolidation of learning but to continue learning through discussion after each question).
- › Quiz needs to be operated in full slideshow mode using the on-screen buttons.
- › Tip: Explore the right and wrong answers.

8. Let's Practise

- Ask participants to work in pairs or small groups to discuss/write/roleplay asking for consent in various ways and responding to these requests.
- Support and emphasise the skills of communication and negotiation that need to take place.

Follow up questions:

- What did it feel like to ask for consent?
 - What forms of communication and negotiation were needed?
 - Did any other factors affect the conversation, or make it awkward? If so, what were they and how could they be avoided in the future?
-

9. Summarise and Close

- Reiterate key points
- Share support services information
- Final questions

Elbow Bump Activity

Explain to the group:

- This is a silent activity, no speaking allowed.
 - This quick icebreaker will look at non-verbal cues and body language.
-

Instruct the group they have two minutes only to get consent to 'elbow bump' as many people as you can in that time without talking.

You must ensure you have the other person's permission to do this and both must agree to 'elbow bump'.

Discussion prompts for the activity:

- How did it feel not being able to speak to the other person?
- Was it easy or difficult to understand their body language?
- What did or did not help this work between you?
- Can you see how non-verbal cues and body language are linked to consent and boundaries?

Zac & Zena Scenario

Zac and Zena know each other through friends. Both are sixteen and very popular in their year group - a lot of young people fancy them both.

Zena recently started following Zac on Instagram and they talk daily through DMs - there's a lot of banter back and forth, with flirting and intensity increasing very quickly.

They both know that a huge house party is on next weekend at Zac's best friend's house, and everyone is going. They begin chatting about the party and Zac asks if Zena will be drinking at the party as he heard she is 'great craic with a few drinks' in her. He says everyone will be drinking and smoking weed. The conversation continues between them over the next few days, and the day before the house party, they talk about 'hooking up' with each other at it. Zena asks if Zac wants to have sex with her at the party and he agrees over Instagram that he will, saying he'll bring her favourite drink and a few joints.

At the party, Zac and Zena are very flirty and start kissing. They hang out with their own friends and every so often Zac reappears in Zena's circle and gives her another drink. They kiss again and this time the intensity increases - Zena gestures towards the stairs and takes Zac's hand and they both head up to find a free bedroom. They find an empty bedroom, go in and start kissing and feeling each other up. Zena begins to feel dizzy but is enjoying shifting Zac and the chance to be on their own, because she knows everyone saw her with him downstairs. All the girls fancy him, and here she is, kissing him!

In the bedroom things start to become more sexual, as Zena moves her hands to Zac's bum. Zac asks Zena if she is 'up for it now', but she is beginning to feel really sick and her head is spinning, so after a few more seconds she pulls away from him. He continues to kiss her and moves to put his hand up her skirt. She pulls back and stumbles onto the bed, rolls over and says she wants to go to sleep and asks Zac to lie down with her for a while and if they could 'spoon'. He replies she is being a tease! She looks at him but doesn't say anything, Zac stops speaking and lies down with her.

Zena falls asleep almost instantly. Zac is aware her clothes are open and messy and starts to wonder if they can still 'have a fool around'. As his thoughts are racing, he thinks 'Should I try to wake her up? She was up for it earlier... we did agree that we'd have sex at the party... She wanted this as much as me... She took my hand and brought me upstairs ...I can't go back downstairs and tell the lads I didn't actually have sex with her, I'd be so embarrassed... It's not fair to agree to be up for it and then not follow through, I feel like she's led me on...'

Having read the scenario, has anything stood out to you?

What do you think happened straight after this scenario?

Make a note of your initial thoughts and we will come back to them in a few minutes.

How well do you understand CONSENT?

1

What is Consent?

- An agreement between all participants that they definitely want to do any sexual act
- Fully, clearly, and continuously agreeing to engage in any sexual act when sober
- Something that must be continuous for the duration of any sexual act
- All of the above

6

Does marriage or a long term commitment change the rules about Consent?

- Yes
- No
- Only on Tuesdays
- Sometimes

2

The legal age to consent to engage in a sexual act in Ireland is..

- 16
- 17
- 18
- 21

7

If you think someone wants to have sex with you, you should...

- Ask them respectfully if that is what they want
- Kiss their neck and rub your hands down their body
- Ask them do they want to go to your bedroom
- Buy them a drink

3

How can sexual consent be expressed?

- Through the clothes that someone is wearing
- By someone's friend telling you that they want to have sex
- Through clear and enthusiastic verbal and non-verbal cues
- By having previously had sex

8

You should stop having sex with someone if...

- They are not responding to your touch
- Their body stiffens and they turn their face away from you
- They seem upset and turn silent
- All of the above

4

Who must give Sexual Consent

- The person's mom
- The person who is more powerful in the relationship
- Both people involved in the sexual encounter
- The person who wants to initiate the activity

9

If you are being intimate with someone and they say they want to stop you should...

- Continue to kiss them and try to change their mind
- Stop and tell them it makes you feel bad that they don't want to continue
- Respect what they want and tell them you only want to continue if they do too
- Try a different position

5

Consent cannot be given if...

- The person has only met you recently
- The person has previously dated your friend
- If the person doesn't want a relationship
- The person is drunk or high

10

Who does Consent apply to?

- People who aren't married
- People who identify as Gender Queer
- Parents
- Everybody

Scenario Information

<p>This is under the legal age of consent.</p>	<p>People are not clear and coherent while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.</p>	<p>While it is healthy to discuss boundaries ahead of time, consent itself cannot be pre-agreed.</p>
<p>Consent must be negotiated every step of the way.</p>	<p>Both verbal and nonverbal cues must be watched out for.</p>	<p>Consent is something you have to give and receive, it is a two-way process.</p>
<p>Consent must be ongoing, enthusiastic & clear.</p>	<p>Consent can be retracted at any point.</p>	<p>Consent must be attained only when the person is awake, conscious and able to consent to what is occurring.</p>
<p>Past consent is not future consent for any sexual activity.</p>	<p>Zac asks for consent, but Zena is sick and under the influence, and so may not be aware of what she is being asked, or what she's consenting to.</p>	<p>Just because a person doesn't say the word "No" or resist physically, does not mean they are consenting to a sexual act.</p>
<p>Boundaries must be agreed upon, setting out clear and acceptable behaviours, likes, dislikes etc.</p>	<p>We need consent at the time of the act and as the act is taking place.</p>	

Session 2

Teacher Guidance

- Elbow bump activity
 - Zac and Zena - Scenario
 - “What is Consent?” Brainstorm Activity
 - Definition of Consent
 - Revised Scenario
 - Video
 - Quiz
 - Let’s Practice
 - Summarise & Close
-

Before You Begin:

What is Consent?

Consent is the giving and receiving of permission for something to happen, or an agreement to do something. Sexual consent is an agreement or permission to engage in sexual activity of any kind (kissing, touching, oral sex, penetrative sex, digital intimacy, etc.).

The age of consent in the Republic of Ireland is 17. In the Northern Ireland the age of consent is 16. For the creation or sending of sexual images (“nudes”), the age of consent is 18.

In the first session, students discuss healthy and unhealthy boundaries in all types of Relationships (including romantic relationships) and how to recognise abusive behaviours. In this session, students build upon learning to explore:

- Healthy and unhealthy sexual behaviours
- Recognising consent and non-consent
- How to communicate consent and non-consent
- Recognising how we should feel (i.e. respected, listened to, enthusiastic) when we are consenting to sexual activity.

Some important points to remember when discussing sexual consent with students:

- Consent is a skill: knocking on doors and waiting to be admitted or refused entry is consent, and we do this every day without thinking. To ensure healthy sexual consent, we must apply those same skills to sexual consent, by practicing open communication.

Consent to sexual activity should first and foremost be:

- Ongoing: continuous throughout sexual activity from beginning to end
- Positive/Affirmative: it should be a definite, enthusiastic yes – sexual activity should be fun and safe for everyone involved

- Freely Given: an act is only truly consensual if it takes place free of pressure (this could be from someone else, or an internal pressure a person places on themselves to do something they are uncomfortable with) free of coercion or threat, where the person is fully aware of what they are agreeing to, and between people who don't have an imbalance of power between them.

Consent can be given in lots of different ways, either verbally or non-verbally, though if we're uncertain, we can always ask our partner – the same goes for refusing or withdrawing consent – people can indicate to us in many ways that they feel uncomfortable or are upset.

Students should be encouraged to think deeply about how different people express boundaries, and how we can encourage open communication with our partners.

1. Elbow Bump Activity

This icebreaker activity allows students to explore the ways people communicate non-verbally, while engaging and communicating actively with one another about boundaries.

Encourage students to be gentle with one another and move around the room safely.

After the initial exercise, discussion prompts (in lesson plan) should encourage students to reflect on:

- Ways that different people communicate yes or no non-verbally – was it the same for everyone?
- Did anyone refuse to elbow bump you? Did you refuse to elbow bump anyone?
N.B. this can be an opportunity to point out that communication can be a lot easier when everyone is given the parameters beforehand and knows what is about to happen, and also that people can feel socially obligated to do something that they might think is strange.
- If students describe the exercise in a vague way e.g. "Weird", "fun", "hard", "easy", ask them in what way? Allow them to drill a little more down into what made it easy/difficult to communicate.

This is a simple way of showcasing the consent process in action, to lead into the following activity.

2. Zac and Zena – Scenario

Before handing out the scenario explain to the group that this scenario is fictional - however, the story may contain aspects or experiences similar to their own or their peers.

Once students have read through the scenario in small groups, facilitate a short discussion of their initial impressions of the story. This doesn't have to be too in-depth about laws, etc. We will return to the scenario after we have discussed consent and boundaries in later activities.

Encourage critical thinking by guiding students to consider:

- What were the verbal or non-verbal cues that Zac was consenting/not consenting?
- What were the verbal or non-verbal cues that Zena was consenting/not consenting?

After discussing personal boundaries and legal consent in more detail in the following two activities, this scenario can be re-visited with the new information learned.

3. “What is Consent?” Brainstorm Activity

In this activity, students are asked to explore in pairs the meaning of consent and various types of boundaries, using the questions listed in your lesson plan.

Use the Zac & Zena scenario as a guide for discussion. Students will brainstorm their understanding of what boundaries are, the meaning of consent (and sexual consent). Following this, the class will look at the legal definition of consent.

Invite participants to share some of their answers. Time allowing, share some of the following definitions with them to affirm learning.

- Consent is generally described as getting permission, agreeing to do something, checking if it is okay to do something.
- Consent is a skill that we all need to explore, understand, and practice safely. And the good news is, you are all already experts in consent e.g. knocking on doors and waiting to be invited inside, communicating with friends about what you want to do etc.
- Everyone has the right to enjoyable, positive and fulfilling sex, and consent is the foundation for this.
- Sexual activity should be a safe and consensual experience for everyone involved.
- Sex without consent is rape or sexual assault.
- It is very important to check in with your partner throughout sexual activity, not just at the beginning. Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal cues to see how comfortable your partner is. If you are unsure, you can always ask the person what they want, or how they are feeling.
- Tune in to your own body and pay attention to your own comfort.
- A boundary is a limit or rule - there are lots of different types of boundaries.
 - Legal boundaries: Laws that are in place to protect all in society.
 - Social boundaries: Expectations of how we behave in social situations
 - Personal boundaries: limits we set for ourselves within relationships and our lives generally - this could be with friends, family, in a marriage, dating/texting relationships.
 - Physical boundaries between sites, neighbours, countries and so on, just because a boundary is not physically visible, they are still there.

Boundaries provide us with a roadmap for our expectations and how we want to be treated within a relationship.

Remember, if a partner says “No” to you - this is a good thing! They’re not rejecting you, just the activity. This means they feel safe enough with you to communicate their boundaries.

It is our responsibility to agree clear boundaries with our partners, and give and get consent every single time, every step of the way.

Ask the group if they think it is possible to act without consent (and therefore risking being a perpetrator of sexual violence) without intending to violate someone’s boundaries?

4. Definition of Consent

Present the 'Consent Defined' PowerPoint to the class.

Following the presentation please refer to 'Legal Definition of Consent Activity' handout. You can give individual hand-outs to each student, or complete this activity together as a group.

Points of note for this discussion:

Students often have questions regarding the age of consent, and some will have heard about the "Romeo and Juliet" defence.

Highlight with young people that the age of consent exists to protect young people from being taken advantage of, or from being pressured or coerced into sexual activity by someone with more power or influence than them e.g. An adult, a mentor, etc. It does not exist to criminalise young people for normal sexual exploration.

Therefore, the 'Proximity of Age' defence is a provision under the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, also referred to as the 'Romeo and Juliet' defence. If a person charged with the offence of engaging in a sexual act with a person under the age of 17, they can make the argument that this was consensual sex if the following 4 points apply:

- ▶ The person charged is younger or is less than two years older.
- ▶ Agreement was given fully and voluntarily.
- ▶ They must not be in authority over the child.
- ▶ The relationship must not be based on intimidation or exploitation i.e. the person involved is not pressuring or threatening the other.

This does not mean that the age of consent doesn't matter. While under 17, young people are still the responsibility of their legal guardian, and deemed too young to consent to sexual activity. If a young person under 17 is not comfortable discussing their sexual activity with their parents or guardian, it is always safer to wait until 17.

5. Revised Zac and Zena Scenario

Now we return to the original Zac and Zena scenario, where students have the opportunity to re-examine the scenario using the information about personal boundaries, respect and responsibility, and the laws surrounding consent in Ireland.

Points to highlight with students within the story are:

- ▶ **What age are Zac and Zena?**
16, not the legal age.
- ▶ **Thinking back on the conditions that are necessary for consent, are there any issues with this scenario/the way that the couple are navigating consent?**
They will not be clear and coherent under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
Consent cannot be pre-agreed, must be at the time of the act or as the act is taking place.
Consent must be attained only when the person is awake, conscious and able to agree to what is occurring.

➤ **Did Zac and Zena discuss their boundaries or expectations beforehand?**

Consent must be negotiated every step of the way.

Boundaries must be agreed, setting out clear and acceptable behaviours, likes, dislikes.

While it's a good idea to talk about it beforehand, past consent is not future consent for any sexual activity, and someone still has to make sure at the time if their partner is consenting.

Consent is something you have to give and receive, it is a two-way process of negotiation.

➤ **How do you know if consent was taken away?**

There are many ways to tell if a person is not consenting: If they say "No", freeze or seem physically tense, or if they say "Yes" but seem anxious or unsure. They might just be saying "Yes" to appease the other person.

A lack of a "No" is not the presence of a "Yes". Not saying "No" or pushing someone away does NOT mean they have consented.

Consent must be an ongoing process. Check in with your partner's verbal and non-verbal cues. Remember that consent can be retracted at any point.

The ending of this scenario is left open to show the choice that Zac (and all of us) have during sexual activity. We can always choose not to act on sexual feelings, until we are certain the other person is on the same page.

We have a responsibility to ensure that nothing we do crosses someone else's boundaries or puts them in danger.

It is also important to highlight that romantic and sexual relationships should be a positive experience. Sexual activity should be healthy, consensual and pleasurable for everyone. This happens when consent and boundaries are clear and established.

6. Video

On devices or a large screen show the students one or both videos, depending on time allowances. Follow up by asking students what they thought of the videos, or what stood out to them.

"Learn the Basics of Consent" (2020) (1 min 53 secs)

"Consent Explained - what is it?" (2016) (1 min 46 secs)

7. Quiz

The "How well do you understand CONSENT?" is a quiz in PowerPoint form that can be facilitated with the full group on the board/screen, or individually if necessary, on worksheets in your activity pack.

This quiz draws together and summarises the learning in Session 2, and reinforces the main messages about what positive, healthy consent looks and feels like. Students can be asked to call out answers or put their hands up, any way that you feel this would be best facilitated.

Each answer can be clicked on and will take you to the explanation for whether the answer is right

or wrong. All relevant information is in the PowerPoint, and it can be clicked through in its entirety in slideshow mode in PowerPoint.

8. Let's Practice

Break students into pairs or small groups to ask them to discuss, write or roleplay asking for consent in various ways and responding to these requests. Students are to explore what giving consent and not giving consent may look like, as well as ways to check in on their partner. See below for examples.

Support and emphasise the skills of communication and negotiation that need to take place. Following this get students to feedback to the wider group, using the discussion questions in your lesson plan.

VERBAL Indicators of consent, or withdrawing consent, could include:

- Is it okay if we just kiss or cuddle?
- If I don't like it can we please stop?
- I don't like that, please stop
- Can we stop for a second?
- This isn't really working for me, I think I need a break.
- Do you need a minute?
- Do you want to keep going or stop?
- If you're not comfortable please tell me and I'll stop, I want to make sure we're both enjoying ourselves.
- I'll still like you if you do/don't do .
- Do you want to have sex?
- Does this feel good?
- Do you like that?
- Are you sure you want to do this?
- Keep going!
- Can we do that again?
- That feels good!
- Is this what you like?
- I want to do this - is that ok?
- Is it ok if I.....?
- Are you up for this?
- Can we try it this way instead?

NON-VERBAL Indicators of consent, or withdrawing consent, could include:

- Nodding
- Smiling
- Moving in closer
- Seeming relaxed
- Removing clothing
- Eye contact
- Open body language
- Moaning, sighing (positively!)
- "Freezing" or tensing up
- Pulling away
- Stopping kissing or touching
- Stopping a person from removing or opening clothing
- Moving away from someone
- Pushing someone away
- Crying/becoming upset

9. Summarise & Close**Support Services**

It is important that students know where to access support services, and that these services are clearly signposted for them before and after the session. Refer to the support services listed at the end of your handbook and make a Support Services Poster or handout for your classroom using the relevant services and any more you may know of in your area.

Remind students of in school supports such as school councillor, Chaplin or class teacher. Some students may feel reluctant to speak to someone in the school due to the sensitive nature of what might be going on for them.

Other students simply may feel they need more information on the topics discussed in order to support themselves or someone close to them. It is important that specialised support services including local and national helpline numbers for Rape Crisis centres, Hotline.ie etc. can be accessed by all students if needed. See appendix one for information on all support services.

...And the Sexual Consent and the Law session is complete. In the next session, you'll build on this learning around positive consent and boundaries and explore the ways we can recognise and combat sexual violence.



Session 3

Sexual Violence

Lesson Plan

Session 3 focuses on the issue of sexual violence. This session enhances students' understanding of sexual violence as a broad spectrum of many harmful and unacceptable behaviours, not simply sexual assault and abuse. Students will also reflect on and challenge societal acceptance of these occurrences.

This session will begin to introduce themes such as the impact of sexual violence, victim-blaming, bystander intervention and disclosures.

Learning Outcomes

- **DEFINE** the various forms of sexual violence.
- **DEVELOP** increased awareness of sexual violence and societal attitudes towards it.
- **INCREASE** skills, knowledge and attitudes that decrease the perpetration of sexual violence.

Materials Needed

- Graffiti Wall materials and markers.
- Video links (embedded).
- The two provided presentations.
- Activity: 'Is this okay?'.
- Worksheet - 'What happened?'
- 'Jay's Story' questions.
- Additional facilitator information.

Procedure

1. Graffiti Wall

- Introduce sexual violence as a broad umbrella term.
- Using a flipchart or whiteboard, write SEXUAL VIOLENCE in the middle.
- Instruct participants to come up in groups and write any actions or behaviours they can think of that would constitute sexual violence in coloured markers. It is okay if the same terms are repeated.
- Nurture this activity - Support participants to widen their understanding that behaviours such as online sexual harm and sexual harassment are also sexual violence.
- Feed back to the class what is on the wall and discuss.

2. What is sexual harassment? Discussion and video.

- Ask participants what sexual harassment is.
 - Explore this term with them.
 - Acknowledge that although many of us have heard the term, it's not unusual to not really know what it means.
 - Play [video](#).
 - Discuss:
 - ▶ Do the behaviours in the video seem familiar?
 - ▶ What types of sexual harassment are happening in schools or peer groups?
 - ▶ Do you think sexual harassment in teens is common?
-

3. "Teen sexual harassment" presentation

- Go through 'Sexual Harassment amongst Teens' presentation.
 - This will highlight the prevalence of sexual harassment among adolescents in Ireland.
 - Discuss with participants whether they feel this is reflective of the teen experiences they witness.
-

4. Activity: 'Is this okay?'

- All instructions are available on the activity sheet.
 - This is a whole-group activity to be led by the facilitator.
 - Use the final question to highlight the continuum of sexual violence, bringing in sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.
-

4. Activity: 'Is this okay?'

- All instructions are available on the activity sheet.
- Instruct participants to work in pairs or small groups.
- Read the statements and ask participants what took place from the following options:
 - ▶ Rape
 - ▶ Sexual Assault
 - ▶ Sexual Harassment
 - ▶ Sexual Coercion
 - ▶ Intimate partner violence

Answers:

- ▶ Statement 1: Sexual Coercion
- ▶ Statement 2: Intimate Partner Violence
- ▶ Statement 3: Rape
- ▶ Statement 4: Intimate Partner Violence
- ▶ Statement 5: Rape
- ▶ Statement 6: Sexual Harassment
- ▶ Statement 7: Sexual Assault
- ▶ Statement 8: Sexual Coercion
- ▶ Statement 9: Sexual Harassment
- ▶ Statement 10: Sexual Assault

6. Video: ‘The Story of Jay’

- ▶ Explain to the group that the descriptions in the previous activity “What happened?” were quite clear, but in real life, sexual violence and abuse can be much more subtle.
- ▶ Introduce the concept of sexual exploitation.
- ▶ Play [video](#).
- ▶ Give participants the related questions to answer in small groups and then feedback

OR

- ▶ Pose the questions to the full group and discuss with them.
- ▶ It is your responsibility to ensure students understand that the narrator (victim) is not at fault – sexual violence is always the perpetrator’s fault.
- ▶ Additional guidance is available in the Teacher Guidance Section.

Tip: It may be useful to play video again once participants have the questions.

7. Disclosure: Supporting and Reporting presentation

- ▶ Share the Disclosure: Supporting & Reporting presentation
- ▶ Explain the difference between disclosure and reporting
- ▶ Explain the following using the descriptions in your Teacher Guidance.
- ▶ Reasons people don’t disclose sexual assault
- ▶ Benefits of disclosing negative sexual experiences
- ▶ Share discussion questions included in slides.

8. Summarise

- Summarise the session.
 - Reiterate key points.
 - Questions.
-

9. “Why do it?” Activity

- Discuss with participants how this session may have been difficult for them – it has been a reflection of sexual violence, and not healthy relationships and positive sexuality.
- Ask participants to work in groups and list all the positive aspects of relationships and sex. Participants to feed back to the group.

Tip: Let them have fun with this – it is beneficial for them to end the session looking at a brighter perspective and be reminded that relationships and sex conducted in a healthy and consensual way have many positive aspects.

10. Close session

- Share support services information.
- Close.

Is this okay? - Traffic Light Game

Preparation for this activity:

Cut up pieces of Red, Green and Orange/Yellow paper in quarters. Have enough so that each participant has one of each colour.

Whole Group Activity:

Read out the statements below and, after each statement, ask the young people to vote on whether or not the behaviour described is:

Green - okay/appropriate/acceptable

Red - not okay/inappropriate/unacceptable

Orange/Yellow - not sure

After each vote, ask the young people why they voted the way they did. After you have completed the scenario, ask the follow up questions to explore the character's feelings.

First scenario

- Lily, who is thirteen, is walking to the shop with her younger cousin. Three boys from the year above her at school shout across the road at her and say, "nice dress!" **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- Lily tries to ignore the boys and carries on walking. They call over again and say, "Your bum looks great." **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- Lily speeds up, and so do the boys. They shout over some more, and one of them says "You should come to mine later, that dress would look great on my floor." **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**

Follow up questions:

- How might Lily have felt when the boys first called over to her?
- How might Lily have felt when they carried on?
- If we think that the situation is not acceptable then why might the boys have continued?

Second Scenario

- Billy who is fifteen, gets the bus to school with a lot of other students. A group of other students often brush their hands across Billy's body when Billy walks past them to sit down, thinking it's funny. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- When Billy finds a seat, the other students move to sit nearby, and start showing the nude photos they have on their phones. Some of the photos are of girls from the school. Billy tries to look away, but they keep putting their phones right in her eyeline. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- The students start comparing the photos to Billy, making comments about her breasts and bum, and keep asking her to send them nudes so they can see 'who's the fittest'. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**

Follow up questions :

- How might Billy feel when she sees these boys on the bus?
- How might Billy feel when the boys move to sit near her?
- How might Billy feel when they show her the photos and make comments?

Third scenario

- Alan is in TY at school, he's pretty shy and quiet. When he arrives one morning, Aoife in his class tells him he looks 'hot'. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- After lunch that same day, Aoife asks Alan out on a date. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- Alan had said no to the date, in the weeks following this Aoife continues to ask Alan out on dates saying she wants to have sex with him, this is happening in front of other students and through messages. The other students think it's hilarious. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**

Follow up questions:

- How Alan feel when he sees Aoife?
- What do you think Aoife's motivations were for continuing to do this?
- What could the other students have done?

Fourth Scenario

- Jake is sixteen, and is gay. A boy at school, Joe, often teases Jake about his sexuality. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- Jake is walking through the corridor at school. Joe sees him, grabs him by the arm, and pulls him into the school showers. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**
- Joe tries to pull Jakes trousers down to have sex with him. When Jake resists, Joe says 'but you're gay, you like this stuff'. **(Is this okay? Vote, & explore)**

Follow up questions:

- How might Jake have felt when Joe teased him about his sexuality?
- How might Jake have felt when Joe pulled him into the showers?

Question to finish with:

- What were the similarities and differences between these scenarios?

(This discussion can highlight the affects of ongoing behaviours and the continuum of sexual harassment leading into sexual assault.)

What Happened?

Read the following statements and decide what took place from the following options: Rape, Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Coercion or Intimate Partner Violence.

Statement	Verdict
You had sex with me before, so why not now? I take it you lied when you said you were in to me.	
They had been messaging their ex when they were with me, after the smack in the face I gave, I don't think they will be doing that again.	
They kept turning me down for sex, after I spiked their drink, things soon changed.	
Begging your partner to watch porn with you when he said it made him uncomfortable. If he loved you, he would want to make you happy. So, what is the problem?	
She was wearing a tiny, tight dress. She may have said no but she was asking for sex.	
A group of friends in the class keep making sexual comments about your body.	
I only pushed them up against the wall and put my hand up their top. I didn't hit them.	
Well if you won't have sex with me, you're clearly having sex with someone else. I knew I should have never trusted you.	
They keep touching my hair and face. They sit really close to me and whisper disgusting things in my ear. I try to move away, but they keep telling me to chill out, it's only a joke.	
They are meant to be my friend, but when they hugged me, they slid their hand under my skirt and into my knickers. I happened really quickly and everyone was there, I was so shocked, I didn't know what to say, so I said nothing.	

The Story of Jay Questions

What are the warning signs in the video that this is exploitation?

Do you think Jay groomed the girl narrating the video? How?

What made her stay in the relationship?

What are the impacts of this relationship on the narrator?

Was anyone at fault in this situation? Why?

Session 3

Teacher Guidance

- Graffiti Wall – Sexual violence
 - What is sexual harassment?
 - Teen sexual harassment presentation
 - Activity: Is this okay?
 - Activity: What happened?
 - Jay's Story
 - Disclosure: Supporting & reporting
 - Summarise
 - Why do it? – Positive relationships and sexuality
 - Close
-

Before You Begin:

What is sexual violence?

'Sexual violence' is a term we use to describe any sexual activity that happened without consent. Sexual violence is any kind of sexual activity or act (including online) that was unwanted or involved one or more of the following:

- Pressure
- Manipulation
- Bullying
- Intimidation
- Threats
- Deception
- Force
- Drugs or alcohol

There are lots of different types of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, online sexual harm, and exploitation. No one ever deserves or asks for sexual violence to happen – not even a little bit. 100% of the blame lies with the perpetrator or perpetrators. However, many of the myths surrounding sexual violence can make victims and survivors feel as though they are somehow to blame, or that what happened to them wasn't 'real' sexual violence.

Some important things to remember about sexual violence are:

- It is never the victim's fault.
- It does not have to leave a person with visible injuries.
- It does not have to involve other physical violence or weapons.
- If the victim or survivor didn't scream, try to run away or fight, that doesn't mean it wasn't sexual violence.
- It's common for people who experience sexual violence to find themselves unable to move or speak.
- Sexual violence can be perpetrated by a stranger, but it is very often perpetrated by someone that the person knows or even trusts: for example, a friend, colleague, family member, trusted adult, partner or ex-partner.
- Orgasming or experiencing feelings of arousal during sexual violence doesn't mean it wasn't sexual violence.
- A victim or survivor of sexual violence was never 'asking for it'.
- It doesn't matter what they were wearing or what consensual sexual activity or other interaction happened before the sexual violence.

1. Graffiti Wall

Terms we want to see on the Graffiti Wall are anything to do with:

- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault
- Online sexual harm
- Coercive sexual behaviours
- Rape
- Non-consensual sexual activity – because a person either didn't consent or couldn't consent due to age, drugs and/or alcohol, etc.

Nurture this activity to ensure the Graffiti Wall reflects the list above, providing hints and prompts if needed.

Let participants know that the majority of relationships are positive, whether platonic, romantic or sexual – but just like anything in life, there are negative sides to sex that we must be able to recognize, in order to know what a healthy, positive sexual interaction looks like!

2. What is sexual harassment? Discussion and video.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual behaviour that makes someone feel upset, scared, offended or humiliated or is meant to make them feel that way.

Victims of sexual harassment are often told that they are being 'unreasonable' or 'too sensitive', or that they 'can't take a joke'. Sexual harassment is never funny and should not be happening. Sexual harassment includes a really wide range of behaviours, such as:

- Showing someone sexual materials, text messages, sexual jokes, innuendo (this means a hint or suggestion) without their consent.
 - Sexual behaviour, requests or inappropriate touching is used to intimidate, humiliate or offend the other person, in the workplace or in someone's personal life.
 - Sexual comments or noises – for example, catcalling or wolf-whistling.
 - Acts of shouting, harassing and often sexually suggestive, threatening or degrading comments aimed at the other person in a public place.
 - Sexual gestures. Leering, staring or suggestive looks. This can include looking someone up and down.
 - Sexual 'jokes'.
 - Sexual innuendos or suggestive comments. Unwanted sexual advances or flirting. Sexual requests or asking for sexual favours.
 - Sending emails or texts with sexual content – for example, unwanted 'sexts' or 'dick pics'.
 - Sexual posts or contact on social media. Intrusive questions about a person's private or sex life.
 - Someone discussing their own sex life.
 - Commenting on someone's body, appearance or what they're wearing.
 - Spreading sexual rumours.
 - Displaying images of a sexual nature.
 - Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature – for example, brushing up against someone or hugging, kissing or massaging them.
 - Stalking.
 - Indecent exposure.
 - Taking a photo or video under another person's clothing – what is known as 'up-skirting'.
 - Discussion questions are provided in the session plan which creates a link to the following activity.
-

3. Teen Sexual Harassment Presentation

All information needed is provided within the PowerPoint presentation. Having led this, the discussion after could enable participants to process and talk about the examples of sexual harassment they see in their lives.

4. Activity: Is this okay?

All instructions for this activity are given on the activity sheet. This is facilitator-led with the whole group and aims to incite discussion around behaviours that are and are not acceptable. The questions encourage participants to begin thinking about the impacts of sexual violence on the victim. The activity starts with sexual harassment and begins to introduce sexual assault and rape – explain this to participants within the final discussion.

5. Activity: What happened?

At the beginning of the activity give brief definitions of rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual coercion and intimate partner violence, listed below. If you feel it is needed for your group, hand out or display these definitions.

Rape: Unlawful sexual intercourse with someone who does not consent to it. It is sexual assault that includes penetration.

Sexual assault: Sexual assault happens when someone touches another person in a sexual manner without their consent, or when someone forces another person take part in a sexual activity with them without that person's consent. It includes unwanted kissing and sexual touching.

Sexual harassment: Any unwanted sexual behaviour that makes someone feel upset, scared, offended or humiliated or is meant to make them feel that way.

Sexual coercion: Sexual coercion is unwanted sexual activity that happens when you are pressured, tricked, threatened or forced in a non-physical way. Coercion can make you think you owe sex to someone.

Intimate partner violence: Violence that occurs between people in sexual or romantic relationships. This can include physical, verbal, emotional, economic and sexual abuse including humiliation, degradation and coercive acts and behaviours.

6. Jay's Story Video

Jay's Story introduces child sexual exploitation into the session.

What is child sexual exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they are given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they are in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they are being abused.

Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they have no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know cannot be repaid or use financial abuse to control them.

Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender or race. Perpetrators of sexual exploitation take advantage of the power imbalance that exists between them and the victim.

The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups.

Children and young people can be trafficked into or within countries to be sexually exploited. They are moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited.

The Story of Jay questions

Acknowledge either during or at the end of this activity that child sexual exploitation is a type of child sexual abuse. We tend to associate the terms 'child sexual abuse' and 'grooming' with younger children, but they apply to any child under the age of 18.

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. This can happen online and in person and is an exceptionally problematic, criminal behaviour that can lead to childhood sexual abuse, trafficking and exploitation.

Example answers for activity questions:

What are the warning signs in the video that this is exploitation?

- ▶ Jay is older
 - ▶ Jay is experienced
 - ▶ Given drugs/alcohol
 - ▶ Sex with Jay's brother
 - ▶ Sex with Jay's friends
 - ▶ Given money
 - ▶ They get her wasted before sex
 - ▶ Jay doesn't care what she does
 - ▶ Jay joins in the sex with others
 - ▶ Unhealthy Relationship
-

Do you think Jay groomed the girl narrating the video? How?

- ▶ Love Bombing
- ▶ Drugs/Alcohol
- ▶ Money
- ▶ Offered adventure
- ▶ Offered a different life
- ▶ Jay probably saw her vulnerabilities

What made her stay in the relationship?

- She thinks she loves him
- She thinks he loves her
- She doesn't get on with her mum
- She hates being at home
- He wants her to move in
- She has started 'hating' her friends
- Isolated from others
- Isolated from normal life
- Trauma
- She thinks Jay is all she has
- She thinks this is her life now
- She has no options

In this situation, it is likely that the more sexual abuse she experienced, the more she engaged with drugs and alcohol to cope with the trauma of what she was experiencing. This resulted in a self-perpetuating cycle of abuse. This will likely lead to further isolation and removal from any type of normal life, making it increasingly difficult to attempt to return to it.

What are the impacts on the narrator?

- Isolation
- Feels she hates everyone
- Multiple rapes
- Drug/Alcohol issues
- Doesn't go to school
- Limited life choices
- Stays in bed
- Depression
- No friends or family
- Feels he is all she has

Was anyone at fault in this situation? Why?

Pre-empt some responses blaming the narrator here: this may be part of participants processing what happened in this story but also displaying societal norms of victim blaming.

During the feedback and discussion, it is the role of the facilitator to ensure there is no ambiguity as to where fault lies, and the following points are made clear:

- Jay, his brother and his friends are the people to blame.
- In all sexual violence, only the perpetrator(s) are to blame.
- Perpetrators of CSE know how to groom successfully.
- Perpetrators of CSE know how to look for vulnerabilities that make victims more susceptible.
- Perpetrators of CSE know how to isolate a victim, lower their self-esteem and make them feel extreme shame or fear, so they feel that they can't leave the situation.
- The narrator may have made some poor or uninformed decisions when she got into this relationship, but we don't understand the aspects of her life and her vulnerabilities that led her here, e.g., poor home life, parental neglect, special educational needs, previous trauma.

7. Disclosure: Supporting & Reporting

Presentation:

At the beginning of the presentation explain the difference between 'disclosure' and 'reporting'. Disclosing is to tell another person what has happened; reporting is to report the incident to Gardaí, a Rape Crisis Centre, or other official service.

Additional information needed for facilitator on slides 5 and 6:

Slide 5 – Reasons for people not disclosing sexual assault

Emotional pain: Trying to avoid thinking about, remembering or talking about the sexual assault because it is emotionally painful.

Shame: Sexual trauma is associated with a high degree of stigma in our society. Most teens are embarrassed for others to know that they experienced sexual violence. Not having been able to protect themselves during the assault causes many teens to feel weak, ashamed or even that they deserved what happened. They may also fear being 'slut-shamed' or criticised for real or alleged sexual behaviour.

Fear of being blamed: It is common for victims of sexual assault to face scrutiny regarding what they did to cause the incident (what they were wearing, whether they were using drugs or alcohol, etc.) instead of focusing on their lack of consent.

Fear of punishment or reprisal: Teens may avoid disclosing because they fear parental punishment for rule breaking (e.g., for having used drugs or alcohol prior to the assault, being out after curfew or in a location that is not allowed, or meeting people online). Teens may also fear reprisals from potentially violent perpetrators, or social ostracism by perpetrators who are popular as well as their friends.

Feeling partly responsible: When the perpetrator is an acquaintance, victims are more likely to feel responsible for the assault and delay disclosing. Some teens may believe that they did something to contribute to the assault (e.g., if they had been sexually active with the perpetrator in the past, were flirting with the perpetrator prior to the assault, or were using drugs or alcohol when the sexual assault occurred). Such confusion and fear may diminish teens' ability to recognise that the perpetrator is responsible and not them.

Other traumatic reactions: Feeling shocked, dazed, confused, and/or not remembering some details of the event can be traumatic responses to the sexual assault. However, teens may fear that no one will believe them if they do not remember all the details, or they may not want to think or talk about the painful event.

Cultural or religious reasons: Cultural or religious beliefs may contribute to a teen's fears about punishment or ostracism. Cultural differences can also influence a teen's trust in various institutions (such as law enforcement), as well as how a family deals with a crisis.

Limits to confidentiality: Teens are more aware than younger children that sexual assault is serious and that if they tell someone the authorities may be notified and become involved. This, combined with the above concerns, may keep many teens from disclosing a sexual assault.

Slide 6 – Benefits of disclosing

Teens who experience sexual assault and its aftermath may have many compelling reasons for not disclosing. The individual holds the final authority over whether to disclose and, if so, when, how and to whom. For those who do choose to disclose, supports and benefits include:

Medical services: Prompt medical examination provides teens with the potential for preserving forensic evidence of the assault, as well as early identification, prevention or intervention related to sexually transmitted infection or pregnancy.

Support services: Services such as the Rape Crisis Sector and specific youth and counselling organisations can offer evidence-based treatments to help teens recover and to prevent the long-

term negative effects of sexual violence.

Mental health services: Sexual assault is associated with potentially serious and long-lasting mental health consequences, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, substance use and other problems, such as adverse effects on school performance or family and peer relationships.

Legal services: Some teens and their families wish to pursue outcomes within the legal system. Disclosure can be made at any time.

Accountability: Some people who experience sexual assault want to ensure the perpetrator is held accountable and won't act in the same way towards another person.

8. Summarise

The session has incorporated a wide range of sexually violent behaviours whilst also beginning to explore the impacts of sexual violence and victim blaming attitudes. The summary can be used as an opportunity to reiterate any points that could be further consolidated.

9. Why do it? Positive relationships and sexuality

This session covers many topics that may be challenging for young people. The aim of this activity is to be light-hearted and fun and end the session on a more positive note.

Participants will have heard about many negative sexual experiences throughout the session; through this activity we hope that they can be reminded that there are many positive aspects of relationships and sex also.

- Open communication and respect help us to make sure we are behaving in a fun and positive way.
- Sex and sexual relationships should be positive for everyone who engages in them - we all have the right to be respected in our sexual relationships.
- By increasing our awareness and understanding of the serious negatives associated with non-consensual behaviour, we can ensure that we take responsibility for our own behaviour towards others - and hopefully prevent future sexual violence.

10. Close

... and BREATHE! The Sexual Violence Session is complete.

Session 4

Online Sexual Harm

Lesson Plan

Session 4, Online Sexual Harm, begins to explore how sexual violence can take place through online platforms and communications. The session will focus on online sexual harassment, sexting and the law, and online blackmail including sextortion. Participants will have the opportunity to explore victim impact and empathy, victim blaming and bias as well as bystander intervention. Participants will identify where they can go to seek relevant support.

Learning Outcomes

- **IDENTIFY** the various ways in which online sexual harm may occur.
 - **RECOGNISE** the warning signs that may lead to various nuances of online sexual harm.
 - **EXPLORE** the law surrounding sexual image sharing.
 - **DEVELOP** empathy for victims of online sexual harm and ability to challenge our own victim blaming attitudes
-

Materials Needed

- Post-Its
 - Two embedded video links
 - Signs and Blu Tack
 - Scenarios
 - OSH presentation and Coco's Law handout
 - Four handouts for online blackmail activity
 - Reporting & bystander handout
-

Procedure

1. Post-It Mind Map

- Give each participant a few post-Its.
 - Ask everyone to individually write down as many examples of online sexual harm as they can think of and the stick the post-It to the wall or board.
 - Facilitator will feed back the responses and discuss.
 - Pick some that are online sexual harassment specifically to feed into the following activities; if they are not there, introduce the topic and highlight that the wall doesn't reflect it.
-

2. Video

- Play short [video](#) produced by Childnet, 'What is Online Sexual Harassment?'

3. Online sexual harassment

- Place signs on opposite walls – Harassment and Not Harassment.
- Ask participants to work in small groups and share the short scenarios between the groups.
- Each group reviews its scenarios and places them on the relevant wall.
- Once all scenarios are allocated groups are to walk around, read them and remove any they disagree with or are unsure about.
- These scenarios will be read out and discussed.

Additional points:

- Online sexual harm is different from cyber bullying, as it has a sexual element.
 - Online sexual harm is different from digital intimacy (such as consensual image sharing, sexting) as there is a lack of consent.
-

4. Sexting quickfire questions

- Are there positive aspects in relationships and online technology?
 - What is sexting?
 - Why might a young person send a sexual image?
 - Does anyone need to consent in sexting?
 - Is sexting illegal?
-

5. Sexual image sharing and the law

- Presentation
 - During presentation, distribute and discuss the Coco's Law infographic at the relevant prompt.
 - After presentation, discuss that even in a trusting relationship, intimate image sharing can have negative consequences.
 - Ask a few questions incorporating both laws discussed to ensure that participants have understood (naming the laws is far less important than the understanding of what is illegal.)
-

6. Digital consent activity

- Optional activity.
- Reiterate that consent is key. Consent is just as important for online intimacy as it is for "real-life" sex.
- Ask participants to work in pairs or small groups and create a Digital Consent Agreement for online interactions.
- Ask for the agreement to reflect both the law and what they have covered in the session.
- Participants to feed back to the group.

It may be helpful to go over some key points from the Consent session!

7. Online blackmail activity

- Participants to work in pairs or small groups.
 - Hand out sheet (a) of this activity 'Snapshot' – the information refers to two separate incidents and is purposely written in a way that is unlikely to incite any sympathy.
 - Ask participants what their initial thoughts are.
Tell participants they will now receive two primary sources giving a much bigger picture of each incident in the 'Snapshot'.
 - Hand out 'Sextortion Newspaper Article' and 'Diary Entry'.
 - Let participants know that although these documents are fictional, they are very much based on real events.
 - Allow participants to read and discuss; facilitator to move around groups and discuss their thoughts on the articles.
 - Hand out the 'Online Blackmail Questions' and ask participants to complete.
 - Participants to feed back to wider group
-

8. Optional video

- If time allows, [play video](#). This video will show reactions to a set-up sextortion incident and begin to explore what to do if you find yourself in this situation.
-

9. Dealing with Online Sexual Harm

- Give out the Reporting and Bystander handout.
 - Discuss with participants that talking to someone about any online sexual harm they are experiencing is beneficial – there are people that can help with any situation you are in.
 - Explain what Hotline.ie is.
 - Discuss ways to help as a bystander – explain that these behaviours can only be reduced if we all step in.
-

10. Summarise, Reflect, and Close.

- Summarise the lesson and reiterate key points.
- Allow students time to reflect on all the lessons covered and ask any questions.
- Reiterate where to access support services or ask students to think about a trusted adult they could speak to if needed.
- Close.

Online Sexual Harassment Activity

<p>Jenny has taken nude photographs of herself, she has been hacked and someone has downloaded the images.</p>	<p>Taylor has posted a few selfies on social media, people begin to talk about their body in the comments.</p>	<p>Ben opens a message on a group chat, it's a porn video.</p>
<p>Ciara is chatting to a guy she knows online. He sends her a picture of his penis, she deletes it and stops talking to him.</p>	<p>Amy takes a selfie with her best friend and posts it on Instagram, her friend comments on it with 'love you slag xxx'.</p>	<p>Jordan is posting pictures to social media, a 'porn bot' keeps commenting with links to porn sites in the text.</p>
<p>Kelly is a girl, but she is starting to feel more comfortable when she presents herself as a boy. She tells her friend about this, her friend posts it on social media that evening.</p>	<p>Two people who have liked each other for a while are kissing outside at a party, someone sees them from an upstairs window, takes a picture and posts it on social media.</p>	<p>Sam and Laura are in the first stages of a relationship. They text each other a lot, and have quite flirty conversations. Sam tells Laura she's 'hot'.</p>
<p>James and Lily have been in a relationship, when they break up James threatens to send her nudes around but doesn't actually do it.</p>	<p>Someone films a group of friends in their school forcing Ellen, a girl in the year below, to touch John's penis.</p>	<p>Kate sends a picture of herself at the beach wearing a bikini to her boyfriend.</p>

Online Sexual Harassment Activity

<p>Joanna likes Samantha and thinks Samantha may feel the same. It's awkward to talk about it face to face, but she has more confidence to ask about it when messaging. Samantha is happy that Joanna wants to talk about it.</p>	<p>David's class have a running joke that he fancies the PE teacher. Some of the students post pictures of David and the PE teacher together that they have made, and add emojis that suggest sexual behaviour.</p>	<p>Frankie and Charlie are in a relationship but are both away at different colleges, they often enjoy sexual conversations and image sharing, Frankie sends Charlie a sexually suggestive image, Charlie responds with a 'dick pic'.</p>
<p>Alex was messaging with a friend and hoping for a relationship. They asked for nudes but Alex avoided the question. The requests kept coming so Alex blocked them.</p>	<p>Raj is out with his friends and asks Jordan and Jay to pose for a picture for his story, Jordan and Jay turn to each other and share a kiss for the camera. Raj posts this.</p>	<p>Eoin posts a video of himself running. Someone sends him a message saying 'looking good'; he replies with 'thanks, you've been looking good too'.</p>
<p>Ria's boyfriend cheats on her. She shares around nude pictures of him to get her own back.</p>	<p>Rosie keeps getting messages from someone saying how hot she is, she doesn't respond but the messages keep coming.</p>	<p>MJ is in a long-term relationship where they have regular sex. One evening MJ secretly sets up a phone in the bedroom to record them having sex.</p>

**HARASSMENT,
HARMFUL
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RELATED
OFFENCES ACT 2020**

webwise.ie

COCO'S LAW

EXPLAINED

Coco's Law creates two new offences which criminalise the non-consensual distribution of intimate images:

1. It is an offence to distribute or publish intimate images of a person, without consent and with intent to cause harm. Penalties include an unlimited fine and/or 7 years imprisonment.



2. It is an offence to take, distribute or publish intimate images of a person without consent even if there is no specific intent to cause harm. Penalties include a maximum fine of €5,000 and/or 12 months' imprisonment.

Importantly, this applies even if the person initially gave consent for the picture to be taken, but they were later shared with other people without their consent.

It an offence to distribute, publish or send any threatening or grossly offensive communication about or to another person, with intent to cause harm. Penalties include a fine and/or a maximum sentence of up to 2 years in prison



COCO'S LAW



KEY WORDS

permission for something to happen or agreement to do something.

CONSENT

GENITALS

The sexual organs; the testicles, penis and vulva



INTIMATE IMAGE

- (a) of what is, or pretends to be the person's genitals, buttocks or anal region and, in the case of a female, her breasts,
- (b) of the underwear covering the person's genitals, buttocks or anal region and, in the case of a female, her breasts,
- (c) in which the person is nude, or
- (d) in which the person is engaged in sexual activity.

SEXTING

Sending, receiving or forwarding of images, videos & text that are sexually explicit.



CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

(also referred to as child sexual abuse images) can be described as the depiction of children & young people (under 18) in a sexually explicit manner in images, videos or in written text.

COERCION

means to persuade someone to do something by using force or threats.

Online blackmail activity - Sheet (a)

1

She has been selling sexual images of herself to a guy on the internet and now is acting upset that he is pushing her to send videos.

Type something...

2

INCIDENT REPORT:

Male masturbated via video stream to unknown female.

He is now concerned about communications he has received since from her associates.

What are your initial thoughts on these two items?

Online blackmail activity - Sextortion Newspaper Article

2 THE CONSENT ED GAZETTE

MONDAY 30TH JANUARY

SEXUAL IMAGES AND VIDEOS USED FOR PURPOSES OF WIDESPREAD BLACKMAIL

WRITTEN BY CONSENT ED TEAM

Dozens of reports have been made to An Garda Stochana throughout Ireland in recent months with victims detailing they have been blackmailed for large sums of money in exchange for not having their sexual images and videos released.

Online blackmailers have targeted individuals in a practice known as 'catfishing'. They have set up numerous false profiles across a range of social media and dating platforms to establish online relationships with potential victims. Once the relationship becomes more personal, victims are encouraged to send sexual videos and/or engage in online sexual behaviours through video chat. Unbeknown to victims, the criminals have already noted all their social media connections. Once the blackmailers have the compromising materials, victims are contacted with the videos or screen recordings that have been made of them with demands for cash, threatening to release the videos to family and friends if their requests are not fulfilled.

An Garda Stochana are investigating the current reports but believe that many

more people who have not come forward will have fallen victim to this scam.

One officer said reports of sextortion are becoming more and more common.

The Consent Ed Gazette managed to speak to a victim called 'James' (not his real name), an 18 year old Leaving Cert student. James told us it started when a girl called 'Casey' sent him a friend request on social media. 'When the request came through, I saw we had mutual friends at school and around where I live. I thought she must know me and she was a really attractive girl... I accepted the request, why wouldn't I? James told us. 'She started messaging me, she was nice and seemed interested in me, she mentioned a couple of people I knew, so I began messaging her back.'

James told us he and 'Casey' were messaging daily and the

conversation turned very sexual, very quickly. 'She started sending sexual images and it felt great, I couldn't believe this girl was so interested in me. She asked if we could video chat and she started undressing, and asking me to do the same. I went along with it and things went from there.'

'By the next morning I woke up to messages from a different profile, saying they knew "Casey", they had sent me a recording of everything I had done on camera the night before, screenshots of all my social media contacts and they wanted a thousand euro within 48 hours or they were sending the video to everyone I knew.'

James said at that point he just didn't know what to do, he felt scared, ashamed and hopeless. He just didn't know how this was happening to him and felt like he had been so stupid to trust this person. James knew the money in his savings account could just about cover what the blackmailers wanted, it was everything he had from his part-time job and he desperately didn't want to hand it over but he couldn't risk the video being sent to his friends

and family, his parents, aunts and uncles, cousins and school friends were all on his social media contacts. James paid the money. 'I gave everything I had so that my life wouldn't be ruined, I was completely shaken but at least no one would find out.'

Roughly a week later, the messages started coming in again. The online criminals now wanted another payment in exchange for not sending on the video of James. 'When I saw the messages, I felt like I couldn't breathe, I sat there and cried, I didn't have any money left to give. I didn't know what to do.'

After a day, James confided in his best friend. 'He took me to see the Guidance Counsellor at school, I felt like I couldn't say the words, so my friend told her for me with me there. She was really understanding and helped me tell my parents what was happening, and we went to the Guards.'

The video of James was sent to his social media contacts the following day. 'It was the worst day of my life, the only thing that had helped was that my parents could explain to the rest of the family what had happened so they knew to delete the video

before even opening it if anything was sent. My friend did the same with my close friends. Of course, some people still saw it. I felt so embarrassed and ashamed. I knew everyone was talking about it, I didn't go to school for weeks. Even though most people were much nicer about the incident than I expected, I still feel really depressed a lot of the time, the whole incident just changed me somehow. James told us he felt the need to share his story so that other people can be warned and see the signs before falling into the same trap.

The leading Garda investigating officer on the case said to us 'These are very serious crimes taking place with devastating consequences for victims. James and many others have shown incredible courage in reporting their stories, the information given has resulted in vital leads in the investigation. My advice is to not engage with people online that you do not know and trust, and if you find yourself in a similar situation, do not pay any money, it is unlikely to make the problem go away. Instead report the incident and seek support.'

Online blackmail activity - Diary Entry

Dear Diary,

I don't know what to do. I feel sick. I can't tell anyone what's happening... I'd be in so much trouble.

I met someone, online, a few weeks ago after dad got me the new phone for my 16th birthday, that guy Mark that I wrote about before. At first I liked him messaging me, he was nice to me and always told me how pretty I was, it made me feel good... and I never feel good since mom left, dad is always depressed he worries about money all the time. Being able to message Mark made me feel different, like things could change for the better. I knew he was older, so we agreed that I wouldn't tell anyone. Mark had told me he had loads of money, he had sent me pictures of his house and cars, it all looked amazing. Nothing like what me and dad are used to.

Mark asked me to send him some topless pictures, at first I said no and then he said he would give me money to do it. I wasn't sure but he was offering me more than I had ever had and I knew that I could use that to really help out at home. So I just did it, it was only a couple of topless pics, and I liked Mark, what harm could it do??? - It felt weird to do but Mark paid up and I was able to buy my school books with it so that I didn't have to ask dad.

This happened twice, the second time was more revealing, but after this, Mark wanted videos. I didn't want to do any, I felt embarrassed by what he was asking, I had never done anything like that before. I told him I wouldn't do it. That's when he started getting nasty.

Mark called me, he sounded so different, he was so angry, he told me that if I didn't do what he wanted, he was going to post the pictures I had sent him online and send them to my dad. I was so scared, I did what he wanted and sent it to him, I cried all night. There was no money this time.

Mark keeps contacting me wanting more videos, if I don't he's going to post everything. There is nothing I can do. I looked online for advice and everything says I need to report it to the guards... but what could they do? I know they will just blame me for doing what I did.

Sophie

Online Blackmail Questions

Since reading the newspaper article and diary entry, has your view of the events that took place changed from when you had only read the text message and incident report? Why?

What were the similarities and differences between the events detailed in the newspaper article and the diary entry?

Why did 'James' feel comfortable initially accepting a friend request from 'Casey' and responding to her messages?

Why do you think Sophie developed an online relationship with Mark?

How did he manage to convince her to send images and then videos?

Online Sexual Harm Hand-outs - What can I do about it?

REPORT OR BLOCK VIA THE APP

Apps have built-in reporting tools. You can use these to block or report the user, message or image to the social media platform. You could also mute someone if the app allows you to, and check your privacy settings to change who can see and contact you. Each platform will provide you with instructions on how to report.

REPORT TO HOTLINE.IE

REPORT OFFLINE

If you experience anything online that makes you feel uncomfortable, angry, upset, weird - speak to someone that you trust. It is not your fault and you do not have to suffer in silence. If you think someone has committed a crime, and you feel able to do so, you can report it to Gardai. You can also contact Childline on 1800 666 666.

Online Sexual Harm Hand-outs - What can I do about it?

As a bystander, there are things you can do to help prevent further harm to a victim of online sexual harassment.

- 1. If anyone tries to show you a nude of someone else, remember that you don't have to look at it or share it.**
- 2. If someone is harassing another person online, don't join in with the harassment, or like offensive comments or posts.**
- 3. If it's helpful to the victim, report any images, comments or the user who is doing the harassment.**
- 4. If someone tells you they are experiencing online sexual harassment, believe them and take it seriously.**
- 5. Don't slut-shame or victim-blame someone who experiences online sexual harassment - tell them it's not their fault.**
- 6. If you can, and it is safe for you and the victim, call out people who are harassing others online. Tell them that what they are doing is harassment, and it's not okay.**

pshe-association.org.uk/

Session 4

Teacher Guidance

- Post-It Brainstorm
 - Video
 - Online Sexual Harassment Activity
 - Sexting Quickfire Questions
 - Sexual Image Sharing and the Law
 - Digital Consent Activity
 - Online Blackmail Activity
 - Video
 - Dealing with Online Sexual Harm
-

Before You Begin:

What is Online Sexual Harm?

Online sexual harm can be any type of sexual harassment, exploitation, coercion or abuse that takes place through a screen. Simply put, it is any sexualised behaviour online that causes harm.

Online sexual harm is a form of sexual violence. It refers to a range of behaviours where digital technology is used to facilitate both virtual and face-to-face sexually based harms. Online sexual harassment may constitute a number of criminal offences, depending on the nature of the incident.

Although these forms of sexual violence can take place behind a screen, the victims are still negatively impacted in their offline lives. For people who have been affected by image based sexual abuse, there is an added layer of re-victimisation if content is reshared.

Examples of online sexual harm can be broadly split into the following areas:

1. Unsolicited sexual content online - refers to any sexual content shared online which is not wanted by the recipient. This could include content seen on apps, messaging services and websites which has not been sought out by the user.
2. Image-based sexual abuse - refers to the non-consensual creation and/or distribution of sexual images.
3. Sexual coercion, threats and intimidation online - could include a person receiving threats of a sexual nature or being coerced to engage in sexual behaviours on or offline via digital technologies.

While we make distinctions between these three categories for the sake of clarity, there are evident overlaps and links.

1. Post-It Brainstorm

The terms we want to see on the post-It brainstorm are any behaviours or actions linked to the information in the above section.

- The differences between Online Sexual Harm and cyber bullying is that there is a sexual element to the interaction.
- The differences between Online Sexual Harm and welcomed online sexual activity is that there is a lack of consent.

2. Video – ‘What is Online Sexual Harassment?’

A short production made by Childnet with a young person explaining what Online Sexual Harassment is. This can give an opportunity for the facilitator to discuss that online sexual harassment is a spectrum of harmful behaviours.

3. Online Sexual Harassment Activity

To start this activity, create two separate areas marked with signs ‘Harassment’ and ‘Not Harassment’. Divide the 21 short scenarios between the small groups of participants for them to review and decide whether they are harassment or are not harassment, they then blue tack these to the relevant area.

The groups will peruse both areas reading the other scenarios to decide whether they agree, disagree or are unsure of the categorisation. Any ‘disagrees’ or ‘unsures’ will be removed from that area and discussed among the class and facilitator.

1. Jenny has taken nude photographs of herself; she has been hacked and someone has downloaded the images. **Harassment** – *Hacking or stealing somebody’s nude photographs is an example of image based sexual abuse (IBSA).*
2. Taylor has posted a few selfies on social media; people begin to talk about their body in the comments. **Harassment** – *This is an example of unsolicited sexual comments in relation to Taylor’s body.*
3. Ben opens a message on a group chat, it’s a porn video. **Harassment** – *This is an example of unsolicited sexual content as Ben has deliberately been shown pornography without his consent.*
4. Ciara is chatting to a guy she knows online. He sends her a picture of his penis; she deletes it and stops talking to him. **Harassment** – *This is an example of unsolicited sexual content, the scenario gives the reader the impression that consent was not sought as Ciara’s actions indicate she was upset or angry with the content.*
5. Amy takes a selfie with her best friend and posts it on Instagram, her friend comments on it with ‘love you slag xxx’. **Not Harassment** – *The context suggests the sexual language is being used in a familiar and friendly way. If this language was being used online to victimise or offend then it would be harassment.*
6. Jordan is posting pictures social media, a ‘Porn Bot’ keeps commenting with links to porn sites in the text. **Harassment** – *This is an example of automated activities sending links to online pornography content. Although the activity is carried out by an automated feature, the person is still experiencing harassment.*
7. Kelly is a girl, but she is starting to feel more comfortable when she presents herself as a boy. She tells her friend about this, her friend posts it on social media that evening. **Harassment** – *You cannot disclose a person’s sexuality or gender identity without their consent.*

8. Two people who have liked each other for a while are kissing outside at a party, someone sees them from an upstairs window, takes a picture and posts it on social media. **Harassment** – *This is the non-consensual creation of individuals involved in an intimate situation. The picture should not have been taken, and then should have not been shared.*
9. Sam and Laura are in the first stages of a relationship. They text each other a lot, and have quite flirty conversations. Sam tells Laura she's 'hot.' **Not Harassment** – *The behaviour that Sam and Laura are exhibiting is very normal and healthy in the early stages of a relationship. Sam telling Laura she is hot does not appear to be an unwanted comment and appear to be in keeping with the conversation they have been having.*
10. James and Lily have been in a relationship, when they break up James threatens to send her nudes around but doesn't actually do it. **Harassment** – *Although James did not actually send the nude pictures of Lily around the threat to share images non-consensually is harassment.*
11. Someone films a group of friends in their school forcing Ellen, a girl in the year below, to touch John's penis. **Harassment** – *This is an example of non-consensual videoing of a sexual assault.*
12. Kate sends a picture of herself at the beach wearing a bikini to her boyfriend. **Not Harassment** – *The image that Kate sent was not sexually explicit.*
13. Joanna likes Samantha and thinks Samantha may feel the same. It's awkward to talk about it face to face, but she has more confidence to ask about it when messaging. Samantha is happy that Joanna wants to talk about it. **Not Harassment** – *The comments are part of a respectful conversation and are not unwanted.*
14. David's class have a running joke that he fancies the P.E teacher. Some of the students posting pictures of David and the PE teacher together that they have made and add emojis that suggest sexual behaviour. **Harassment** – *David could find this situation uncomfortable and embarrassing and be worried about how to explain this to his friends or ask them to stop. It would also count as harassment towards the teacher, as it is going on without his knowledge or consent and could damage his professional reputation.*
15. Frankie and Charlie are in a relationship but are both away at different colleges, they often enjoy sexual conversations and image sharing, Frankie sends Charlie a sexually suggestive image, Charlie responds with a 'dick pic'. **Not Harassment** – *The scenario would suggest that Frankie and Charlie are both over 18 and both enjoy using digital technology as part of their sexual relationship.*
16. Alex was messaging with a friend and hoping for a relationship. They asked for nudes but Alex avoided the question. The requests kept coming so Alex blocked them. **Harassment** – *Alex clearly does not want to send nude images or have a conversation about them.*
17. Raj is out with his friends and asks Jordan and Jay to pose for a picture for his story, Jordan and Jay turn to each other and share a kiss for the camera. Raj posts this. **Not Harassment** – *Jordan and Jay consensually kissed for the camera for the image to be shared.*
18. Eoin posts a video of himself running. Someone sends him a message saying 'looking good' he replies with 'thanks, you've been looking good too'. **Not Harassment** – *The comments are part of a respectful conversation, and are not unwanted.*
19. Ria's boyfriend cheats on her. She shares around nude pictures of him to get her own back. **Harassment** – *The images were used to humiliate Ria's boyfriend, and is Image Based Sexual Abuse.*
20. Rosie keeps getting messages from someone saying how hot she is, she doesn't respond but the messages keep coming. **Harassment** – *These comments are unwanted and could scare or intimidate Rosie.*
21. M.J is in a long-term relationship where they have regular sex. One evening M.J secretly sets up a phone in the bedroom to record them having sex. **Harassment** – *This is the non-consensual creation of sexual images.*

4. Sexting Quickfire Questions

Sexting is increasingly common among adolescents and might be viewed as a way of flirting to express or confirm interest in another person. To some young people, sexting can be seen as harmless, however we also need to be aware of the dangers associated with sexting, especially around consent and sexually explicit photographs (“Nudes”).

➤ **Are there positive aspects in relationships and online technology?**

There are a range of positive aspects of online technology in a relationship. Possible responses may include maintaining a long-distance relationship, being able to communicate without having to physically see each other - allowing more time for homework and activities, easier to have difficult conversations, can send funny content to make each other laugh, take photos together etc.

➤ **What is sexting?**

Sexting is defined as the “sending or receiving of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive nude or semi-nude images or video”, usually via mobile devices”. (Highlight that a sext might also include text messages with suggestive words and emojis, encourage some responses as to what those emojis could be and mean.)

➤ **Why might a young person send a sexually explicit image?**

They may offer different suggestions which may include, to discuss sex beforehand, they live far away from one another, could feel pressured, they think it’s fun, they think it’s expected etc.

➤ **Does anyone need to consent in sexting?**

Consent is vital for any sexual interaction, and that goes for online too. Respect and dignity in online communication is very important.

➤ **Is sexting illegal?**

It can be. The following presentation will explain this.

5. Sexual Image Sharing and the Law

This presentation will take participants through the laws in Ireland that relate to sexual image sharing: Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 and The Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 (Coco’s Law). Participants will learn the legal implications of sharing sexual images for both minors and adults as well as the impacts for victims who have had their sexual images shared non-consensually. There are two videos embedded into the presentation and a prompt to give participants a handout containing an informative infographic relating to The Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020.

It will be helpful for participants to know:

- Sexting is a common part of many romantic relationships, and for many young people, sexting can be seen as a harmless, non-contact way to explore their own sexuality and their relationships.
- We should also, however, acknowledge with young people that there are dangers associated with sexting. Consent is often not sought with regard to online interaction.
- There are laws there to protect and support.

- ▶ **REMEMBER:** No matter how or why anyone sends nude photos of themselves, it is NEVER okay to send these materials on or share them without the explicit consent of the person. We must respect one another, regardless of the situation. Sharing someone's photos without their consent can do damaged to someone's emotional wellbeing, reputation, or self-image.
-

6. Digital Consent Activity

Optional Activity. Begin by reiterating to participants that consent is just as important for online digital intimacy as it is for "real-life" sex. Ask students to think about what digital consent means, and to create a 'Digital Consent Agreement' document, incorporating aspects of the law and what has been covered so far in the session.

7. Online Blackmail Activity

Participants are to work in pairs or small groups.

Hand out Part 1 of this activity 'Snapshot' - the information refers to two separate incidents and is purposely written in a way that is unlikely to incite any sympathy. Talk to participants about what their initial thoughts are when reading the 'text message' and 'incident report'. Ask participants what their initial thoughts are. Participants may feel that the incidents being discussed were likely the fault of the principal character each piece refers to. Make clear they are referring to two entirely separate incidents.

After discussion give participants the two primary sources of information giving a much bigger picture of each incident in the 'Snapshot'. Tell participants the 'Sexstortion Newspaper Article' refers to the incident report they have seen and the 'Diary Entry' refers to the text message. Let participants know that although these documents are fictional, they are very much based on real events.

(Sextortion is a serious crime that occurs when someone threatens to distribute your private and sensitive material if you don't provide them images of a sexual nature, sexual acts, or money.)

Allow participants to read and discuss, facilitator to move around groups and discuss their thoughts on the articles. The aim of the activity is not only to understand ways in which online blackmail happens, but to also begin to explore the impacts of online blackmail on the victim, actions to take if you are victim of online blackmail, and to challenge their own potential victim blaming attitudes.

Hand out the 'Online Blackmail Questions' and ask participants to complete in their pairs or groups:

Since reading the newspaper article and diary entry, has your view of the events that took place changed from when you had only read the text message and incident report? Why?

Participants may realise that there was far more to the story than what they initially saw in the 'Snapshot Document'. Once they have seen the details of how these incidents occurred they may begin to empathise with the victims, to see that they were groomed by abusers and that it may be easy to be taken in by these tactics if you are uninformed and/or vulnerable.

What were the similarities and differences between the events detailed in the newspaper article and the diary entry?

The similarities between the newspaper article and the diary entry are that both are based upon online blackmail. The principal characters are both victims of online sexual harm which has had vast impacts on both their lives and their wellbeing. Both characters have been groomed by perpetrators that went began these 'relationships' in order to extort something from the victim.

The differences are based within what the perpetrators wanted. The perpetrators in the newspaper

article have carried out these actions in order to get money, whereas the perpetrator in the diary entry wants more extreme sexual materials and is likely looking to have ongoing power over victims. 'James' has disclosed what has happened to him and is gaining support. Life is still very difficult for him due to the trauma he has experienced, but he has been able to take steps to begin to recover. 'Sophie' has not disclosed and is still very much inside her abusive situation, she is worried and scared and continues to therefore produce more content for the perpetrator, becoming trapped in a worsening cycle of abuse. Help participants to recognise that life is unlikely to start getting better for Sophie until she has disclosed the abuse she is experiencing – even if she fears that will feel worse in the short term.

Why did 'James' feel comfortable initially accepting 'Casey's' friend request and responding to her messages?

When 'James' received the friend request from 'Casey', they had mutual friends, so he assumed they had some type of connection. Friend requesting a person and all their friends is a common tactic used by perpetrators of online blackmail, as people are more likely to accept their requests when there are mutual associates. Following this, 'Casey' was an attractive girl which may have made 'James' more eager to establish a connection.

Why do you think Sophie developed an online relationship with Mark?

'Sophie' is 16 years old, she is under the age of consent, which already makes her somewhat vulnerable. However, the diary entry references further vulnerabilities such as her mother having left her and her dad, her dad's depressions, and financial worries within the household. 'Sophie' is clearly having a difficult time. Mark has used grooming tactics, to make Sophie feel very enamoured with him and therefore feel good about herself. Sophie valued the relationship.

How did he manage to convince her to send images and then videos?

Mark built a relationship with Sophie so that she trusted him. He ensured that there was a perception that he was very wealthy and perhaps that made Sophie feel that offered her a life outside of the circumstances she was currently living in. Sophie initially declined to send intimate pictures; Mark had likely realised that using money may have been a way to coerce Sophie into doing things she didn't really want to do. Sophie was concerned about her dad and the household finances and accepting money from Mark in exchange for images gave her the opportunity to try and relieve some financial pressure.

8. Video

This is a video produced by the National Crime Agency UK showing the reactions of the public to a fake sextortion video. The video can be helpful as it reinforces the learning from the previous activity, shows that these scams can be relatively easy to fall for so if a person is having online interactions with strangers, they need to be extremely vigilant and it begins to explore help seeking behaviours.

9. Dealing with Online Sexual Harm

Begin by disseminating handout to participants and discuss with them.

This will take them through options of support and disclosure if they are to find themselves affected by online sexual harm.

The second part of the handout looks at Bystander Intervention behaviours and how we can all do our own bit to try and reduce the prevalence of online sexual harm.

Additional Information for Facilitator:

How is online sexual harm different from exploitation offline?

We know that sexual abuse is harmful regardless of where it takes place. Despite the similarities between online and offline sexual abuse, there are some differences.

Online interaction can give the offender greater access to the child. Family members can be in the background, downstairs or in other rooms and not know that abuse is occurring. This may be due to some parents not realising what their child is doing online or because they are unaware of the consequences.

Online sexual abuse is often recorded and shared. This adds an extra layer of harm for the child because they may feel embarrassed or ashamed, blaming themselves for the abuse. The child may become anxious and worried the offender will share pictures or videos with others. Survivors of online sexual abuse are often fearful that images of them will 'resurface' causing re-traumatisation and re-victimisation. This fear can stay with them into adulthood.

How do offenders target young people online?

Offenders are skilled and motivated to target children through the internet. They can be of any gender, age or sexual orientation and gain access to a child by manipulating or grooming them. Grooming is when an offender starts interacting online with a child by taking an interest in them, forming friendships, and finding out about their interests, home, family and friendship groups. During this process, the offender will be testing out a child's response. This may start subtle or platonic, and then may move into more sexual or coercive conversations. However, it can also be more direct with the offender moving onto another child if they are not getting the response they want.

As in the offline world, offenders will want to be where children are. Not all offenders pretend to be someone else or younger. They may engage with children via social media, gaming sites, and other apps. Offenders will target children of all ages and genders, regardless of their backgrounds.

Examples of unsolicited sexual content online:

- ▶ Unsolicited sexual images (e.g. someone sending an unsolicited image of their penis to someone else, often referred to as a 'dick pic').
- ▶ Unsolicited sexual videos.
- ▶ Unsolicited sexual messages and comments.
- ▶ Deliberately being shown pornography or sent links to pornographic content without consent.
- ▶ Automated activities sending links to online pornography content (porn bots).

Examples of image-based sexual abuse:

- ▶ Consensually taken images that have been consensually shared with one recipient then distributed by the recipient non-consensually.
- ▶ Consensually taken images that have been hacked or stolen and then shared without consent.
- ▶ The recording and/or sharing of rape or sexual assaults.
- ▶ The non-consensual creation of sexual images (e.g. upskirting which is the taking of a photo up a person's skirt without their consent).

Examples of sexual coercion, threats and intimidation online:

- Threatening to share images non-consensually (commonly part of a pattern of coercive behaviour in abusive relationships).
- Sextortion: the practice whereby perpetrators (often strangers) typically coerce vulnerable individuals or groups of victims into creating and sharing images or performing sexual acts, then threaten the victim with blackmail and exposure. Other times, the perpetrator hacks into people's social media profiles and, on finding intimate images, threatens to share them.
- Homophobia or transphobia online, including 'outing' or threatening to out someone. This is where someone discloses a person's sexuality or gender identity without their consent.

What is the impact of Online Sexual Harm?

- The experience of online sexual harassment will be different for all young people. It is important to recognise that it can have both short and long-term consequences for victims which will appear differently for each individual, impacting mental health and wellbeing.

Examples of the Impact of Online Sexual Harm

- Severe mental distress - feeling threatened, violated, and anxious regarding repercussions including fearing direct physical attacks, to name but a few.
- Violates dignity, privacy, and autonomy of victims - it removes the right to control what we see and engage with online.
- Normalisation of non-consensual sexual activity and intimidation.
Impacts on feelings of self-worth and self-esteem levels: IBSA can relate strongly to issues of body image and self-esteem.
- Takes away right to freedom of sexual expression - feelings of shame from culture of blaming victim for their own abuse.
- Social stigma can negatively impact peer relationships leading to risk of isolation.
- School refusal if issues of social stigma begin to prevent a young person from feeling comfortable in the school setting.
- Victim's fear chance of employment and other opportunities will be put at risk if employers or potential employers find images and police involvement.

Glossary of Terms

Boundaries:

Boundaries in a relationship help each person figure out where one person ends and the other begins. In short, boundaries help you define what you are comfortable with and how you would like to be treated by others. They apply to any kind of relationship you have: friends, family, platonic, or professional.

Consent:

Consent is a core principle of all respectful interpersonal relationships; consent involves recognising and respecting one's own boundaries and the boundaries of others and always checking whenever one is unsure. Consent in a sexual setting is defined in Irish law as follows: a person consents to a sexual act if he or she freely and voluntarily agrees to engage in that act. The age of consent to engage in sexual intercourse in Ireland is 17 years old.

Gaslighting:

Gaslighting is a form of sustained psychological manipulation that causes the victim to question or doubt their sanity, judgement and memories. This is a serious form of emotional abuse that is never acceptable.

Intimidation :

When a partner tries to control some or all aspects of your life by making you feel fearful or timid, this is intimidation. It may also include threatened or actual violence.

Love bombing:

This refers to a pattern of overly affectionate behavior that typically occurs at the beginning of a relationship, often a romantic one, in which one party "bombs" the other with over-the-top displays of adoration and attention.

Manipulation:

This can present in the form of emotional manipulation, where the manipulative person seeks power over another and employs dishonest or exploitative strategies to gain it.

Negging:

In simple terms, negging is when someone insults you and undermines your confidence in an effort to make you more open to their romantic advances. It is subtle and easily disguised through flirtatious banter, making it even more difficult to see if a boundary has been crossed. It appears as a compliment but hidden within it is an insult.

Stealthing:

This is when someone removes a condom during sex without their partner's knowledge. It increases the risk of pregnancy and the spread of STIs and is a grave violation of dignity and autonomy.



Appendix 1: Additional Supports

- ▶ **Gardaí:** Your local Garda station should be notified if you or a member of your family are being cyberbullied, threatened or harassed.

- ▶ **National Crisis Text Line:** Free text 'Hello' to 50808.

- ▶ **Tusla:** Concerns about child welfare should be reported directly to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.

- ▶ **Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU):** <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/5/sexhealth/satu/> SATU is a safe place for those who have, or believe they may have, been raped or sexually assaulted. SATU looks after all genders and gender identities, aged 14 years and over. Each member of staff in the unit has received specialised training to provide care and treatment in a respectful, person-centred, non-judgmental environment. There are six units in Ireland – in Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Galway, Mullingar and Waterford.

- ▶ **Rapecrisishelp.ie** Has a directory of all Rape Crisis Centres in Ireland to find one closest to you, along with other useful information. The RCC's national 24-hour helpline is open 365 days of the year and is completely free – you can contact them on 1800 778888.

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- ▶ **B4uDecide.ie** The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme runs the B4uDecide campaign – for teenagers most importantly, but also for parents, teachers and youth workers, to help them in talking to teenagers in their care about relationships and sex.

 - ▶ **Belongto.org** Is the national organisation supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) young people in Ireland.

 - ▶ **Bodywhys.ie** Is the national voluntary organisation supporting people affected by eating disorders. Its mission is to ensure support, awareness and understanding of eating disorders among the wider community, as well as advocating for the rights and healthcare needs of people affected by eating disorders.

 - ▶ **Childline.ie** Is a part of the ISPC (Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children), offering free and confidential supports to young people 24 hours a day – call 1800 66 66 66, or text Talk to 50101.

- ▶ **Consenthub.ie** Supports young people and those important to them (teachers, parents, college staff and policy makers) in building their knowledge of consent with interactive resources, videos, and trainings.

- ▶ **Hotline.ie** Provides free reporting and support for IBSA (image based sexual abuse). This is an anonymous facility for the public to report suspected illegal content encountered on the Internet, in a secure and confidential way. It is run by the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland.

- ▶ **Myoptions.ie** Aims to make women aware of the existence of a range of high-quality, State-funded, crisis pregnancy counselling services that can assist them in finding a resolution to a crisis pregnancy.

- ▶ **Reachout.com** Is an online youth mental health service helping young people through tough times.

- ▶ **Samaritans.ie** Samaritans' mission is to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicidal feelings - available 24 hours a day to provide emotional support for people who are struggling to cope.

- ▶ **Sexualwellbeing.ie** The HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme is a national programme tasked with implementing Ireland's framework for sexual health and wellbeing. Spunout.ie Is Ireland's youth information website - created by young people, for young people. This site aims to inform its readers about the importance of holistic wellbeing and how good health can be maintained, both physically and mentally.

- ▶ **Teni.ie** Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) seeks to improve conditions for and advance the rights and equality of trans people and their families.

- ▶ **Webwise.ie** Offers information, advice and support to those who have been affected by abuse relating to sexting.

- ▶ **Yourmentalhealth.ie** Is a place to learn about mental health services in Ireland, coordinated by the HSE, National Office for Suicide Prevention and partner organizations across the country.

Useful Links:

▶ <https://www.barnardos.ie/resources/young-people/domestic-abuse/>

▶ What is abuse? Too Into You - <https://www.toointoyou.ie/what-is-abuse/>

▶ <https://spunout.ie/sex-relationships/relationships/healthy-relationship/>

▶ <https://b4udecide.ie/relationships/healthy-relationships/>

▶ <https://www.safeireland.ie/get-help/understanding-domestic-abuse/what-are-healthy-relationships/>

▶ https://www.drcc.ie/assets/files/pdf/drcc_resource_healthy_relationships_jan_2022.pdf

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