

ONLY YES MEANS YES

Did you get/give a yes?

FAQ

WHAT IS THE ONLY YES MEANS YES CAMPAIGN?

Only Yes Means Yes is our newest campaign that uses the phrase “**Only Yes Means Yes**” as a way of changing how we look at and understand consent. It focuses on what positive consent can sound and look like as a way to promote healthy relationships and increase a greater understanding of consent culture.

Have you heard of the saying “No Means No” before? This is a common statement used when describing consent. What “No Means No” tells us is that our bodies are always conveying consent (always saying yes) until you say “no” and indicate a lack of consent. “Well they didn’t say ‘no’ so it must be a ‘yes.’” Although this is not wrong or incorrect, it tells people that unless they gave a “no” that was clear and understood, they were giving consent.

The **Only Yes Means Yes** campaign challenges the conversation by reinforcing that our bodies/person is always conveying a lack of consent (always saying no) and that consent only happens when a person can actively and consciously say “yes” and gives/shows their consent.

Affirmative consent matters. Not getting a “no” is not the same thing as consent. Saying and showing “yes” are the only ways to get consent. Canadian law defines consent as: *the voluntary agreement to engage in the sexual activity in question [1]*. Put simply, **Only Yes Means Yes**.

Sexual violence remains a problem in Canada. PEI has the highest increase in the rate of sexual assaults reported to police in the country.

Most people understand in some way what consent looks like and that consent is important, but knowing what consent sounds and looks like is only the first step. We hope to normalize consent by empowering adults to actively use and engage in consent conversations.

It is no longer about just teaching adults how to say “no” and recognize the “no,” it’s helping them to understand that unless they received a “yes” the “no” is implied and consent was not given.

Through simple, relatable posters, we are showing Islanders what consent can sound and look like. Prompting adults to ask the question “*Did I get a yes?*” and showing what that “yes” can be.

[1] Canada’s Criminal Code Section 273.1

Consent is current, active, positive, sober,
ongoing and voluntary



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Consent is not a one-time thing. It can be taken back and a person can change their mind anytime. A person might give consent to kissing or touching, but that does not mean the consent carries over to having sex. Check in with your partner and make sure you have consent to continue your activity. It is okay to remove consent. We can change our minds and decide we don't want to participate anymore. Changing our minds and no longer wanting to continue sexual activity is not consent. Remember only a CURRENT and ACTIVE Yes Means Yes.

CAMPAIGN GUIDING PRINCIPLE

This campaign encourages individuals to rethink their perceptions about consent. By seeing examples of positive consent statements and by asking questions like "Did you get/give a yes?," we hope to demonstrate the simple, everyday, respectful and caring ways in which we can ask for and give consent. Empowering individuals to revisit their relationships and see if their perception of receiving consent was on the right path.

HOW DOES MY ORGANIZATION PARTICIPATE?

Participation is easy and free.

Here is how it works:

- Review our campaign information. Become familiar with the resources available around consent.
- Display the **Only Yes Means Yes** posters in your workplace where they are visible to adults, staff and clients (bathrooms, staff room, gathering spaces).
- Open up conversations with clients, colleagues, family, partners and friends about consent.

"Did you get a yes?,"

"What does yes sound and look like?,"



When it comes to consent,

Only **YES** means **YES**.

"Are they still giving me a yes?"

- Use and share our free campaign assets, or create your own messages on your digital and social media platforms.
- Share and tag us in your media posts and messages so we too can promote your organization and the great work you are doing to support positive consent conversations.

Instagram @PEISexualAssaultCentre

Facebook @PEIRSAC

Help us grow and evolve the campaign over the next several years by offering your feedback to PEIRSAC and by sharing the campaign out with your own connections.

CONSENT IS: YES IN WORDS
AND
ACTIONS

HOW TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY

This campaign is focused on prevention and awareness. But being reminded of consent language could possibly trigger people, going back to moments where they felt unsafe, harmed, a time they may not have given consent, or choose to not get consent from a partner. People may recall moments of sexual violence and their experiences. This campaign will help to enhance access to support through:

PEIRSAC's Counselling Request Line 1-866-368-8055

- Individual and group therapy and counselling for adults (16+) of all genders

PEIRSAC's Main Phone Number 902-566-1864

- Psychoeducational information and community programming
- Referrals to other community support programs



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WHY CONSENT?

Despite ongoing efforts, sexual violence remains a problem in Canada. Between 2014 - 2019, PEI police reports rose from 59 to 132 - That's a 122 per cent increase.

A lack of consent is at the foundation of sexual violence perpetration. The difference between consensual intimate relationships and sexual violence is the choice you make when you are faced with consent language and actions. *Is it a YES?* or *Is it a NO?* Those who commit sexual violence have chosen to not respect someone's *NO* or to not get consent.

Positive consent matters. Showing and saying an enthusiastic "yes!" is the process of giving permission to another person, letting them know that you are interested and committed to engaging in what they are asking of you.

In healthy intimate partner relationships, both partners openly give consent and receive consent with respect. When a person indicates yes (in words or actions), their partner recognizes this and continues if they too have given consent. The same goes for not giving consent. When a person indicates no (in words or actions), their partner recognizes this and stops what they are doing, regardless of their feelings towards continuing the activity.

[1] Canada's Criminal Code Section 273.1

Contact Us

Office phone: 902-566-1864

Email: admin@peirsac.org

peirsac.org

