



What is Consent?

Lately there has been a lot of talk in the media about the issue of consent. The Kobe Bryant case has made people question what consent means. If a woman goes into a man's bedroom does that mean that she has agreed to have sex with him? Does a woman have the right to say stop at any point during a sexual activity?

Consent is...

- ...mutually agreeing to do something you both (or all) want to do.
- ...giving permission.
- ...saying "yes" and meaning it.
- ...approving of what's happening to you and your body.

Coercion is when you do something you don't want to do because you're afraid of what might happen if you say "no". Coercion does not always have involved the threat of physical violence. For example, wondering "will he/she leave me if I don't agree to have sex?" is coercion. Other examples of coercion include false promises of love, persistent persuasive arguments, and threats to end the relationship.

A person is NOT giving consent when they:

- Say "no," with words and/or body language
- Want to say no, but are afraid to
- Are silent because it isn't safe to say no.
- Are being forced by someone with more power.
- Are threatened, or someone they love is threatened.
- Say "yes" because it isn't safe to say no.
- Would say "no" if they were not intoxicated or high.

But is it consent?

Sometimes it's hard to know if consent is being given. There may be mixed signals or one partner may feel saying "no" is not an option. Sometimes the signals are there and pretty clear, but they get ignored. Some examples of words and actions that might mean consent isn't being given include:

- "I don't want to"
- "I'm not ready"
- "Ouch/That hurts"
- "Stop"

- hitting
- kicking
- avoiding eye contact
- not getting into it or stopping

Words, especially the ones above, are usually pretty clear signs that consent is not being given. Sometimes a partner won't feel safe saying them out loud. Safe and comfortable are two different things. You should always feel

comfortable talking with your sex partner or partners about what you do. For some people, they feel comfortable talking about sex until their partner does something to make them feel unsafe.

If you notice any of the signs above or something that looks or sounds like one of those signs, stop, ask and clarify. It shows that you're paying attention to and respect your partner. Not noticing or ignoring those signs and others like them could mean that you have crossed a line that separates consensual sex from sexual assault.

Who cannot legally give consent to have sex in Arizona?

1. People who are too young.
 - Anyone under the age of 14 cannot give consent.
 - A 15 year old person can give consent to have sex with someone who is 17 years old, if there is no more than a 24 months age difference.
 - An 18 year old person can give consent to have sex with anyone who is 18 years or older.
2. People who are severely developmentally disabled or seriously mentally ill cannot give consent.
3. People who are under the influence of drugs, alcohol or asleep cannot give consent.

Remember that sex without consent is Rape!

- Rape is not sex! Rape is violence using sex as a weapon.
- A person has the right to say stop at any point during a sexual activity.
- The only person who can prevent rape is the person who chooses to rape.