



Understanding Consent; A guide for Parents and Carers

Rebecca Weaver - Barnardo's Advanced CE Practitioner

Rebecca.weaver@barnardos.org.uk
www.somethingsnotright.co.uk

Things we
need to
think
about
first...



Who are we?

Warwickshire Exploitation Team



Children's Services

1-2-1 support for CE victims & children at risk of CE
Support for SW's holding CE cases

Believe in children



Barnardo's

1-2-1 long-term Support for CE victims
1-2-1 Support for parents & carers of CE victims
Training and outreach for all services across Warwickshire



Disruption Investigation
Bringing CE cases to court



Missing Team

Supporting Police investigations
Addressing reasons behind missing episodes



Multi-Agency Co-located at Warwickshire Justice Centre



Nurse (Public Health)

YP's Missing Team

Young people's RHI's Intelligence & info gathering
1-2-1- support for children who are regularly missing

What is consent?

- As a parent/carer, you may have heard the word 'consent', but you might not know what it means or what it includes.
- Simply put, consent is permission for something to happen or an agreement to do something.
- Consent requires respect and communication.
- Consent is an important concept for children and young people to learn about and can lead to better relationships with family, friends, peers and, eventually romantic partners.

Consent is...

*'if a person agrees by
choice, and has the
freedom and **capacity** to
make that choice'*

(Sexual Offences Act, 2003)

A child who has been groomed, coerced or forced into sexual
activity DOES NOT have the capacity to give consent

CSE – Child Sexual Exploitation

Revised Statutory Child Sexual Abuse Definition 2017

It occurs where an individual or groups takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person **under the age of 18** into sexual activity:

(a) In exchange for something the child needs or wants
and/or

(b) For the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator

- **Child** – Anyone under the age of 18
- **Sexual** – Sexual activity, physical touching in person or online, sexual images/videos, messages
- **Exploitation** – to take advantage of someone unfairly for your own gain
- Child Sexual Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also through the use of **technology**.



Talking to your child about consent

- It's so important for parents and carers to talk to children about sex and relationships as early as primary school age to help keep children safe and recognise the signs of abuse.
- We have put together advice over the next few slides to help you start the conversation. It can also help to speak to teachers at your child's school about the kinds of topics being covered in PSHE-style lessons and discuss how you could add to this at home.
- When talking to your child about sex and relationships, it's really important that you help them to feel supported by listening openly and non-judgementally. Let them know that they can talk to you if anything inappropriate or that's upset them has happened, whatever the circumstances. And that it's never their fault if it has.

Talking to your child about relationships

- It's very common for parents or carers to feel awkward or uncomfortable talking to your child about relationships and sex. But there are ways you can make the conversation easier:
 - Try to find a good time to start a conversation. Pick a time when your child's relaxed and when there aren't other people in your family around. You might want to have the conversation in a neutral place, such as on a walk or a bike ride, or even in the car, rather than somewhere at home where you might be interrupted.
 - It can help to make the conversation relevant to something that's happened recently. For example, if you've been watching a TV series or film where one of the characters is in a relationship. You could ask your child what they think about the character's relationship and if it's healthy or unhealthy. Or if your child's been learning about sex and relationships education in school, you could ask them how they're finding this or what everyone in the class thought about it.
 - Try not to rush the conversation and let your child talk to you in their own time. It can help to have several short conversations rather than trying to cover everything at once. If your child feels uncomfortable, let them know that you're there if they want to talk to you about relationships at a different time.



Start talking
(the sooner the
better...)

- Talking to your child about healthy relationships and consent while they're still in primary school will help you to work out their level of understanding and encourage them to ask questions. Try not to lecture your child but talk together and listen.

You could try:

- Having short, informal chats now and again.
- Using everyday situations to start a conversation, such as seeing a pregnant woman or discussing stories in the news.
- For Primary School age children NSPCC's Talk PANTS - a simple conversation to help keep your child safe from sexual abuse. From P through to S, each letter of PANTS provides a simple but valuable rule that can help keep your child safe.
- Using humour if it makes things easier.

Conversations around safe sex

Encourage your child to make safe choices about sex. As children get older it's important to talk about sexually transmitted infections (STIs), contraception and pregnancy. Although children are generally taught these topics in secondary school, it's helpful for them to know they can talk about them with you too. Let them know you're there for them if they have any questions or need support.

Childline have great advice online for young people about pregnancy, STIs and contraception and safe sex.

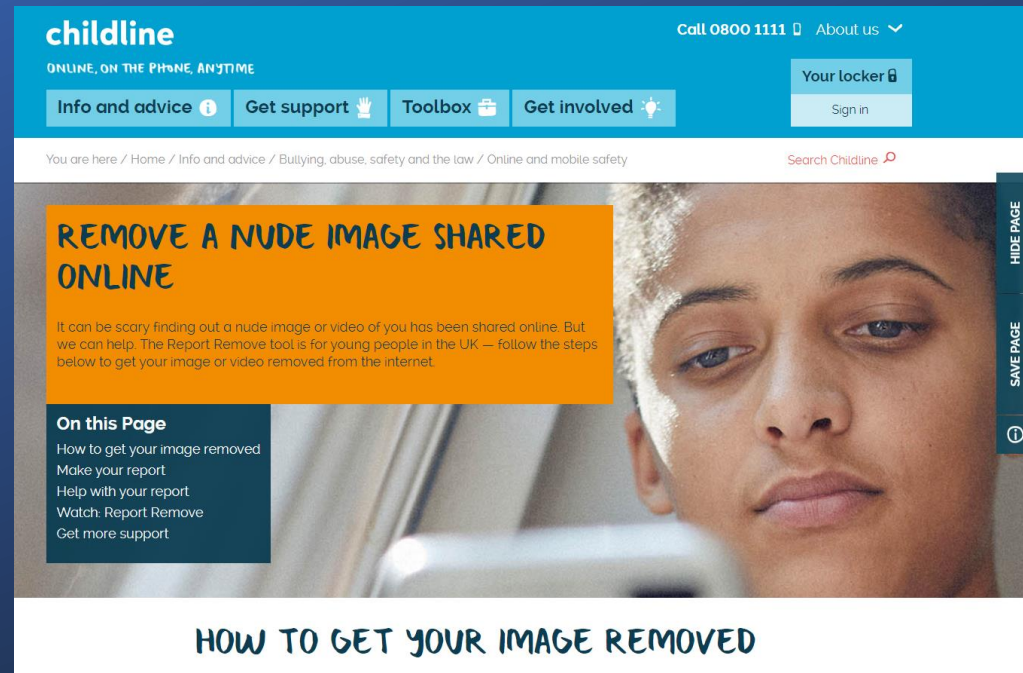
Talk to your child about consent and the law

It's important to talk to children and young people about consent. You can help them to understand that consent in relationships is about feeling in control and saying yes or agreeing to sexual activity because you choose to, not because someone is pressuring you to. Remember sexual activity can be in person or online.

- Consent means actively saying yes, using both words and body language. You should explain to your child that they should always check to ensure the other person is happy to have sex or take part in sexual activity of any kind. And that it's important to be aware of the other person's body language and behaviour, and to stop if you think that the other person is uncomfortable or unhappy.
- Let your child know that even if they've agreed to sexual activity or sex before, whether online or in person, they have the right to change their mind at any time. Tell them they can always talk to you if they feel pressured or unsure if they're ready to take part in sexual activity or do things like send sexual images. And if they're worried that an image of them has been shared online, they can use Child Line Report Remove tool to have it taken down.

NSPCC'S Report Remove Tool

- Report Remove is a tool that allows young people to report an image or video shared online, to see if it's possible to get it taken down. Provided by Childline and IWF, it keeps the young person informed at each stage of their report, and provides further support where necessary.



The screenshot shows the Childline website interface. At the top, the 'childline' logo is on the left, and 'Call 0800 1111' and 'About us' are on the right. Below the logo, it says 'ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME'. A navigation bar contains 'Info and advice', 'Get support', 'Toolbox', and 'Get involved'. A 'Your locker' button with a 'Sign in' link is also present. A breadcrumb trail reads: 'You are here / Home / Info and advice / Bullying, abuse, safety and the law / Online and mobile safety'. A search bar is labeled 'Search Childline'. The main content area features a large orange box with the title 'REMOVE A NUDE IMAGE SHARED ONLINE'. Below the title, a paragraph explains the tool's purpose: 'It can be scary finding out a nude image or video of you has been shared online. But we can help. The Report Remove tool is for young people in the UK — follow the steps below to get your image or video removed from the internet.' To the left of the main content, an 'On this Page' sidebar lists: 'How to get your image removed', 'Make your report', 'Help with your report', 'Watch: Report Remove', and 'Get more support'. On the right side of the page, there are vertical buttons for 'HIDE PAGE' and 'SAVE PAGE'. The background of the page shows a close-up of a young person's face looking at a smartphone. At the bottom of the page, a white banner contains the text 'HOW TO GET YOUR IMAGE REMOVED'.

Talk to your child about consent and the law

Consent can be complicated and sometimes it can be hard for a young person to recognise what's okay and what's not. If you're worried about a young person's sexual behaviour always seek professional support.

What does the law tell us?

- The age of consent or the legal age to have sex in the UK is 16. The laws are there to protect children and not to prosecute under 16s who have mutually consenting sexual activity.
- Any sort of sexual contact without consent is illegal, regardless of the age of those involved. Children under 13 cannot legally consent to any type of sexual activity.
- Childline has some great resources to help young people understand healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Consent; Five Facts to Remember

5 facts about consent to share with
your children:

- Consent is more than just saying yes or no
- Wanting to do something once doesn't mean you have to in the future
- Consent applies to anything sexual, not just sexual intercourse
- Being in a relationship doesn't mean you have to do what your partner wants
- You can change your mind about what's happening any time

Worried about your child's relationship?

Realising that your child may be in an unhealthy relationship can be upsetting and very worrying for parents and carers. It can also be difficult to know if something's wrong or how to help them. We can help you to spot the signs of an unhealthy relationship and know what to do if you're worried.

Signs that a child might be in an unhealthy relationship are:

- Becoming isolated and spending little time with family or friends.
- Controlling behaviour, such as being told what to wear, always needing to let the person know where they are or what they're doing or having their social media accounts monitored.
- Feeling pressured or like they have to do things they're uncomfortable with. This could include being pressured into sex or to send nudes or sexual images.
- Having their money, access to food or day-to-day items controlled.
- Being prevented from working or going to school or college or feeling reluctant to go to school.
- Persistent changes to a child's mood or behaviour can also be a sign that something's wrong.
- Being bullied or experiencing sexual bullying, either online, in private or in front of others at home or in school.

Barriers for Children

We cannot rely on children disclosing what's happened or happening to them for many reasons;

- Feeling: **FEAR, SHAME & LOVE**
- **Fear:** ...of the exploiter or 'perceived' bf/gf
- ...of authorities
- ...of not being believed
- **Ashamed** and **embarrassed**
- The fear of **bringing shame** to their family because of cultural or religious beliefs
- Do not see themselves as a **victims...GROOMED**
- Not being aware of the **help** that is available
- Being **labelled** or **judged** as:
 - ...' **promiscuous** ... **experimenting**
 - ... **placing themselves at risk...**

Supporting a child who has disclosed abuse

Starting conversations about relationships and sex can sometimes mean a child shares an experience that's distressing or abusive. This can be upsetting or shocking for parents and carers, but there are things you can do to help a child feel supported.

1. Show you care and help them to open up

Give the child your full attention and listen without interrupting. Be compassionate and reassure them that their feelings are important.

2. Slow down and take your time

Let the child talk at their pace and don't interrupt them while they're talking. Try not to rush them and let them know that they can talk to you again at another time if they don't feel comfortable sharing everything straightaway. Sometimes it can take several conversations for them to tell you everything.

3. Show you understand

Show that you're interested in what your child's telling you and check if you're unsure by repeating back what they've told you. Use their language to show it's their experience.

How can YOU best support your children?

Listen...

If you think a child is in danger, asking if they are okay often makes a huge difference. Children are sometimes worried that they won't be believed, so making the time to listen, and take what they are saying seriously, is incredibly important.

Don't Blame!

Always remember the child is a victim in the context of abuse and is in no way responsible

Keep an open dialogue...

Let children know that you are always there for support and they can talk with you about anything.

Encourage pro-social interests...

Promote positive hobbies including sports, art, music etc

Trust your instinct...

We have gut feelings for a reason so please seek advice and support for your child if you feel that something isn't right

Additional support...

Local mentoring support can provide children with additional positive role models

Safeguarding

If you have concerns that a child is suffering ANY form of neglect, abuse or cruelty call:

Warwickshire Front Door/MASH

on

01926 414144

Lines are open from

Monday to Friday:

8am – 6.30pm

Saturday: 9am – 1pm

If there is an immediate danger to life call 999

Support for you

- **Barnardos** - Warks Exploitation Team Parent Support Provision or available for advice and guidance
- **Police** – Non-Emergency - You can pass information and concerns to Warwickshire Police on 101
- **Crimestoppers** on 0800 555 111 Anonymously
- **Targeted Youth Support, Youth Clubs and Services** – research what's available in your local area on Warks County Council Website
- **Family Information Service (FIS)** : 01926 742274
- **Parents Against Child Exploitation (PACE)** - <https://paceuk.info/>

Support for you

 **IWF** Internet Watch Foundation:
<https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

 Believe in children
Barnardo's **Barnardo's:** www.barnardos.org.uk

- **ChildLine:** www.childline.org



- **OFCOM:** www.ofcom.org.uk



- **CEOP:** www.thinkuknow.co.uk



- **PACE (Parents Against Child Exploitation):** www.paceuk.info



- **NSPCC:**
www.nspcc.org.uk/keepingchildrensafe

NSPCC

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Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Services



- **01788 551150**
- **support@rosasupport.org**
- **<https://rosasupport.org/>**



Who are we?

- RoSA is an independent charity working with survivors of rape or sexual abuse, their families and friends. We support women, men, young people and children from age 5 and offer a completely free and confidential service.



What do we do?

- We support victims of abuse and their families and help them to rebuild their lives. Nothing can change what has happened, but with support they can change how they deal with it

We Offer...

Counselling for ChYP



- Pre-trial therapy
- Support children and young people through counselling, advocacy and group work
- Work in schools, colleges and university settings as well as f2f or on line appointments
- Prevention & protection initiatives
- **ChISVA** – support through the criminal justice system

ChISVA



- Support related to the CJS
- From thinking about reporting
- To trial and applying for CICA.
- And everything in-between

RoSA are able to work with children and young people to help them understand consent



CONSENT
IS AN
**ACTIVE,
SOBER,
VERBAL**
YES.
**NOT THE
ABSENCE**
OF A
NO.

Any questions, please get in touch....



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- **support@rosasupport.org**
- **<https://rosasupport.org/>**

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Warwickshire CE



@WarksCE



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Any Questions?



Thank you!!



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<https://rosasupport.org/>

Warwickshire Child Exploitation Team
Warwickshire Police
Leamington Justice Centre
Newbold Terrace
Leamington Spa, CV32 4EL