

# STOP! OR GO!

## COMMUNICATION, CONSENT AND BOUNDARIES

Sexual health  
Consent  
Sexual activity  
Masturbation  
Oral sex  
Alcohol  
Sexual coercion  
Gender-neutral  
Sexual orientation  
Gender  
Rape  
Sexual assault

- ✓ 1. To help learners understand the importance of **consent**.
- ✓ 2. To get learners to think about and discuss sexual boundaries, and understand that comfort levels vary greatly from person to person.

45 Mins

**Teacher Prompt: Stop!/Go! Statements** (provided)  
**Stop! / Go! Signs** (provided)

### PROCEDURE

**1** Begin the lesson by asking learners what **consent** with regard to sexual activity means to them. You can ask for volunteers to share their opinions.

**2** Now give learners the definition of **consent** from the **Glossary** as follows:

**CONSENT:** The clear, unmistakable and voluntary agreement between people to participate in a **sexual activity** (including fondling, **masturbating** each other or **oral sex**). In terms of South African law, someone cannot consent if they are asleep or under the influence of **alcohol** or drugs.

**3** Emphasise how important it is to have consent before proceeding with any sexual activity with a partner.

Remind the class that consent should never be assumed. You cannot assume that someone is consenting based on their behaviour, or appearance. You also cannot assume that someone is consenting because they have consented in the past.

Emphasise that everyone has the right to stop any sexual activity whenever they want, regardless of what has happened up until that point, or in previous sexual encounters.

**4** Learners may be anxious about the potential for embarrassment if they ask questions before or during sexual activity. They may also fear being rejected.

Explain that awkwardness is often part of sex (including talking about sex), and the potential for rejection is always there. However, the risks of not asking for consent far outweigh the task of asking for consent. Communicating before, during and after sexual activity is very important, so as to make sure that each person is comfortable with what is happening, and that each feels safe and is consenting. Clear communication is also the best way to ensure that your sexual relationship develops and improves.

**5** Give each learner a 'Stop!' and a 'Go!' sign.

**6** Read the list of statements (provided) which may be spoken by either partner during sexual activity. For each statement, the learners should hold up their cards as follows:

- Hold up the Go! (green) card if they think that the statement indicates that consent was given.
- Hold up the Stop! (red) card if they think that the statement indicates that consent was not given.
- Hold up the Stop! (red) card if they are unsure about whether consent was given, and think that the partners should stop and discuss or clarify what should happen next.

**7** After each statement, the teacher should affirm the learners' correct choices. If learners put up the incorrect sign for a certain statement, ask them why they chose that response, and explain why it is incorrect. For example, in statement 4, a learner may feel that silence means Go! You should explain that many people may not communicate how they feel because they are shy, because they do not know how to explain what they do or do not want, because they do not want to upset you, or because they feel scared, or are in shock at what is happening. For this reason, silence is never consent. If someone is being quiet, ask if everything is okay, and if you should stop or keep going.

**8** Once the class has gone through all the statements, and discussed them. They will be doing the same thing again, but this time you are going to be reading out longer scenarios (provided) instead of statements.

**9** Read each scenario, and after each one, have volunteers reveal their answer. Stimulate debate, by getting all learners to think about reasoning behind their answers for each scenario.

Make it clear which are the correct responses, and make sure that you explain why.

For example if a learner thinks that Scenario 4 illustrated a fair or consensual situation, you can explain that people have different boundaries, comfort levels, and past experiences, and just because one partner is comfortable doing something, it does not mean that the other should also be. Just because someone is okay with receiving oral sex does not mean that they should necessarily be okay with giving it.



Aalia may have had a bad experience in the past, or may not have done it before and wanted to get more information so that she felt more comfortable when she did do it in the future. Point out that if Alex only wanted to give Aalia oral sex if she reciprocated, s/he should have said that from the outset. Communicating expectations is important for any relationship, and is a good way to ensure consent.

- 10 Finally, learners can also come up with their own scenarios. Ask them to break into groups of 4 or 5 and come up with one scenario where consent was given through effective communication between partners, and one scenario where consent was not given due to a lack of communication. Ask learners to focus on situations where consent could be tricky. This should not take longer than 10 minutes.
- 11 Ask for volunteers to share their scenarios, and ask the rest of the class if they agree with whether the scenario was consensual or not. Again, make sure to clarify the correct answer and explain why.
- 12 Explain to learners that these are scenarios where consent, or the lack of consent, can be tricky or unclear. These scenarios show why it is necessary for the person initiating sexual activities to ask for consent before going ahead, whatever the situation.

## TEACHER TIPS



### General

Learners may act silly or make jokes, mock each other or withdraw because of the overt sexual content in the exercise which adolescents might find amusing or uncomfortable. You can minimise this by preparing the class for the sexual content before the exercise. Tell them that you will be talking about sex, and even though they may find that amusing, the discussion of negotiating sex, and sexual coercion is really important and serious. For this reason you would like them to focus on the exercise and give the issues their full attention. You may want to re-emphasise this before asking learners to read their responses aloud, and add that it is important to show respect, and to be non-judgemental when listening to other's efforts.

Whenever discussing sexual activities with learners, it is important to use the term 'partner' rather than 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend'. By staying gender-neutral, you ensure that no one in the classroom of a different sexual orientation or gender is alienated, which is especially important when asking learners to discuss touchy topics such as intimacy and sexual boundaries.

If learners ask about the gender of Alex, tell them that Alex is a gender-neutral name and it was specifically chosen so that they did not know if the scenario involved a same-sex or opposite-sex couple. This is because it does not matter! The point of the activity is that all couples and partners, regardless of sexual orientation, need to communicate openly and discuss consent.



### Making the Link with Gender & Violence

It is very important for learners to understand how to negotiate consent to promote healthy sexual relationships, and prevent rape and sexual assault. Rape and sexual assault often occur when the victim is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, so it is important to tell learners that legally, consent cannot be given by someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Learners need to begin talking about consent and communication in relationships from a young age.



### Assessment Ideas

Ask learners to write a short reflective paper that defines consent, explains why consent is important in sexual relationships, and provides specific examples of how to ask for consent.

# STOP! / GO! STATEMENTS

Read out each of the following statements. Learners should use their cards to indicate whether the correct response is 'Stop! or Go!'

STATEMENT	CORRECT RESPONSE
1. "That hurts"	STOP!
2. "That feels so good!"	GO!
3. "I am so drunk right now"	STOP!
4. ....Silence.....	STOP!
5. "Keep going, I love that"	GO!
6. "Would you mind doing ..."	GO!
7. The partner is asleep or passed out.	STOP!
8. "No"	STOP!
9. "I don't feel like it"	STOP!
10. "I don't think I want to do this anymore..."	STOP!

# STOP! / GO! SCENARIOS

Read out each of the following statements. Learners should use their cards to indicate whether the correct response is 'Stop! or Go!'

SCENARIO	CORRECT RESPONSE
1. Lulu and Jo have been dating for a few months; Lulu would like to remain a virgin until marriage and has told Jo this. One day, when they are making out, both partners touch each other's genitals, and take off each other's clothes. Jo begins to rub his body against Lulu's and she seems to enjoy it. After a while Jo begins to push his penis into Lulu, Lulu goes stiff and does not say anything. He proceeds with intercourse, while Lulu stares up at the ceiling.	STOP!
2. Marco and Pumi have been dating for a few weeks. Pumi is 3 years older than Marco, and they get along very well. When they are making out at Pumi's house one evening, Pumi pushes Marco's hand into her pants. Marco takes his hand out, and tells her to stop because he is not ready to go that far yet. Pumi gets angry. She says she does not want to date a child, and if Marco is a man he would pleasure her. Marco looks embarrassed and apologises. He goes along with what Pumi wants.	STOP!
3. Wesley and his friends are drinking at a friend's house. Wesley gets very drunk and his friend takes him to his room and puts him to bed. They begin talking and Wesley kisses his friend, and they start taking each other's clothes off. After a little while Wesley passes out on the bed naked. His friend proceeds to have sex with him.	STOP!
4. Aalia and Alex are fooling around. Alex asks Aalia if she wants oral sex, and she says ok. Alex gives Aalia oral sex. Then Alex asks Aalia to do the same. Aalia says she has never done it before and does not want to do it right now. Alex gets upset and says that that is unfair, and that Aalia should return the favour. Aalia looks upset but agrees and gives Alex oral sex.	STOP!

# STOP! AND GO! SIGNS

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Print and cut out a set of signs for each learner.

