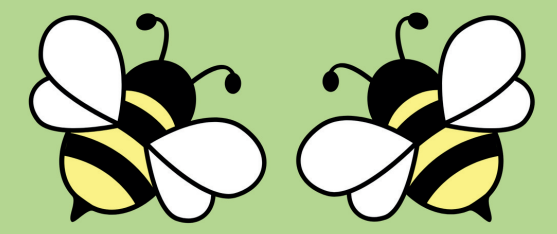


*Practicing* consent as individuals is vital, but ending sexual assault will take more than that. How can we build a *culture* of consent? This zine shares a few ideas pulled from conversations with advocates, activists, students, and survivors around the US:

- Source: *Planned Parenthood's "What Is Consent?" Resource* - April 2024
- **Freely given** - A choice you make without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
  - **Reversible** - Anyone can change their mind about what they feel like doing, anytime. Even if you've done it before, and even if you're both naked in bed.
  - **Informed** - You can only consent to something if you have the full story. For ex., if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, there isn't full consent.
  - **Enthusiastic** - When it comes to sex, you should only do stuff you *want* to do, not things that you feel you're expected to do.
  - **Specific** - Saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn't mean you've said yes to others (like having sex).

Consent is:

# HOW DO WE BUILD A CULTURE OF CONSENT?



*Consent is a mutual verbal, physical, and emotional agreement that happens without manipulation, threats, or head games.* - Project Respect

*Consent is informed, freely and affirmatively communicated willingness to participate in sexual activity, expressed by clear, unambiguous words or actions.* - The Aurora Center

## AS INDIVIDUALS, WE CAN LEVEL UP

**Learn** more about consent via books, articles, podcasts, classes, and more. Especially for men: *unlearning* some of what we're taught about masculinity and sex can be necessary too. Check out the last page of this zine for some potential starting points.

**Practice consent** in our relationships: Be present. Communicate, ask questions, and *listen*.

**It isn't just about sex.** We can practice consent in other areas of our lives too: ask before giving someone a hug, taking their picture, etc. Let children know that they can always say "no" to tickling, kisses, etc.

**Understand consent** beyond the "dominant narrative." Consent matters in same-sex relationships, for people outside the gender binary, and beyond. While most perpetrators of sexual assault are men, men can also be survivors.

**Get plugged in.** Do a quick online search to find local or national organizations doing work to support survivors and end rape culture, and join their email lists, follow them on social media, or attend their events.

**Believe survivors.** Start from a place of listening to, and taking seriously, those who come forward.

## IN COMMUNITY WITH EACH OTHER, WE CAN STEP UP

**Dialogue.** Spark conversations with friends and family. Join a book club or discussion circle where people can meet up, share their experiences, and build community. If you're a student, take a class that explores these issues.

**Speak out.** You don't have to be an expert or authority. On social media and offline, share and amplify the voices of organizers, advocates, and survivors.

**Challenge the myths.** Check out the "Sexual Violence Myths & Facts" resource at *OurResilience.org* for some common misconceptions and how to challenge them.

**Especially for men:** Bring these conversations into spaces where they aren't already happening. Refuse to laugh at sexist or violent jokes. Call people out. Don't just be a good guy, put your values and principles into *action*.

**Support survivors:** The digital version of this zine at *guante.info/zines* shares a few links with practical tips.

**Create art.** Speak out. Plant seeds. Whatever audience you have access to, no one else has that same access. You can also *share* existing art: find a bunch of examples at the digital version of this zine: *guante.info/zines*

## TO SHIFT POLICY AND CULTURE, WE CAN SHOW UP

**Show up.** Find organizations doing work to support survivors and cultivate a culture of consent, and support them via donations, signal-boosting, volunteering, organizing fundraiser events, or joining them—you can become an advocate too.

Of course, not everyone can "show up" in the same ways. That's okay. No single individual has to do every thing on this list. But we can all do *something*.

**Vote** for candidates who share your values on these issues. Volunteer for their campaigns. Get better people into positions of power. Voting alone won't solve this problem, but it can help set the stage for future work.

**Plan for the future.** If you're a student, meet up with your advisor to find some classes that might put you on a career path to doing this work for a living.

**Do the work where you are.** Make sure your school, business, or organization has effective protocols in place for dealing with accusations of harassment or sexual assault, as well as plans to help cultivate a culture of consent, respect, and support *before* any harm occurs.

Part of building a *culture* of consent is remembering that it's not just about perpetrators and victims. We're all in community together, and we can all look out for one another. A useful resource might be **The "Five D's" of Bystander Intervention** found at *RightToBe.org*. Right To Be also offers online trainings-sign up for one!

The digital version of this zine at *guante.info/zines* shares some links to deeper dives about bystander intervention: why it matters, but *also* how it can sometimes come up short as a strategy. Lots of food-for-thought.

A key element of bystander intervention is that it doesn't just happen "in-the-moment." We can be proactive and have these conversations *before* harassment, abuse, or assaults happen.

**Talk to the next generation.** In that spirit: parents, older siblings, teachers, and other trusted adult mentors can have open, honest conversations with the young people in their lives about consent. For some guidance, check out **"6 Resources to Help Parents Talk to Kids About Consent"** at *NSVRC.org*.

This zine was put together by poet and educator Kyle "Guante" Tran Myhre. Find the digital version and more at [www.guante.info](http://www.guante.info) // IG: @guantesolo