

START HERE

Campaign Guide

ACTIVE* CONSENT

About the Campaign

Start Here is a national campaign by Active* Consent designed to equip young people with the skills and confidence to respond appropriately if a friend/peer discloses an experience of sexual violence or harassment.



The campaign offers simple, clear disclosure tips that highlight the need to:

- Listen without judgment
- Respond with empathy
- Signpost to relevant support services
- Look after your own wellbeing

This campaign was originally created as a response to the Active* Consent and Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn (AMLE), formerly known as the Union of Students in Ireland's (USI), 2020 national [Sexual Experiences Survey](#). This study revealed that **79%** of college students who

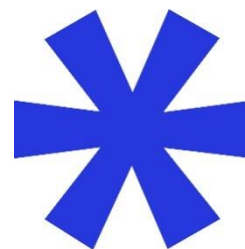
disclosed sexual misconduct (rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment) told a close friend about it first. In 2022, the findings of the [National Survey of Student Experiences of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education](#) showed 85% disclosed to a close friend first.

This awareness campaign includes:

- Social media posts for your Instagram and TikTok
- Digital content with a dedicated webpage
- *Start Here* Cards that outline basic dos and don'ts on how to respond to disclosures

- Access to Active* Consent's e-learning module *Sexual Violence and Harassment: How to Support Yourself and Your Peers* (see page 12 for more information)

Objectives of the Campaign



- **Support Survivors.** Ensure that your community knows how to respond appropriately to disclosures, helping survivors feel heard and supported.
- **Build a Culture of Compassion.** Foster an environment where empathy and respect are at the forefront, and where the community is equipped to handle difficult conversations.
- **Demonstrate Leadership.** Position your organisation as a leader in addressing sexual violence and harassment, showing a strong commitment to the safety and wellbeing of your community.

How to Launch the Campaign

Here's how we can collaborate to reach your community:

1. **Social Media Pack:** Use the posting guidelines in this document along with the social media pack you will receive to post key messages across your social media platforms during the campaign period and/or on key dates for your community.
2. **Start Here Cards:** Order *Start Here* cards through Active* Consent or print your own using the .pdf in your campaign kit. These cards are credit card size to make it easy to carry in the back of a phone case, wallet or behind an ID holder on a lanyard. (*shown below*)
3. **Ongoing Support and Consultation:** We'll offer support and resources to help maintain the momentum and ensure the campaign's long-term success. Contact us if you would like to discuss how we might customise the campaign to fit your campus's unique needs and challenges.

START HERE

Disclosure tips to support your friend if they've had an unwanted or non-consensual sexual experience

Rape Crisis Helpline
1800 77 8888
www.rapecrisisireland.ie

Sexual Assault Treatment Units
<https://www2.hse.ie/services/satu/>

Report Image Based Sexual Abuse
www.hotline.ie

An Garda Síochána
www.garda.ie/en/crime/sexual-crime/
In an emergency contact 999 or 112

For more support and information visit WWW.CONSENTHUB.IE

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DO

DO listen, let them know you believe them
Opening up about an unwanted/non-consensual sexual experience is stressful. Let the person know you are listening, you believe them and will support them.

DO ask "What do you need right now?"
They might not know what they want to do right away, but what happens next needs to be their choice.

DO ask "How can I help?"
You could offer to find out about support services, like the ones on the back of this card, for when the person feels ready.

DO look after yourself
Hearing about someone's experience can be very difficult. Make time for your own self-care and wellbeing.

DON'T

DON'T ask questions like "Were you drunk?/ Are you sure?/ Why did you go there?"
That sounds like you think it's their fault. Try to listen without judgement.

DON'T react in the moment
Hearing about someone's unwanted/non-consensual sexual experience can be upsetting – try to focus on their feelings, instead of your own.

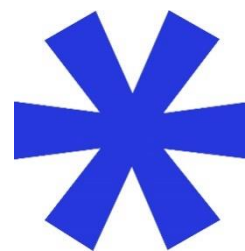
DON'T rush them into sharing anything they don't want to
They might not feel ready to tell you the whole story.

DON'T say "You have to report it!"
Pushing someone to take action they're not ready to take can be disempowering and re-traumatising.

'If the person disclosing is under 18 reporting is mandatory in Irish law'

Posting Guidelines

The national campaign will run for 6 weeks starting on 5 October 2026. We encourage you to run the campaign within your institution at the same time, but welcome you using the campaign materials anytime during the year too to support your community needs.



6-Week Rollout Plan Beginning on 5 October 2026

Content:

- 4 Videos
- 4 Static Posts (including 1 as Gaeilge)
- 4 Carousel Posts

Posting Frequency: 1–2 posts per week

Posting Instructions

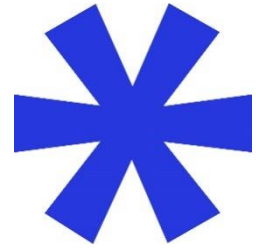
We have created this guide for you to post key messages about *Start Here* on your social media channels. Here you have tips on posting online which help ensure your posts are accessible and viewed by as many of your community as possible.

Tips:

- Stay positive when possible.
- Do not explicitly use words like rape, abuse, assault, etc. as this can have your content flagged and removed, or shadowbanned (meaning your posts will no longer be visible to other users without your knowledge) – instead, use asterisks (e.g., s*x, r*pe).
- Ensure posts are accessible (e.g., captions on videos, alternative text image descriptions, etc.).
- Use relevant hashtags – #starthere #activeconsent #imlistening #whatwouldyousay
- Tag @activeconsent so we can share your stories.
- Include the Consent Hub link: consenthub.ie/start-here

Suggested Posting Rhythm

- Aim to post 1 video + 1 image or carousel per week or alternate if needed.
- Use Stories to boost reach (e.g., resharing Feed/Reel content).
- Align posts with key student events or international days:
 - Consent training / workshops
 - See Campaign & Key Dates table



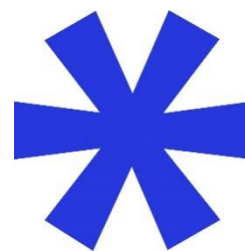
Instagram

- Use Reels for all video content.
- Use Feed posts for still images. Avoid posting only to Stories.
- Include campaign hashtags: **#StartHere** **#ImListening**
#WhatWouldYouSay **#ActiveConsent**
- Tag @activeconsent in the caption and on the image/video.
- Link to the *Start Here* campaign page <https://www.consenthub.ie/start-here/>

TikTok

- Use engaging hooks in the captions: questions, challenges or relatable prompts.
- Ensure all videos are in vertical format (1080x1920).
- Use trending audio only if it supports (not distracts from) the message.
- Include campaign hashtags: **#StartHere** **#ImListening**
#WhatWouldYouSay **#ActiveConsent**
- Tag @activeconsent
- Link to the *Start Here* campaign page <https://www.consenthub.ie/start-here/>

Suggested Captions



Below are suggested captions you can use. In the content calendar that follows, you will see how and when you can use these captions with our social media assets. The captions are drafted for you to use as written or to tailor for your community.

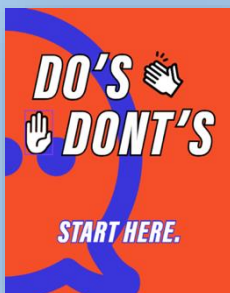
If you run your own social media channels, you may be able to post these directly. However, you may need to send this guide to your Communications Team/Lead to post on your organisation's social media channels and/or get approval for these messages before posting. If you have any questions, just let us know.

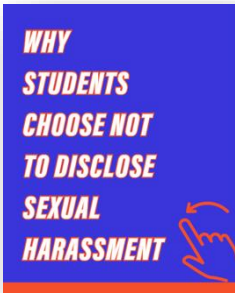
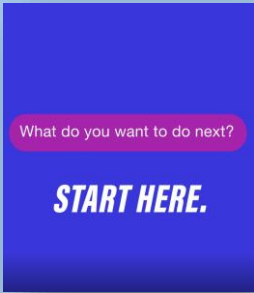
Caption 1	What would you do if a friend told you about a non-consensual s*xual experience? Wouldn't know where to begin? Start here. A survey of Irish students found that 85% who had a non-consensual s*xual experience told a close friend about it (HEA, 2022). That's why we're giving young people tips on how to handle a disclosure and what you can do to support your friends through healing. Join the conversation #StartHere #ImListening #WhatWouldYouSay #ActiveConsent @activeconsent
Caption 2	A friend discloses to you about a non-consensual s*xual experience. What would you say? For more tips on how to help someone who's disclosed to you, visit consenthub.ie/start-here. Join the conversation #StartHere #ImListening #WhatWouldYouSay #ActiveConsent @activeconsent
Caption 3	When a friend or loved one tells us they've had a non-consensual s*xual experience, it's totally normal to feel a flurry of emotions (like anger, sadness and confusion just to name a few). Simply asking "How can I help?" is a great place to start. Whether that's by going for a walk, chatting on the phone, gifting them a takeaway or researching support services available for them, there are lots of different ways you can help.

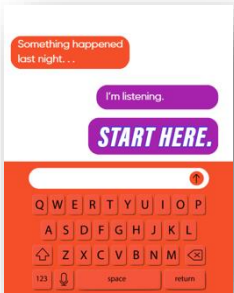
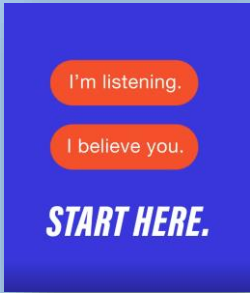
	For more information on how to help a friend that's disclosed to you, visit consenthub.ie/start-here. Join the conversation #StartHere #ImListening #WhatWouldYouSay #ActiveConsent @activeconsent
Caption 4	If someone shares their non-consensual s*xual experience with you, it's important not to rush them into telling you the whole story. If someone doesn't tell you all the details, that doesn't mean it didn't happen or that they don't trust you, it's more likely that -They're still processing what's happened -Talking or thinking about what happened is triggering for them -They may be worried about what will happen to the perpetrator (especially if it was a mutual friend, family member or partner) Whatever the reason, you don't need to know all the details to support your friend and be there for them. Let them know that you still believe them, even if they don't tell you what happened. For more information about how you can support a friend through a disclosure, visit consenthub.ie/start-here. Join the conversation #StartHere #ImListening #WhatWouldYouSay #ActiveConsent @activeconsent
Caption 5	If you're supporting a friend who's had a non-consensual s*xual experience, it can be tough trying to figure out how to help them. So, we've compiled a list of support services available to young people and students (and the friends supporting them) It's important to note that *You can still reach out to many of these services even if your friend is not ready to report what happened to them or doesn't want to make a formal report. *These services are here to help survivors and the people supporting them, so you can avail of their services too.

	For more information about how you can support a friend through a disclosure, visit consenthub.ie/start-here. Join the conversation #StartHere #ImListening #WhatWouldYouSay #ActiveConsent @activeconsent
Caption 6	Disclosing non-consensual s*xual experiences can be hard and there are many reasons why people don't tell anyone if they have been subjected to s*xual violence, abuse or harassment. Some people don't tell anyone about their non-consensual s*xual experiences because of things like: *Thinking it wasn't serious enough *Fearing they would not be believed *Thinking others would say it was their fault For more information on how you can help your friends that have been subjected to s*xual violence and/or harassment, visit consenthub.ie/start-here. Join the conversation #StartHere #ImListening #WhatWouldYouSay #ActiveConsent @activeconsent

Use the Content Calendar shown next to see how and when you can use these captions with our social media assets.

CONTENT CALENDAR					
Week	Platform	Post Type	Thumbnail Example	Caption	
1	Instagram & TikTok	Post 1 – Static post		1	
1	Instagram & TikTok	Post 2 – Video		1	
2	Instagram & TikTok	Post 3 – Carousel		2	
2	Instagram & TikTok	Post 4 – Static post		2	

3	Instagram & TikTok	Post 5 - Video		3
3	Instagram & TikTok	Post 6 - Carousel		3
4	Instagram & TikTok	Post 7 - Static post		4
4	Instagram & TikTok	Post 8 - Video		4

5	Instagram & TikTok	Post 9 – Carousel		5
5	Instagram & TikTok	Post 10 – Static post		5
6	Instagram & TikTok	Post 11 – Video		6
6	Instagram & TikTok	Post 12 – Carousel		6

Use the Campaign & Key Dates Calendar shown next to see suggested dates on when to run this campaign and key dates where you may wish to repeat the campaign messages.

CAMPAIGN & KEY DATES CALENDAR



Campaign	Dates	Duration	Key Dates
START HERE	BEGINS ON 5 OCTOBER	6 WEEKS	5 October – 15 November: <i>Start Here</i> National Campaign
16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM	25 NOVEMBER – 10 DECEMBER 2025	16 DAYS	19 November: International Men's Health Day 25 November: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 30 November: International Day of Consent 10 December: International Human Rights Day
CONSENT IS FOR EVERYONE	AFTER WINTER BREAK	2 WEEKS	<i>For those using our Consent is for Everyone prevention campaign:</i> First 2 weeks of Semester / Term 2 after Winter break, e.g., "Refreshers" at universities
OTHER SUGGESTED DATES	VARIOUS		10 February 2026: Safer Internet Day 20 February: World Day of Social Justice 1 March: Zero Discrimination Day 8 March: International Women's Day 8 April: International Day of Pink 1 May: Global Love Day June: Pride month 19 June: International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict



This 45-minute self-guided eLearning module brings the learner on a gamified journey to increase knowledge and build confidence to navigate the complexities of consent. The module **provides the learner with practical and introductory skills in supporting friends who disclose non-consensual sexual experiences** and how to safely intervene in potentially negative situations in peer groups and communities.

The eLearning module covers a wide range of topics including:

- The legal definition of consent, rape and sexual assault in Irish law
- How external factors (gender roles, alcohol and drugs, etc.) can impact individuals' ability to communicate consent with partners
- Fictional consent scenarios featuring a diverse range of relationships
- How to be an Active* Bystander that intervenes to prevent sexual violence & harassment from occurring
- What to do if a close friend or peer discloses sexual violence or harassment
- Interactive content (quizzes, polls, etc.) that helps students develop a more nuanced understanding of consent & sexual violence

How to access the course

Anyone can access the course on consenthub.ie and there is a direct link on the consenthub.ie/start-here page. The learner will receive a completion certificate at the end of the course. Data about the learner is not captured on consenthub.ie. Active* Consent cannot report on how many students/staff from a specific institution has taken the course.

If you would like to host the eLearning course on your institution's unique virtual learning environment (VLE; Moodle, Blackboard, Canvas, etc.), so that you can track who in your institution has completed the course, or if you would like more information about our eLearning module, email us at activeconsent@universityofgalway.ie. A SCORM package is available for you to add to your VLE.

Campaign Partners



Active* Consent Funders



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For more information or to contact us

Learn more consenthub.ie

Contact us activeconsent@universityofgalway.ie
consenthub.ie/contact

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