

Active* Consent's interdisciplinary team works from the central assumption that one intervention (be it workshops, play, an eLearning module or a social media campaign) cannot on its own, create the change within society of more positive sexual experiences and less sexual violence and harassment that will enable young people to safely navigate and explore their sexuality.

At the end of 2021, despite all the uncertainty and disruption created by Covid, we have fully developed the first stage of our school programme. We know it is vital to work with the whole school - parents, teachers and young people hence:

1. we train teachers so that they can confidently and competently facilitate the workshop
2. then we talk with parents to share insights and resources with them to equip their children with the information they need to explore and develop independence in a social context where they may encounter sexist banter, sexting, revenge porn, sexual bullying and rising numbers of sexual assaults.

For many parents and their children, the prospect of talking about topics related to sexuality is daunting, and negative press reports heightens anxiety about how to discuss issues they feel they know little about. The parents' evening seminar aims to:

- Address parental anxieties about consent and talking to their children about sexuality and intimacy
- Realise the context within which adolescents maybe starting to explore their sexuality and the influences that maybe informing their decisions to do so.
- Share some of the exercises in the workshop, so they are clear as to the content, language, tone and intended learning outcomes of their children's engagement with the workshop

- Promote conversations about consent and sexual media at home by sharing relevant resources to enable their children to safely navigate and explore their sexuality.

By the end of the 2021/2022 academic year we will have piloted and evaluated 2 more stages of training, resources and supports for staff, pupils and parents.

These include:

- a workshop on IBSA,
- Sex on our Screens (an eLearning resource for pupils, parents and teachers),
- a filmed drama based on our research findings with TY and 5th year pupils,
- posters and
- social media assets and campaigns.

Our seminar for parents lasts about an hour, from a 7 p.m. start. Some of their feedback, gathered during our pilot of the Active*Consent workshop with 10 different schools and 993 pupils across the country includes:

96% of the 353 parents stated school workshop will provide important learning for 15 – 17 year olds

- “Teenagers realising that their perception of what everyone else is doing is not correct. I think that will be so helpful to them.”
- “Very pleased with the language used and the no nonsense attitude towards such an important but often ‘skirted’ around topic.”
- “Knowing that I owe it to my son (for his safety and happiness) to have this conversation with him.”
- “I love the way you show sex in such a positive way to young people, when it occurs in a loving consensual manner.”
- “It’s given me more confidence to approach this topic with my son!”

