
STATEMENT

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Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills
Gender Equity Office

Minister's statement on Consent Awareness Week

VICTORIA – Selina Robinson, Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, and Kelli Paddon, Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity, have released the following joint statement on Consent Awareness Week:

"Today marks the beginning of Consent Awareness Week in British Columbia. We hope this week serves as a reminder that gender-based and sexualized violence remains too prevalent in communities across our province.

"Sexualized violence continues to exist and be normalized in jokes and everyday conversation. This week and every week, we want to remind everyone to focus the conversation on the importance of consent.

"In the context of sexual activities, consent means giving voluntary permission to engage in a sexual activity. Consent is a freely given 'yes.' It is ongoing and continuously discussed. Consent can be taken away at any time.

"As a new semester begins at B.C.'s post-secondary institutions, we want to make sure we're creating the safest environments that are inclusive and welcoming for everyone.

"Being aware of consent means having conversations with our friends and family about what it means and to remember that consent is essential. Consent is the law.

"That's why this year we introduced new legislation to prevent the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

"The new act creates an expedited process resulting in legal decisions and orders designed specifically to stop the distribution of intimate images without consent, and a more traditional civil action for survivors to seek monetary damages for harms suffered.

"As part of our ongoing commitment to help survivors of sexualized violence, the B.C. government provides more than \$54 million annually to support more than 470 victim service and violence-against-women programs.

"Whether it's face-to-face or online, consent is not optional, it is required.

"Preventing sexualized and gender-based violence is everyone's responsibility."

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