CONSENT

... IS PART OF MY OPERATING SYSTEM!
Workshop Agenda

- Getting to know each other & guidelines
- Why is consent important?
- Defining and broadening what consent is...
- Exercises
- Break!
- Skits & scenarios
- Community visioning activity
- Check out

They Do, You Don’t: Your partner wants to have sex for the first time, right now. You don’t.

Them: Can we move this to the bedroom? I think it’s time to take things to the next level.
You: I’m cool going to the bedroom if you want to, but I don’t feel like it’s time for me to step things up yet. Sorry, I just need some more time.
Them: But we’ve been going out for a while now, it just feels right, and you’re so sexy right now. I want you, and you’ve got me all worked up.
You: Hey, I’m glad you think I’m sexy: I think you’re hot, too. And while I also really care about you, it doesn’t feel right for me yet. I’m worked up right now, too, but that doesn’t mean it’s a good idea for me to go farther before I’m ready, or that it’s fair to suggest that I should do more than I’m comfortable with because you’re excited. Plus, we haven’t even talked about this before, and I feel like there’s a lot to talk about. We can stop and start talking about it now if you want – so long as you understand I’m still not going to do it tonight – or we can keep doing what we were doing, or even just call it a night, but that’s it.
Them: I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean to be so pushy. That wasn’t cool of me. Let me calm down for a minute, and then what do you say we just cuddle up and talk about this – no pressure, just seems like it’d be a good idea to figure out where we both stand and what we need.
You: That’d be great, thanks.

Alternate Conversation:

Them: Can we move this to the bedroom? I think it’s time to take things to the next level.
You: I’m cool going to the bedroom if you want to, but I don’t feel like it’s time for me to step things up yet. Sorry.
Them: No problem. You want to keep doing what we are, then, or want to just chill out? We can talk about this, too, if you want.
You: You know, I liked what we were doing, so if you’re cool, and we can keep it at that level, I’d like to keep doing that. Thanks for being so understanding.

What Inspires Us!

Resources:

- Zines, Articles, Books

My Body My Limits My Pleasure My Choice
A positive sexuality booklet for young people by Generation Five
http://www.phillyspissed.net/node/9

Don’t Rape Each Other
Consent is a community issue!
Zine brought to you by the Olympia Street Medics Collective
http://zinelibrary.info/dont-rape-each-

Taking the First Step: Suggestions to People Called out for Abusive Behavior
By Wispy Cockles
A zine for those who have been confronted by their partner(s) for overstepping their boundaries or consent.
http://fruitiondesign.com/dealwithit/02wispy.php

Transforming a Rape Culture
By Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Fletcher, Martha Roth
This work seeks cultural change: the transformation of basic attitudes about power, gender, race, and sexuality.

Yes Means Yes! Jaclyn Friedman & Jessica Valenti
An essay compilation focusing on the struggle to stop rape in the U.S. and the importance of sexual identity and ownership

Color of Violence: the incite! anthology
By INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence
Collection of critical writings demanding that we address violence against women of color in all its forms, including interpersonal violence, such as sexual & domestic violence, & state violence, such as police brutality, militarism, attacks on immigrants & Indian treaty rights, the proliferation of prisons, economic neo-colonialism, and violence from the medical industry.
SAFER SEX

Get Tested: Getting tested is one of the best ways to avoid spreading STIs. Unfortunately, a lot of people think that they have been tested when they actually haven’t. Giving blood, general check-ups, and physicals, are not getting tested. You can get tested at general health clinics, sexual health clinics, private OB/GYNs or urologists, your family doctor or hospitals, etc. Lots of clinics offer free testing, look one up and see if you qualify! Even if you have to pay to get tested, it’s usually affordable and can save your life. It’s preferable to get tested every six months with partner(s).

- One box of latex condoms, preferably NOT spermicidal, and in a variety of the styles you like. Keep a couple flavored ones (Trustex makes great flavors) in there for fellatio (oral sex on a man). If you are allergic to latex, then polyurethane condoms will provide you the same level of protection. Just never use animal-based condoms for safer sex purposes as they do not block microorganisms. **Average cost: $10**
- One bottle of latex-safe, water-based lubricant. You can even get lubricant in single-use tubes and have a variety of lubes, including flavors. **Average cost: $12**
- 10 pairs of latex gloves — any drug store or medical supply sells them. If you're allergic to latex, there are latex alternatives. **Average cost: $5**
- 5 dental dams, or, if you can't find them, a box of plain old plastic wrap (the kind you’d have in the kitchen for wrapping food) for cunnilingus (oral sex on a woman). If you’re allergic to latex, go with the plastic wrap. **Average cost for five dams: $7 Average cost for one box of plastic wrap: $2**
- A little tube of organic aloe vera gel. Say what? Sometimes, our skin reacts badly to certain lubricants or condoms. When it does, a little aloe will soothe your skin and stop swelling and allergic reactions that can make the transmission of disease more likely. Let it sit for a little bit, then wipe with water, and you're all better. **Average cost: $3**

How/When to:

* Penis-in-vagina intercourse or anal intercourse: Condom and lubricant (ALWAYS use a new condom if switching between vaginal and anal intercourse)
* Fellatio ("giving head" or "blow job"): Flavored condom or unlubricated condom.
* Analingus (or "rimming"): Dental dam or saran wrap barrier, lubricant
* Cunnilingus ("going down" or "eating out"): Dental dam or saran wrap barrier, lubricant
* Manual sex ("fingering" or "hand job"): Latex gloves (or just freshly-washed hands), lubricant

The Not-Just-Yet-Hookup: You’ve hung out with someone once or twice with friends, and wound up spending time alone both times. Now you’re hanging out alone in a private space for the first time, some enjoyable making out is afoot, and it seems pretty likely one or both of you are going to initiate something more sexual. That’d be just fine by you, but you want to be sure things don’t get too heavy, too fast.

**You:** Hey – this feels great, and I’d like to keep on doing it if you would, but I just want to press pause for a sec to make sure we’re on the same page.

**Them:** Mmmm, mmmm…okay. What’s up?

**You:** I’d like to keep making out, and I’m probably comfortable with some dry sex if you are, but I know I don’t want to go further than that this soon.

**Them:** Yeah, I like this too, and if you want to have dry sex, I could be down with that, but that all by itself is great for me, too.

**You:** Awesome. Just keep me posted with any changes if you start to feel differently, and I’ll do the same. Can I press play again?

**Alternate Conversation:**

**You:** Hey – this feels great, and I’d like to keep on doing it if you would, but I want to stop for a sec to make sure we’re on the same page.

**Them:** Mmmm, mmmm…shhhh. (keeps kissing)

**You:** Whoah: it’s really important to me that I take a minute now, so I need you to do that, too.

**Them:** Ugh, FINE!

**You:** You know, if we can’t do things like just take a minute to check in and lay down some boundaries and ground rules – and that’s all I needed to do – while this felt really good, I don’t want to keep going with it. So, I’m going to go home for now. If you’re ready to talk about this another time, you can call me.
Their Favorite, Your Big Drag: There’s a sexual activity your partner really likes to do, so you’ve done it a few times, even though you’ve come to the conclusion that you really don’t like it at all. He or she wants to do it again today, and you’re just feeling trapped, especially since you feel like because you did it a few times before, it’s going to be a big drama for you to say you don’t want to do it anymore, and you’re also worried about losing them if they can’t do that activity with you.

You: Hey: I don’t really want to do anymore. I know you like it, so I’ve tried it, but I’m just not into it and it doesn’t make me feel good.

Them: Why didn’t you tell me before?

You: I was still making up my mind, but I was also worried because it seems like everybody does it and likes it, so I felt like a jerk or a prude and was also really worried you’d just want to find somebody else who would do it. I wanted to like what you like.

Them: Well, you like and I don’t, and while I wish I did, because it’d make you happy, I know that you wouldn’t want me to do anything I didn’t like, and that sex where we both aren’t into something just isn’t any good. I don’t want you to do things you don’t like: there are plenty of things we both like, and we don’t have to like all the same things. And I’d never ditch you because you don’t want to do that: I care about you for way more reasons than this. Please just be honest with me when you don’t want to do something, okay? How can I help?

You: God, thanks. I’m sorry, I was just feeling really insecure. And I guess you could help by just not talking about how hot that is, and obviously by not asking me to do it for now. Who knows, I might feel different later on, and if I do, I’ll let you know, okay?

Them: No problem: consider it done. By the way, I’ve been meaning to tell you something, too.

You: What?

Them: This is hard for me, but…oh god, I just don’t know how to say this.

You: Oh, no: what IS it? Are you okay?

Them: I’m just going to come out with it. I know you love Chocolate ice cream, but – and this isn’t easy for me to say – I’ve got to be honest, I’m a Mint Chocolate Chip guy. I hope you still want to be with me.

The Silent Partner: You can tell that your partner is trying pretty hard to have things feel good to you, but your indirect (or nonexistent) communication about what feels best to you and where has got them clueless and you perpetually dissatisfied. You have a disability which limits your mobility, and which you also aren’t yet totally comfortable talking about when it comes to sex. Fact is, you just have a tough time talking about what you like.

Them: How about this, do you like this? Do you want that instead?

You: You know what, let’s stop for a minute and talk. I’ve been having the hardest time talking about what I like and what I don’t. Maybe I’m afraid of hurting your feelings, or of embarrassing myself. It’s also still not easy for me to voice when my disability keeps me from doing things I wish I could do, but I know just don’t work for me.

Them: Well, I embarrass myself in front of you almost every day and you still like me. And my feelings shouldn’t be hurt about what you like and you don’t: if they are, that’s my thing to deal with, not yours. I don’t have a disability, but there are plenty of things I can’t do or which don’t feel comfortable for me, too. How about we start with the good stuff: that’s easy, right? Later on we can get to the stuff that’s going to make me feel like a dope.

You: Okay. Well, I like it when you do . But it’s often painful for me to do it in the position you keep wanting to do it in.

Them: I like that, too. So, what can I do to make that even better, and how can we do it so you’re comfortable?

You: Ummm… maybe we could try it like .

Them: You got it! See, not so hard.

When It’s Over for Me, It’s Over: Your sexual partner doesn’t seem to really keep you in the picture: when they’re all finished with sex, they act as if that means you must be, too, even though you usually aren’t.

You: I want to talk to you about something that’s been bothering me, and it isn’t easy to talk about, but I need to.

Them: Okay, what is it?

You: Well, I keep feeling like maybe you don’t understand that just because you’re finished with sex, that doesn’t mean I am. When we have sex together, it feels like it’s all about how or when you get off and not about me, too.

Them: Wow, I thought you were enjoying yourself. I feel terrible, now.

You: You don’t need to feel terrible: I should have said something before now, I was just too nervous. And I have been enjoying myself, just not all the time, and just not to the point where I’m feeling as good as you are, or getting to an orgasm, like you do. But now that you know, can I tell you what I need more of, and can we talk about how we might do things differently from here on out?

Them: Of course.

Alternate Conversation:

You: I want to talk to you about something that’s been bothering me, and it isn’t easy to talk about, but I need to.

Them: Okay, what is it?

You: Well, I keep feeling like maybe you don’t understand that just because you’re finished with sex, that doesn’t mean I am. When we have sex together, it feels like it’s all about how or when you get off and not about me, too.

Them: It’s about you. I mean, you’re there and I’m touching you, aren’t I? My friends say girls like it the way we do it just fine, and the ones that don’t just have something wrong with them.

You: Yeah, I’m there but I feel like I’m there mostly for what you want, and I’m not other girls: I’m me. I don’t know about the girls your friends are with, but I know that this isn’t working for me, and I’m the girl whose opinions and feelings should matter here. And something is wrong right now: I don’t feel like you’re really considering me, and while I understand you might be feeling defensive, I need to be heard – more than your friends – if we’re going to keep having sex. What I am saying is that when you’re finished, most of the time I’m not, and I need you to either care more about that, or if you already do, to show me that you care by asking if I’m finished, and when I’m not, by asking what else I want to do. I’d do the same thing for you if I came first.

Them: This is making me really mad. It’s not my problem if normal sex doesn’t work for you.

You: You know, this is a hard talk for me to have, too, but with you being this angry about it, I don’t feel like we can have it right now. You’re saying some pretty hurtful things to me, and I don’t feel like you’re being very considerate of my feelings. We’re having sex together, so any problems I’m having like this are supposed to be things you care about, too. I think you do, but you’re too upset to have this talk now. So, I’m going to go home for now, but I’ll call you in a little bit and we can talk more if you want, or you can call me when you’ve cooled off.