



{inclusion outreach}

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Consent Education

Teaching consent to all students from kindergarten to grade 12 is crucial for students to develop healthy relationships. Consent education supports all students to develop healthy boundaries and respect for themselves and others. Consent is used by all students and adults throughout daily interactions, including asking to take a photo or post to social media, asking to participate in an activity, asking for food or drink, asking for a high five or hug, or assisting one in their care. Consent is required of all students and adults before touching others or taking their personal items (e.g. Can I see your iPad?).

Teaching students that consent can be provided both verbally and non-verbally is essential. All students need to understand they have a right to communicate “no” to unwanted touch or interactions to peers, teachers and other adults in their lives, despite power and age differences. Supporting adults can share their power when possible by consulting with students in our decision-making and being transparent about why we are making certain decisions.

Students with complex needs may have multiple ways to communicate “No”, such as turning away, tilting head down, closing eyes, frowning, etc. A [personal communication dictionary](#) is a tool that can assist all team members understand the student’s communicative intent. It’s also important to acknowledge students can remove consent, or change their mind at any time – turning away, or stop holding hands is removing consent. Discussion of consent is also an ongoing discussion, not a one-time event, and should not be assumed based on previous consent provided by a student. Therefore, it is critical to ask for consent EACH time, such as “Can I wipe your face or do you want to do it yourself? Can I push you in your wheelchair to go to gym?”.

When assisting students with personal care, it is important to adopt an approach that fosters dignity and respect. It is important that students have some level of participation in directing their body and care needs. This fosters physical empowerment to have a sense of control over their own body. Indicating they are ready to start is a way of **consenting** to the assistance. As a student gets older and as different people may be assisting with care, this becomes increasingly important.

Examples of how a student may indicate they are **ready** for assistance and **consenting**, include:

- Turn their head toward the person assisting
- Move or turn their body

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- Vocalize consent
- Smile towards the person assisting
- Nod their head

For more information on consent during personal care please see the handout: [Active Participation in Hygiene Routines](#)

Consent Education Resources

- Elementary Picture Books
 - Yes! No!: A First Conversation About Consent. Authors: Megan Madison & Jessica Ralli
 - Body Safety: Book for Kids by Tim. Author: Adrian Laurent
 - Body Boundaries Make Me Stronger Author: Elizabeth Cole

- Ministry of Education and Child Care - Supporting Student Health Resource Guides:

Supporting Student Health: Elementary – (Consent: Pages 8- 14)

- https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/subject/phe/Supporting_Student_Health_Elementary.pdf

Supporting Student Health: Secondary – (Consent: Pages 9-15)

- https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/subject/phe/Supporting_Student_Health_Secondary.pdf

- Erase initiative (Scroll to Gender-Based Violence)
 - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase>

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