

# BE A BETTER HUMAN

**Advice on consent, sexual  
violence and more**

[arc.unsw.edu.au/babh](http://arc.unsw.edu.au/babh)

# BE A BETTER HUMAN

In 2017, the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) released the National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities. The report gave a series of recommendations for universities to tackle sexual violence on campuses. We think those recommendations are just the first step - we can do better, and be better.

At UNSW, the AHRC survey was a huge wake up call. In 2017, UNSW appointed the country's first ever Deputy Vice Chancellor Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Professor Eileen Baldry and action was taken, including the creation of:

- Online sexual misconduct reporting portal;
- Stand-alone sexual misconduct policy;
- Consent training modules for all commencing students;
- Consent training for UNSW college students;
- Network of linguistically diverse first responders to direct survivors to appropriate resources;
- First responder training for club executives and student leaders, and;
- Campaigns and communications around affirmative consent.

There have been some positive steps towards addressing the reality of this problem however, sexual violence continues to be a reality with 52% of UNSW students sexually harassed in 2016 (AHRC 2017b) so we set this challenge for ourselves and for you, dear reader, no matter how well you think you're doing, you could always **be a better human**.



## **Foreword from the Deputy Vice Chancellor Equity Diversity and Inclusion, Professor Eileen Baldry**

Any form of gendered violence is unacceptable. Cultures of sexual harassment and gendered violence are pervasive in our communities, including in our UNSW community. The NUS, Universities Australia, Australian Human Rights Commission and UNSW Human Rights Centre reports provided compelling evidence of both an obligation and an opportunity to change those cultures on our campuses and amongst our staff and students.

For over a decade, UNSW students along with their peers across Australia led the campaign to elevate awareness and prevention of and response to gendered misconduct. UNSW President and Vice Chancellor took up the challenge in 2015 being one of the first universities to screen 'The Hunting Ground', to assist in leading Universities Australia's Respect.Now.Always. initiative and to participate not just in the UA student survey but also in our own survey to determine how we can continue to improve the way we prevent and address gendered misconduct.

The Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion has, since its inception in 2017, worked in close partnership with students and the executive of the university to make preventing and responding to gendered misconduct a priority. Our campuses must be places where everyone, however they identify, feel and be safe to study, work and play. We have safe ways of reporting and of seeking support. We impose consequences on those who perpetrate gendered misconduct. But we recognize that the greatest challenge is changing behavior, changing culture so that this behaviour is no longer acceptable from anyone in any context. That is, we are striving to become better humans.

- Professor Eileen Baldry



**1 IN 5 WOMEN ARE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THEIR LIFETIME BUT 5 IN 5 PEOPLE CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.**

**75% OF TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE STUDENTS EXPERIENCE SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**

**63% OF STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY COMPARED TO 50% OF STUDENTS WITHOUT A DISABILITY WERE SEXUALLY HARASSED ON AT LEAST ONE OCCASION.**

# TERMINOLOGY

**AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT** – The proactive asking for and giving of consent. It is when the cues a person is giving (verbal and non-verbal) show that they are comfortable, in agreement, and want to engage in sexual activities every step of the way.

**BYSTANDER** – A person present for misconduct or an uncomfortable situation but is not actively participating.

**COERCION** – Forcing others into an act, without their consent – by use of intimidation, threats, pressure or force.

**IMAGE BASED ABUSE** – Commonly referred to as ‘revenge porn’, but it is not limited to acts of revenge, nor is it limited to porn. It usually refers to the sharing, or threat of sharing, images or video of someone without their permission.

**LGBTQIA+** – The acronym used for those who identify as non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender (those whose gender identity does not correspond with their birth sex). The acronym includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual people as well as people with other identities.

**MICROAGGRESSION** – Everyday statements or behaviours often performed unintentionally that communicate hostility or discrimination towards a marginalized group. For example: asking someone of non-white background “where they’re really from”.

**PATRIARCHY** – Refers to a set of invisible social structures that enforces homogeneity in gender expression, sexuality and power. Although patriarchy values masculine traits for positions of power, it does not necessarily favour men in every situation.

**SEXUAL MISCONDUCT** – refers to any kind of inappropriate activity of a sexual nature. Includes sexual assault, harassment, and image based abuse.

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE** – When consent isn’t provided, any form of sexual activity is considered to be sexual violence (i.e. sexual assault and harassment). This includes situations where consent is not properly sought, agreed upon, or when a person doesn’t stop or respond appropriately when their sexual partner changes their mind before or during the sexual activity.



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# CONSENT

Consent means saying yes... and respecting the right to say no. Under current NSW law, consent only exists when a person freely and voluntarily agrees to engage in sexual intercourse. Consent must be positive, meaning it must be an enthusiastic 'yes', not just the absence of a 'no.'

Consent must also be continuing and can be withdrawn at any time. Someone may say yes initially, and withdraw consent later - consenting to one activity does not mean consenting to others.



# CONSENT & COMMUNICATION

**BEFORE** - Have a chat about the kinds of things you're into and what you are expecting. Set up boundaries.

**DURING** - Start off by asking whether you can kiss, or touch your partner before jumping right in. Look for signs your partner is comfortable. If you're ever in doubt, make sure to ask.

**IF THEY ASK YOU TO STOP** - Stop immediately and give them space. While it might not be what you want, respecting their wish to slow things down, take some time out, or stop all together is necessary.

**ON SAYING NO** - You have the right to be comfortable and confident, and the right to say no, no explanation necessary at anytime.

# LACK OF CONSENT

There are situations in which you cannot give consent.

These include if you are:

- Significantly intoxicated or affected by drugs
- Unable to understand what you are consenting to (i.e. there must be informed consent)
- Intimidated, coerced or threatened
- Submitting to the abuse of authority of a professional or any other trusted person
- Held against your will
- Under the age of consent (16 years)

Sexual intercourse without consent constitutes a sexual offence, whether you said no, were unable to say no, or didn't say yes.

# SEXUAL ASSAULT & HARASSMENT

**SEXUAL ASSAULT** - where a person has sexual intercourse with another person without their consent. Note that there doesn't need to be violence or a physical injury for an act to be sexual assault – if sex wasn't consented to, then it is sexual assault.

**SEXUAL INTERCOURSE** - penetration of the vagina or anus of any person with any body part of another person, or any object. It also includes insertion of the penis into another person's mouth, and cunnilingus.

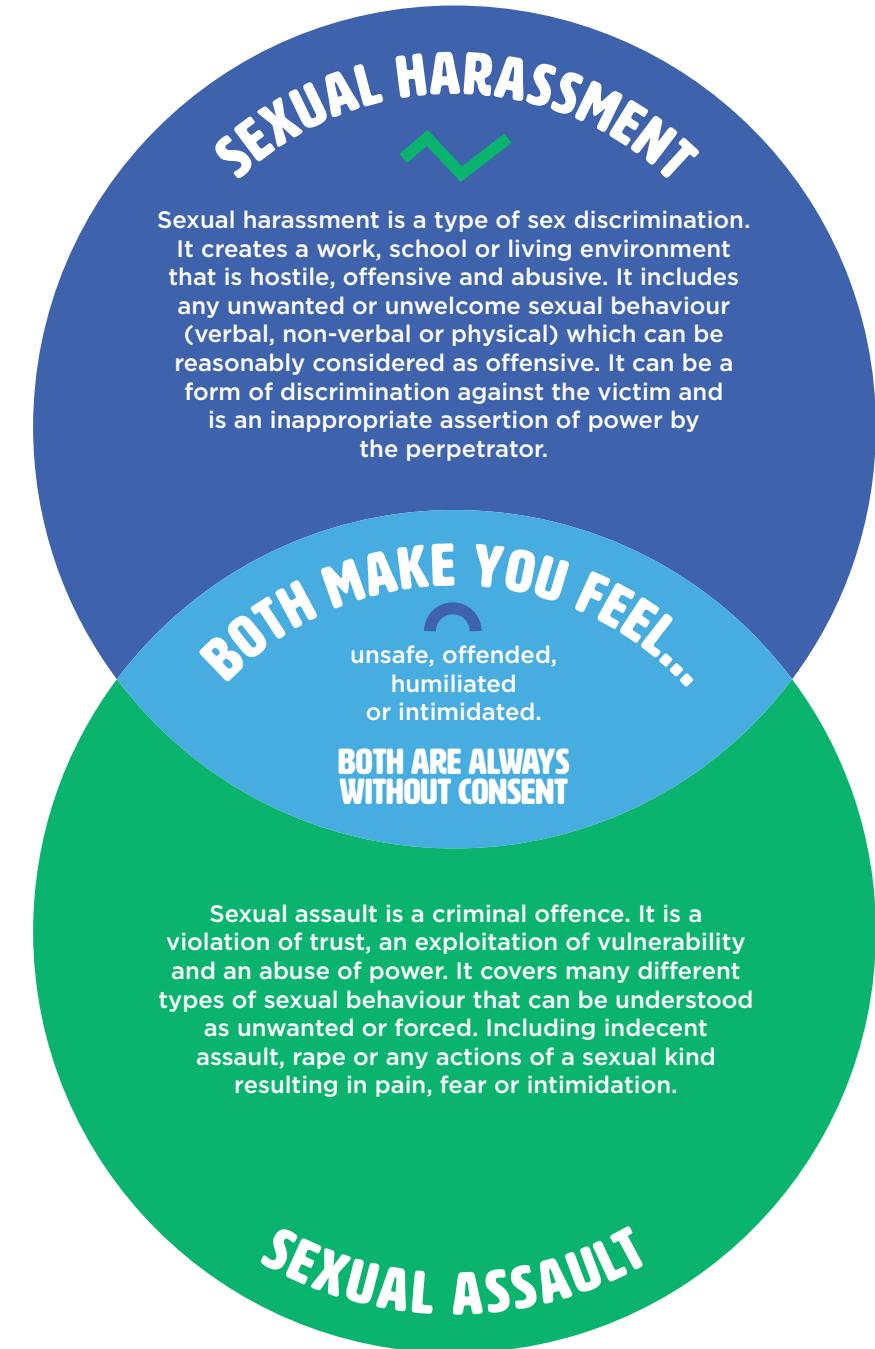
**INDECENT ASSAULT** - the act of touching (or threatening to touch) a person's body in a sexual manner without their consent.  
It can include:

- Kissing another person, if the kiss is unwanted and not consented to
- Unwanted touching of another person's genitals
- Intentionally rubbing your genitals against another person without their consent

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Unwelcome requests for sexual favours
- Any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in circumstances where a reasonable person would be expected to be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the behaviour.

**ON SAYING NO** - You have the right to be comfortable and confident, and the right to say no, no explanation necessary at anytime.



**Someone is telling you something hard to hear:  
How to respond to disclosures of sexual violence**

Helpful Responses	Unhelpful Responses
Listen and acknowledge the seriousness/validity of their experiences	Minimising what they tell you
You don't have to be an expert to listen	Forcing them to seek help or support that they do not want
Encourage them to seek support/resources	Insisting that they report their experiences to the police – going to the police can be a big step and some might not be ready for that
Assist them to access the support that is right for them	Asking for details that are unnecessary or too much detail
	Blaming yourself or them, asking questions like “Why didn’t you try to fight them off?”. The perpetrator is 100% responsible.
	Making comments that might appear supportive, but could be upsetting, like “Where do they live? I’ll hurt them”.



## SELF-CARE

Supporting others can be scary, exhausting and intimidating. It's common to feel out of your depth.

If you're supporting someone through a disclosure make sure you practice self-care. Keep a journal, take breaks, consider counselling yourself. Second-hand trauma can take its toll, so in order for you to sustain your support, you need to look after yourself too.



# SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

## Online Dating

Whether good or bad, dating apps are changing the way we communicate and well... date.

Here are a few things to remember the next time you start swiping:

1. Communication: make sure the direction the conversation is consensual for both parties.
2. 'An eye for an eye' does not apply: sending a nude does not mean the receiver has to do the same.
3. Do not send unsolicited images: ask first and never pressure anyone.
4. Do not badger or harass: You made a choice to send an image, and they made the choice not to humour it.
5. No screenshots: If you and the hottie on the other end do decide to exchange pics, they gave permission for you to view the pic only.



## Image-Based Abuse

Image-based abuse (AKA revenge porn) is extremely serious with stats showing that 1 in 5 people have or will be the victim of image-based abuse in their lifetime (Henry et al 2017), but in many cases it is not about 'revenge', nor is it restricted to 'porn'.

What you need to know:

1. Posting or threatening to post someone's nude images without permission is illegal regardless of the person's age or whether they originally consented to them being taken. If you do so, you face 3 years jail.
2. If you learn there is a photo of you posted online without your permission, you can do something about it: (A) If it has been posted on social media, you can contact the relevant website and ask to have it removed, and (B) contact the Office of the E-Safety Commissioner or the police to report the matter. It's easy to feel embarrassed and ashamed if this happens to you, but know that you are not to blame - this is the perpetrators' fault alone.





# RAPE CULTURE

Rape culture is used to describe the environment where sexual violence is reinforced and excused – that it's "just the way things are". It is perpetuated through media and pop-culture by use of misogynistic language and jokes, the objectification of women's bodies and glamorisation of violence, creating a culture that ignores women's rights and safety and makes sexual coercion seem normal.

#### Examples of rape culture:

- Phrases like “she asked for it” or “boys will be boys”
  - Gender stereotypes:
    - Men are dominant and aggressive, women are submissive
    - Men are confident and strong, women are nice and should never act coldly
  - These microaggressions within rape culture is what ultimately creates more serious sexual violence such as sexual harassment and assault.

## The Effect on Women & Gender Diverse People

- 50% of Australian women reported not feeling comfortable walking a short distance home after a night out for fear of being harassed or assaulted (ABS 2016).
  - Australian women in the workplace are 25% less likely than men to receive pay raises than men (Xiang et al. 2017).
  - Half of all transgender and non-binary workers hide their identities while at work for fear of discrimination (Boncori & Shea 2019)

# TOXIC MASCULINITY

The term toxic masculinity has been coined to describe a dangerous form of performance of masculinity that includes pursuit of sexual conquest and violence; suppressing emotion and devaluing women in the process.

In order to prove one's masculinity, men are often encouraged from an early age to distance themselves from femininity ("pink is a girl's colour"); to suppress emotion ("boys don't cry"); to be tough and aggressive ("don't be such a pussy"); to be seen as sexual ("hit it and quit it") and to prove one's heterosexuality through homophobia ("don't be a sissy").

While toxic masculinity upholds a patriarchal system that gives men societal power, it also stifles men from expressing themselves, leading to depression and contributing to a suicide rate three times higher than women (ABS 2017).

Masculinity is not in and of itself bad, and it can be celebrated. But we also have to remember that it's just a set of ideas, and being 'masculine' does not equate with being a 'man' and should never equate with violence and oppression of women and gender non-conforming people.

## So what can we do to break the cycle?

1. Get to know yourself. Define your gender expression and identity free from stereotypes.
2. Think critically about the media's portrayal of gender identities, relationships, sex and violence, and be supportive of alternative portrayals – e.g. that men can be empathetic; that women can be assertive.
3. Avoid using language that puts people down, objectifies or degrades.
4. Speak out if you hear a sexist joke. It's not cool and it's just lazy.
5. Respect people's personal space and need for alone time.
6. Learn to communicate openly with your partner, lover or friend; that includes both the speaking and the listening parts.
7. Advocate and practice affirmative consent, never assume it's given.
8. Know that the myths we mentioned earlier are just that, myths. Take it seriously if someone tells you they were sexually assaulted.



# HOW TO BE AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

Being an active bystander means taking action when things don't feel right. It means looking after your friends and loved ones but also strangers. It means using your privilege to benefit others.

An active bystander will do four things; notice, identify, assess, and step up.

## NOTICE

What is happening? What your friends tell you? How others behave?

## IDENTIFY

Whether the situation is a problem? Asking yourself if you would act in this way, if this behaviour is acceptable or if everyone involved feels comfortable with what's happening?

## ASSESS

Whether the situation would be dangerous for you to step in and say something. Decide how you will intervene, whether its intervening in the moment or checking in at a later date.

## STEP UP

How can you step up or step in? Choosing to leave a situation, offering assistance and listening to the victim, calling out your friends negative behaviour.

## Example

It's 1:30am and you're slaying the d-floor with a group of friends at the club. You scan the crowd and see a guy is dancing a little too close with a woman he clearly does not know; her body language tells you this. Her posture is turned away from him and she's looking out to the crowd. What do you do?

You **NOTICE** both his behaviour and her reaction. You **IDENTIFY** that it's a problem and **ASSESS** that it would be safe to intervene. You **STEP UP** to her with your friends and form a human wall between the guy and the woman.

Being an active bystander can be challenging at times but know that looking out for someone is nothing to be embarrassed about and that being an active bystander does not always require you to confront the situation yourself. You can instead inform someone in a position of authority that an incident might be occurring. Taking action always feels scarier in thought than in reality.



# HERE AT UNSW

## Reporting Portal

UNSW aims to support victims of sexual assault, sexual misconduct and rape and it enables reporting via a confidential online portal on which you can report any kind of sexual misconduct including sexual assault, harassment or simply feelings of being unsafe in your environment.

To report sexual assault or harassment at or related to UNSW, go to the UNSW Sexual Misconduct Reporting Portal:

[edi.unsw.edu.au/sexual-misconduct/make-report](http://edi.unsw.edu.au/sexual-misconduct/make-report)

Any experience of more generalized discrimination, bullying or harassment can be reported to UNSW through the UNSW Student Complaints portal located:

[student.unsw.edu.au/complaint](http://student.unsw.edu.au/complaint)

You can find more resources, information and guidance for internal and external support online:

[edi.unsw.edu.au/sexual-misconduct](http://edi.unsw.edu.au/sexual-misconduct)

## UNSW Health & Counselling

As a victim or witness of sexual assault or harassment you may have both short and long term emotional and psychological effects. If you or someone you love has experienced sexual violence, you may wish to talk to someone for support. As a UNSW student, you can book an appointment here:

[student.unsw.edu.au/counselling](http://student.unsw.edu.au/counselling)

## Arc Legal

Arc Legal & Advocacy provide free legal advice and subsidized representation for students on matters ranging from parking fines to harassment and assault. Make an appointment via Arc Reception or visit:

[arc.unsw.edu.au/help](http://arc.unsw.edu.au/help)

## Sexual Health

Sex can be great fun but it does come with some risks and nothing is sexier than preparedness, consent, and knowledge! Get to being a responsible adult today and head down to UNSW Health which offers a free sexual health tests for UNSW students. Book an appointment today:

[healthservices.unsw.edu.au](http://healthservices.unsw.edu.au)

## Academic & General Support

If experiences of sexual violence are impacting your academic performance, you may be entitled to special considerations. To access special considerations, you can either:

1. Make a report through the UNSW online reporting portal and indicate during that report that you would like assistance accessing special considerations, or;
2. Submit a special considerations request here:  
[student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration](http://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration)

## Where to find a community?

Angry about the state of things? Want to help others in this situation? Well there is a community for you: the UNSW SRC has a number of collectives that aim to provide students with like-minded people that care equally about the future of UNSW and tertiary education as a whole.

You can find the following Collectives here:

[arc.unsw.edu.au/src](http://arc.unsw.edu.au/src)

Women's Collective	Queer Collective
Disabilities Collective	Indigenous Collective
Ethno-Cultural Collective	International Collective
Welfare Collective	Education Collective
Environment Collective	

# EMERGENCY CONTACTS

## On Campus

**Psychology & Wellness** (formerly Counselling & Psychological Services)  
[student.unsw.edu.au/counselling](mailto:student.unsw.edu.au/counselling)

Ph: (02) 9348 0084  
Ph: 1300 787 026 (After hours)

**UNSW Security**  
[estate.unsw.edu.au/security](mailto:estate.unsw.edu.au/security)  
Ph: 9385 6666 (emergency) | 9385 6000 (non-emergency)

**UNSW Equitable Learning Service**  
[student.unsw.edu.au/els](mailto:student.unsw.edu.au/els)  
Ph: 9385 4734

**UNSW Health Service**  
[student.unsw.edu.au/hsu](mailto:student.unsw.edu.au/hsu)  
Ph: 9385 5425

**UNSW Sexual Misconduct Reporting Portal**  
[edi.unsw.edu.au/sexual-misconduct](http://edi.unsw.edu.au/sexual-misconduct)

## Off Campus Contacts

**Lifeline**  
[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)  
Ph: 13 11 14

**Emergency (Police/Ambulance/Fire)**  
[triplezero.gov.au](http://triplezero.gov.au)  
Ph: 000 | 112 (mobile phones with no network coverage)

**Domestic Violence Line**  
[facs.nsw.gov.au/domestic-violence/helpline](http://facs.nsw.gov.au/domestic-violence/helpline)  
Ph: 1800 656 463

**Child Protection Helpline**  
[facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids](http://facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids)  
Ph: 132 111

**Family Crisis Service**  
Ph: 1800 066 777

## Sexual Abuse/ Assault Services

**1800 RESPECT**  
[1800respect.org.au](http://1800respect.org.au)  
Ph: 1800 737 732

**Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia**  
[rape-dvservices.org.au](http://rape-dvservices.org.au)  
Ph: 1800 424 017

**Sexual Assault Counselling Australia**  
Ph: 1800 211 028

**Adult Survivors of Child Abuse**  
[blueknot.org.au](http://blueknot.org.au)  
Ph: 1300 657 380

**Abortion Grief Counselling**  
[abortiongrief.asn.au](http://abortiongrief.asn.au)  
Ph: 1300 363 550

**Eastern and Central Sydney Sexual Assault Service**  
Ph: 9515 9040

**Northern Sydney Sexual Assault Service**  
Ph: 9462 9477

**Southern Sydney Sexual Assault Service**  
Ph: 9113 2494

**Westmead Sexual Assault Service**  
Ph: 9845 5555



# REFERENCES

## Intersectional Support Services

Another Closet

[anothercloset.com.au](http://anothercloset.com.au)

Ph: 1800 656 463

## The Transgender Anti-Violence Project

[tavp.org.au](http://tavp.org.au)

Ph: 1800 069 115

## Transcultural Mental Health Centre

[dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/transcultural-mental-health-centre](http://dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/transcultural-mental-health-centre)

Ph: (02) 9912 3851



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This campaign was adapted from the excellent Be A Better Human campaign run by Flinders University Students Association.

