

BREAKING

NEWS



The topic of consent has been swept under the carpet for as long as we can all remember. People have been labelled as dramatic or liars for feeling violated at the hands of sexual assault. **Students have not been taught the importance of the word 'yes'** and as a result of this, the vicious cycle of rape, sexual assault and harassment continues, and we are enabling this if we do not speak up.

As a service provider in secondary schools around the country today, **LawEd has been granted with a platform to express these issues and push for change amongst society today.** We feel it is our duty to inform learners of the vital need for consent within any sexual relationship they find themselves in.

It is extremely difficult to pinpoint an assault if you are not fully aware of where it all went wrong. People can be manipulative and threatening, especially when accusing them of something that could potentially burden their name and reputation for life. **However, if you want to avoid being branded as a sexual offender, rapist or anything of the likes, learn the importance of consent and you can avoid ever putting yourself in that situation in the first place.** It's time to **stop shaming the victims** and having pity on the accused, and start protecting those that have experienced sexual assault.

When growing up and finding yourself, there may be times where you pretend to be something you're not, just to test it out. We all fall guilty to this! Ashley included! She painted herself out to be a cool, calm and collected girl that didn't see the big deal when it came to sex. Although Ashley portrayed herself like this, deep down, she was just as **confused and inexperienced** as any other young female adult would be.

It wasn't until Ashley came across the legal definition of rape that she realised. Ashley explains that this revelation was followed by **deep depression, anxiety and guilt.**

Rape, legally is defined as: **"a man commits rape if he has unlawful sexual intercourse with a woman who at the time of the intercourse does not consent to it, and at that time he knows that she does not consent to the intercourse or he is reckless as to whether she does or does not consent to it"**

Westpheling goes on to explain that the term **consent was never a phrase used or explained during her time in school,** and **sex was always looked upon as a taboo subject that should be avoided at all costs.**

By reflecting on sex and sexual acts this way, **we are letting down the young people of society** and we are most certainly not playing a part in stopping the rates of sexual assault that take place daily. **We must push the concept of consent as a non-negotiable obligation during all sexual relationships.** It's about time we look at this issue as a real problem that is affecting the mental health and physical wellbeing of women all over Ireland. It's about time we look towards change.

Yes means yes, no means no.



LawEd

TAKING THE LAW FURTHER