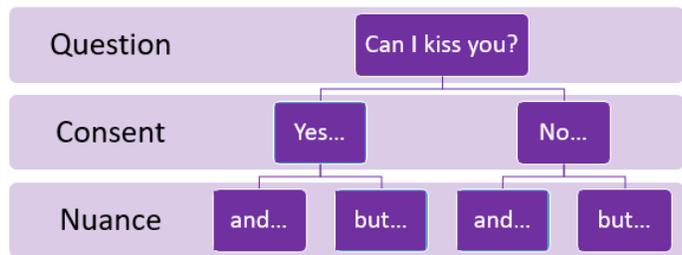


Opening the Communication so you and your kids can talk about *ANYTHING!*

Consent Tools

We get asked for our consent all the time, but we often aren't paying much attention to how we answer. Then, when we're feeling tongue tied, it's hard to remember what we already do! Let's break it down into a tool you can use whenever you're feeling stuck.

Whenever there is a Yes or No question, you can give or withhold consent...but don't stop there! Just saying Yes or No feels awkward and clunky. Add in the nuance so that you're really communicating what you want.



“And” and “But” are great ways to level your answer up or down. The “And” will give more power to your Yes or No. The “but” will soften your Yes or No. Now you don't have 2 answers (Yes / No) – you have 4! With 4 possibilities, you have much greater control over how you're answering your partner:



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Let's practice! Choose a question below. They start easy and get more difficult, more sexy. For this first round, you are required to answer "Yes, and..." to demonstrate *enthusiastic consent*.

1. May I borrow a pen?
2. Want to go camping with us?
3. Can I braid your hair?
4. Would you like me to take you home?
5. Would you like a back massage?
6. Can I buy you a drink?
7. Would you like to come over to my place?
8. Want to get in the hot tub?
9. Want to take a shower together?
10. Do you want me to go down on you?

Second round: Same questions, but tone it down. You are required to answer "Yes, but..." to demonstrate *consent plus a boundary*.

Third round: Same questions, but now you decline. You are required to answer "No, but..." to *soften the rejection* and give a more palatable suggestion.

Last round: Same questions, but now you decline strongly! You are required to answer "No, and..." to send a super clear message that this is *absolutely not ok*.

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What to say to a “No”

Why don't we ask for consent more often? Partly it's because being selfish is easy and immature and reaching for a mature relationship is hard. Partly it's because we're afraid of the answer we'll get.

Are we worried about getting a Yes? I don't think so! An enthusiastic Yes feels *great*. Adults know that from experience, and that's why we're trying so hard to get it across to the next generation that the enthusiastic Yes is the *best* kind of sex, the vision we want them to keep and not settle for less as they navigate their sexual relationships.

It's the NOs we're worried about. We're worried we'll come to an impasse, where the next step won't be obvious, where there will just be an awkward pause. The NOs feel like rejection.

Here's what you need to remember: a NO is a true statement only for this moment in time. That person's mind may change in one minute, so what it really means is “not yet” (which you're absolutely going to respect). After they say No, it's your opportunity to bring on the juicy connection which will draw them closer to Yes. Hold onto your goodness and with warmth in your voice and an open heart, say,

**I'm so glad you told me,
because I like you so much,
and the last thing I want to do
is make you uncomfortable.**

