

before boundaries get crossed

consent deal with it



Keisha Evans and N.B. Gonsalvez
illustrated by Jenny Chan, The Public Studio



Consent

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In the basketball game, you score the winning basket for your team! Your teammates run over to you, cheering and giving you high-fives. One of your teammates slaps you on your butt. He slaps everyone on the team on the butt. It shouldn't be a big deal for you, right? You don't say anything to your teammate, but you feel really uncomfortable. You understand that his slap is just to say you had a good game. But it bothers you. You didn't tell him he could do that.

Do people have the right to make you feel uncomfortable or awkward by the actions they display toward you?

**What does it mean to give and have consent?
Does consent always have to be given for everything?**

If you have ever felt embarrassed or awkward because of someone's actions toward you and you did not know what to do, then this book can help you understand the importance of setting boundaries, setting limits, having mutual respect, and giving and having consent.

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What is Consent?

Everyone has the right to choose what they want to do or what they want to happen to them and their body.

We all know that we need permission to:

- be touched
- touch others
- share secrets
- kiss
- hug
- be intimate with someone
- touch someone in private places
- have sex



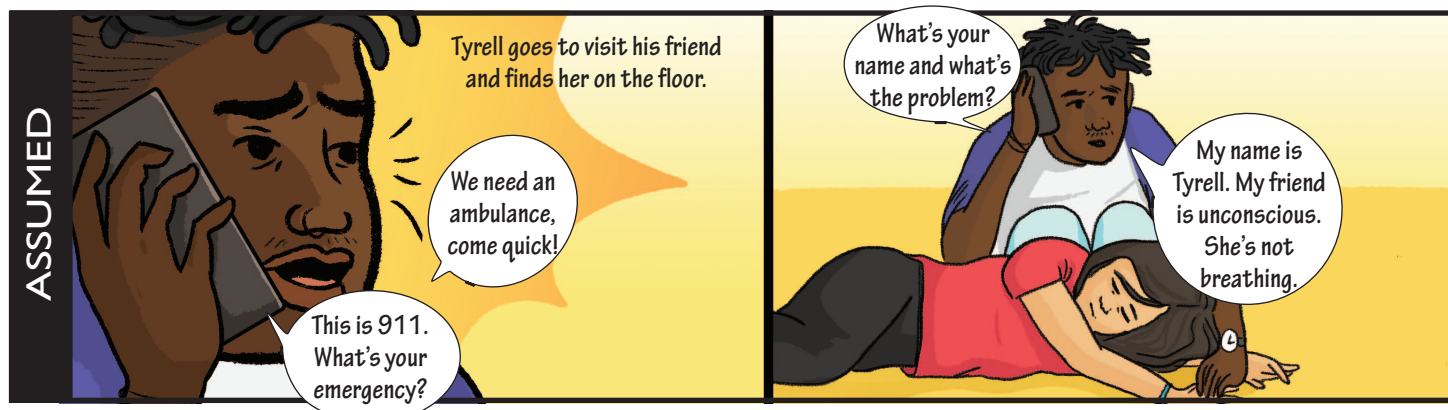


But what about:

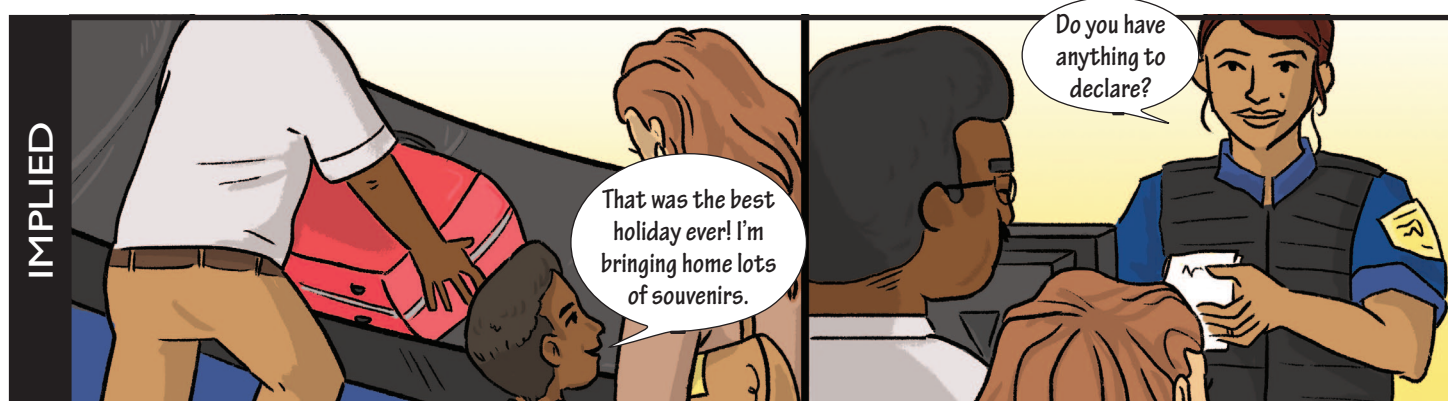
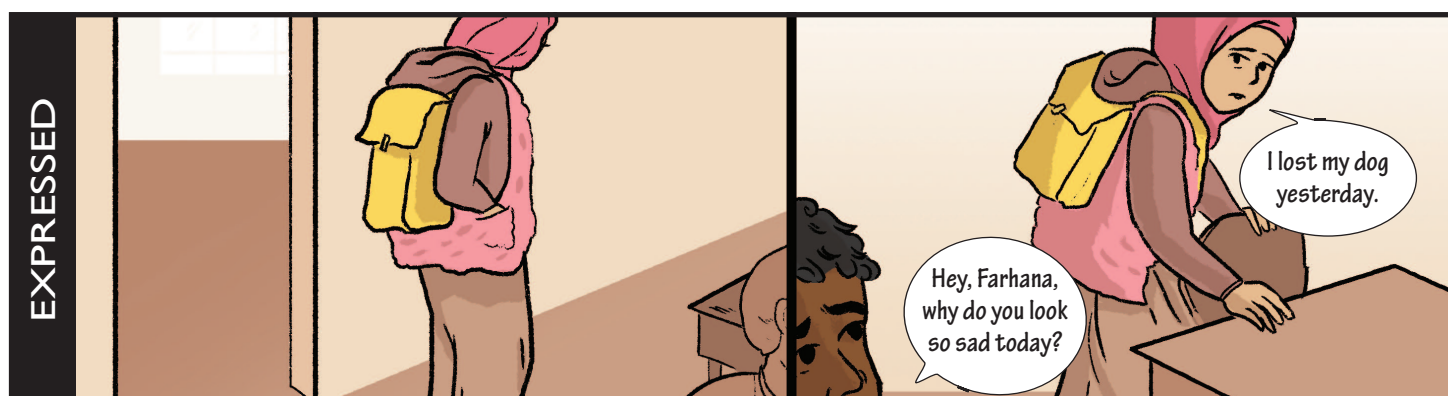
- holding hands?
- saying you are in a relationship?
- borrowing something?
- handling someone's possessions?
- touching in non-private places?
- sharing something?
- posting a picture of someone online?
- watching private content?
- telling someone's story?
- speaking on someone's behalf?

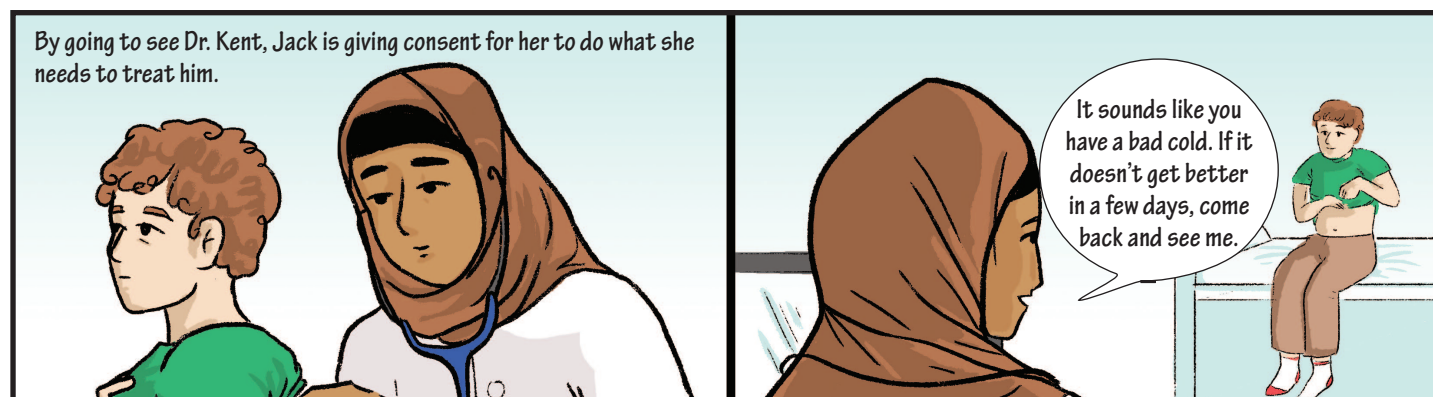
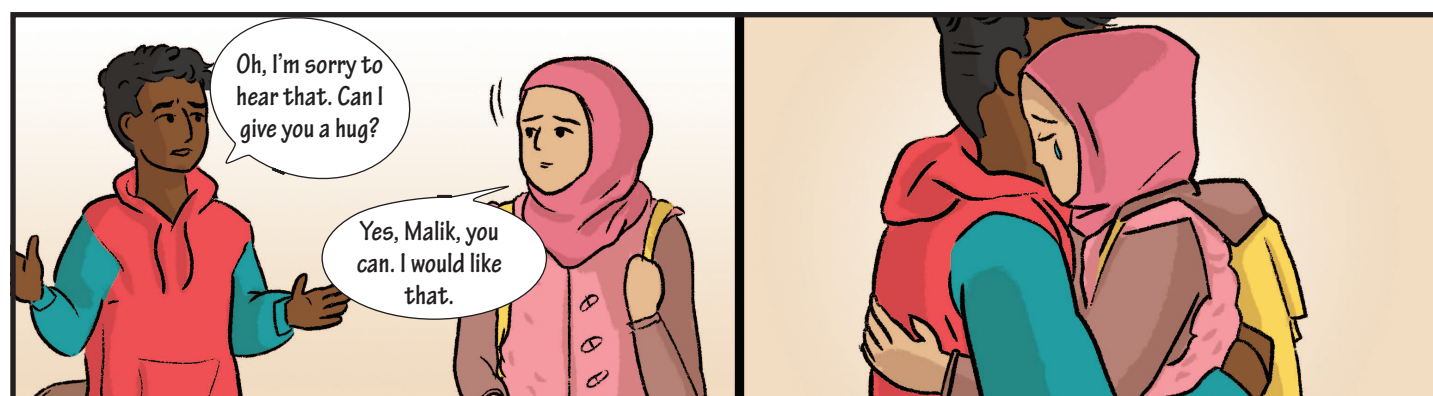
Getting consent is something that everyone needs to practise doing. And everyone has a right to say no. You have the right to make your own decisions when it comes to you. When people don't get consent for their actions, that's where conflict can begin.

Consent 101



Consent can be . . .





Consent 101

QUIZ

Consent needs to be given so that everyone knows what the boundaries are. There are times when consent is needed and not needed. Read the following scenarios and decide if consent is needed or not.

1 Car Trouble



Farique and his dad are out when their car breaks down. When they get to the garage, the mechanic opens the hood and starts checking the engine of the car.

Consent is not needed. When you take your car to a mechanic, it is assumed you are consenting to having it checked out and repaired.

2 Styling

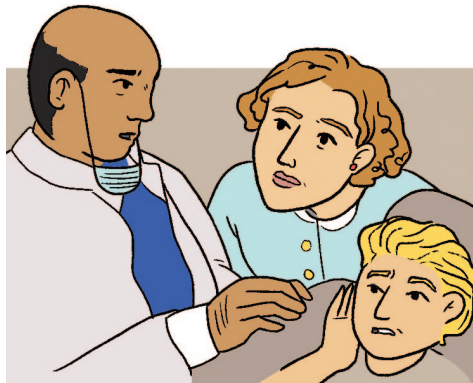


Selena's stylist tells her there is a great style that would be perfect for Selena. She wants to cut Selena's hair short and colour it red.

Consent is needed. The hairdresser can offer their opinion, but it's up to Selena to make the final decision of what she wants for herself.

3 The Cavity

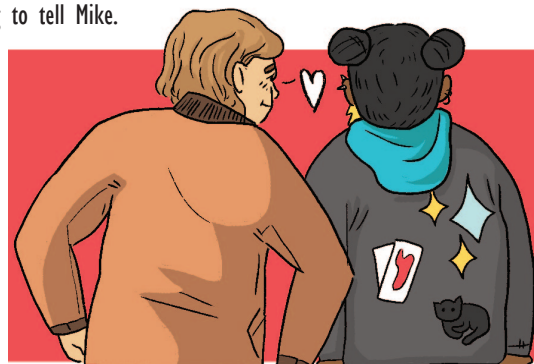
Elijah goes to the dentist with his mom. The dentist tells Elijah's mom that Elijah has three cavities that need to be filled.



Consent is not needed. Elijah's consent is not needed for the dentist to share this information. Elijah is a minor and his mom needs to be informed that Elijah has cavities.

4 The Secret Crush

Tony has a crush on Riley. He tells Stuart not to tell anyone, but Stuart is dying to tell Mike.



Consent is needed. Tony did not give Stuart consent to share his secret.

5 Teacher, Teacher

No one knows that Shanisse is failing her Math class. She doesn't want anyone to know that she needs extra help. However, Shanisse's teacher tells her parents about her grades.



Consent is not needed. For students under the age of 18, a teacher does not need consent to speak to their parents.

6 The Borrower

Michael sees that D'neice has a video game in her backpack that Michael is dying to play, so Michael takes it.



Consent is needed. Michael needs permission to borrow the video game.

7 Body Language

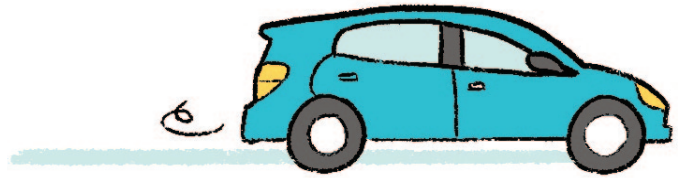
Rachel and Ahmed are making out. Rachel starts becoming uncomfortable and tells Ahmed to stop. Ahmed says he can tell that Rachel likes it and wants to go on.



Consent is needed. Even if making out with Ahmed feels good to Rachel, she has the right to stop what is happening as soon as anything doesn't feel right to her.

8 Driving Mom Crazy

River's mom is mad at her because she took the car. River knows that her mom always lets her take the car when she asks for it, so this time she just took it.



Consent is needed. River needs permission every time to borrow the car. Permission should not be assumed.

9 The Conversation

Aaliyah overhears her mother talking to her aunt in Trinidad. Aaliyah's mom is sharing a private conversation Aaliyah had with her.



Consent is needed. Aaliyah's mom needs Aaliyah's consent because it was not her story to share.

10 The Camper

Jason's class is going on a camping trip, but he forgot his permission form at home.



Consent is needed. Parents need to provide written or verbal consent for Jason to go on a trip with the school.

Consent 101

Dear Conflict Counsellor

Q: My mother brought her boyfriend over to our house. In his culture everyone kisses each other on the cheek to greet one another. Mom explained that it is seen as a gesture of friendship and comfort. Every time he comes over, he hugs me and kisses me on the cheek. The problem is that I am really uncomfortable with him doing that. What should I do?

— *Feeling the Culture Clash*

A: I know you want your mom to be happy. It is not always easy to tell someone how you are feeling, especially if you think it will offend them. But it is important that you do what is comfortable for you, even though you may think that you might be hurting your mom's boyfriend's feelings or your mom's.



Q: I agreed to meet up with this guy I met online. He seemed really nice when I spoke to him on the phone. But on our date, this guy kept grabbing my butt and it made me feel really uncomfortable and awkward. I told him to stop. He told me if I didn't want him to grab my butt, then I shouldn't have worn tight jeans. Is that true? Did I ask for it?

— *Swiping Right*

A: It is your right to wear what you want. The clothes you wear do not define who you are and definitely do not give consent for you to be treated in a certain way. And agreeing to meet does not give this guy the right to touch you without getting your permission. What happened to you is not your fault.



Q: My soccer coach is only a few years older than me. He always tells me how pretty I am. After every practice, he always takes me for a treat. The last time he offered to drive me home. Before we got to my place, he pulled over and kissed me on the lips. I was shocked and felt uncomfortable. I don't want to get him in trouble because he is my coach. Did I do something wrong? Should I tell someone?

— *Unwanted Pass*

A: It is not okay when someone you trust or who is in a position of authority uses their power to get you to do something you are not comfortable doing. You did not do anything wrong. You should tell a trusted adult and seek help.

Q: My best friend and I got into an argument. She decided to post our private conversation online to get everyone on her side. Now everyone thinks I am the bad friend. What should I do? Should I post my side of what happened?

— *The Losing Side*

A: Posting private conversations online without permission is never okay. It can get you in a lot of trouble. Consent must be given because conversations are considered private. Try talking to your friend. Ask her to take the conversation down and try to resolve the situation.

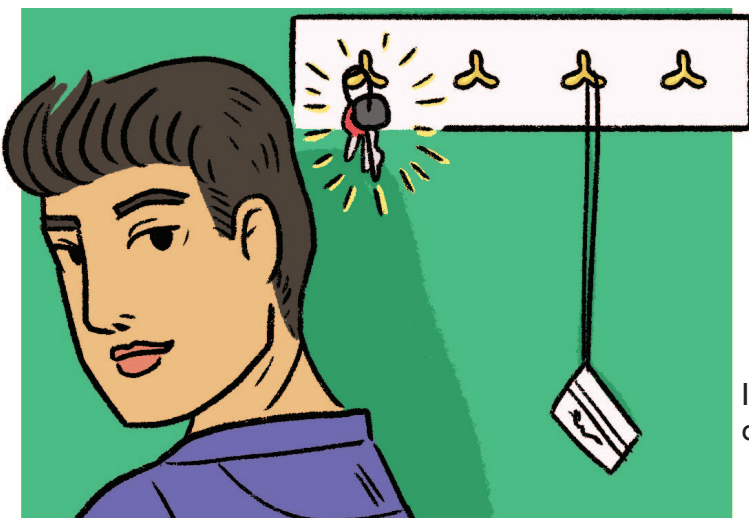


Consent 101

Myths

If you say yes, it means you can't change your mind.

Even if you start off by saying yes, you can change your mind at any time and take back your consent.



It's not stealing if I give it back.

If you "borrow" something without the owner's consent, then it's theft.

Rape is always an attack by a stranger in a dark alley.

Any sexual contact — with anyone, anywhere — without consent is sexual assault.

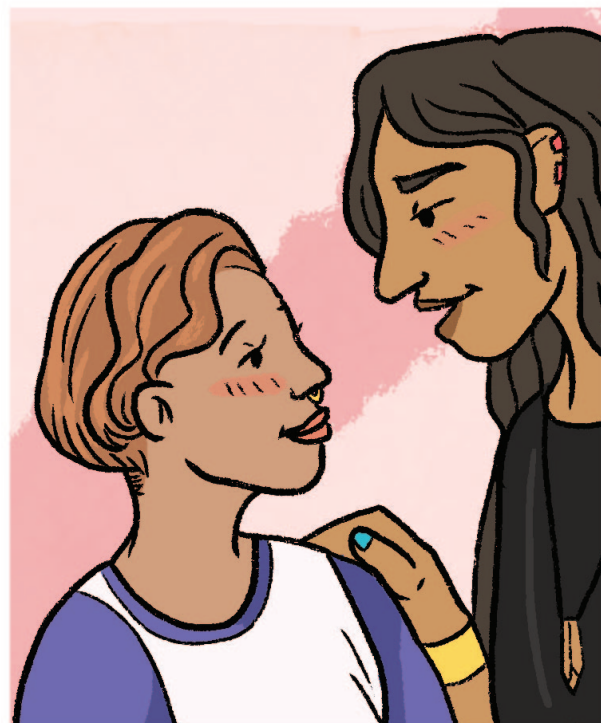


DID YOU KNOW?

- The word *consent* comes from the Latin word *consentire*, meaning agreeing to give permission.

If you ask
permission to kiss,
people will think you
are **weird**.

It may feel awkward and uncomfortable at first, but consent is still required to kiss. People will see that they'd rather kiss someone who respects their rights!



People who wear
revealing clothes want
to be **noticed** and
touched.

People can choose to wear whatever they want without having to worry about others making assumptions.

- You need consent to record and share personal phone calls.

- According to the law, young people under the age of 18 cannot consent to a nude image of themselves being taken or shared with another person.