Find out more about when and how to give sexual consent.

**Consent Is Your Right**

**What consent is**

Freely and voluntarily giving someone permission to touch you
Wanting to participate in a sexual activity and saying “yes”

**What consent is not**

Wearing any type of clothes — even if they are “sexy” or revealing
Spending time with someone
Having sexual contact with a person in the past
Physical responses to sexual activities like erections, arousal or orgasms — your body cannot control its physical response to sexual stimulation even if the reaction is unwanted.

**Who can give consent?**

Everyone involved in sexual situations must give consent.

**BUT**

Some people cannot give consent, even if they say “yes.”

- Underage
- Intoxicated, drunk or under the influence of drugs
- Being pressured, intimidated or threatened, especially if you are in an unequal power relationship
- Unable to understand the nature of the activity

**Power distance**

Power distance is the inequality that exists between people in different positions, such as:

- Officer vs. enlisted
- Higher rank vs. lower rank
- Doctor vs. patient
- Trainee vs. instructor
- GS employees vs. contractors vs. active-duty personnel

If someone who outranks you is pressuring you into sexual activity, remember that their rank does not give them the right to do something to you that you do not want.

**If you've been sexually assaulted, the DOD Safe Helpline offers confidential, anonymous support.**

Text your ZIP Code or installation/base name to 202-470-5546 or visit SafeHelpline.org.