

Burning Nest 2024 - Consent Afterburn Report

Compiled by CK Nam - Consent Link/Lead Burning Nest 2023-2024, consent@burningnest.co.uk

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This document shall be updated several times as more reports are received, processed and concluded.

Content Note - whilst no consent incidents are explained in detail, due to the categories used in reporting, there are mentions of intoxicants, abuse, harassment, and violence including sexual in nature.

Summary

Suitable for inclusion in the Burning Nest 2024 afterburn report for the Burning Man Regional Network.

In conjunction with the Consent Network, an 18 person Consent Team utilised approximately 300 hours to provide 90 hours event time consent cover at Burning Nest 2024.

The Consent Lead was on duty for 60 hours (this does not include Site Lead and other emergency situations).

The size of the Consent Team was significantly uplifted from the previous year, with an aim to reduce the number of hours each volunteer was on duty and also to upskill team members.

The number of consent reports received relating to Burning Nest (before, during or after the event) increased from 20 last year to 33 this year, although a number of reports were regarding the same issues. This is reflected by the number of incidents being almost identical to last year (22 this year compared to 21 last year). This data set is not complete as additional reports in relation to Burning Nest 2024 may be received in the future.

Consent Education provided a well attended physical presence in the form of a Consent Cafe (a bright pink gazebo in Free Camping), a sober and safer space with provisions of homemade baked goods, hot and cold drinks. The Consent Cafe volunteers facilitated discussions on a wide ranging topics, primarily relating to consent (e.g. the Consent FIRES acronym and framework used across the UK Regional Burns), but also relationship questions, polyamory and some controversial opinions.

The obvious physical presence of a Consent Team was commented on by a number of people and no doubt helped increase awareness of consent activity at Nest where almost a third of participants were new burners.

Consent Response managed 6 reports submitted during the event, resulting in warnings being issued and one person being asked to leave the site. All 6 reports were submitted via the onsite written report dropboxes. Before the event, 3 in depth investigations took place resulting in 2 people not attending Burning Nest, one person that did attend was managed through informal processes.

So far, after the event, 9 categorisable consent incidents have been recorded and are being progressed. 3 non-consent related reports were received, the reporting parties are being signposted to other resources.

The Consent Lead was involved in a number of event safety related issues which were not considered consent incidents and therefore have not been included in this report.

Introduction

2024 saw the introduction of a side project called the Consent Network, whilst not fully formed and with some significant hurdles still to overcome, the aim was to bring about a streamlined and standardised approach to consent across the three UK officially affiliated regional burns (Burning Nest, MicroBurn and London Decompression), in terms of education, language, reporting, policies and procedures.

This is the second year CK has been the Consent Lead for Burning Nest and consent service offerings continue to be developed and adapted. Due to the increase in consent general awareness, pre-event engagement and Consent Team size, it is expected that the number of reports will increase compared to last year.

The primary consent aims for Burning Nest 2024:

1. To introduce a two stream approach to consent through Response and Education.
2. To expand the Consent Team and provide a greater number of people with training and experience dealing with consent incident reports.
3. To provide an obvious physical presence through the Consent Cafe pink gazebo.
4. To provide defined core response hours that do not over stretch the Consent Team (and also does not take away responsibility from the Site Leads, Rangers or Welfare).
5. Ask for all theme camps to consider writing and publishing a Camp Consent Policy and Procedure (it was encouraged that all camps have a designated Camp Consent Lead).

An 18 person Consent Team was brought to Burning Nest 2024. Due to the significant amount of time being used on investigations ahead of Burning Nest, there was limited capacity to conduct substantial consent training.

Therefore a number of potential Consent Team members with pre-existing experience and aptitude were identified from previous burns or burn adjacent events, whilst others were recruited through the Nest volunteer application process.

2 applications were rejected due to lack of experience, 2 applications were withdrawn due to availability.

The Nest Consent Team was bolstered by two consent members from Borderland (Sweden), their skills and experience was gratefully received and it is hoped that both burns can continue to work together to improve consent safety across the international burner community.

Due diligence research checks were conducted on all applications, they were also required to sign the Consent Code of Conduct that goes beyond the standard event Code of Conduct in terms of management of personal data, confidentiality, integrity and abuse of power.

Group training was delivered twice during Nest by the Consent Lead.

Consent Reponse

This year, the number of hours consent response was available was reduced to 9am-9pm Monday-Sunday, and 9am-12noon on Exodus Monday (two 6 hour shifts per day and the Consent Lead covering arrival and exodus Monday). This was due to the belief that a serious consent violation would be dealt with by the Site Lead without the explicit need for Consent Team involvement, and that the ability for the Consent Team to interview or mediate a situation would be significantly reduce during the hours of darkness (e.g. not being able to find someone and the person to be spoken to not being available or sober).

A substantial number of the Consent Team were new to Burning Nest, new to burner consent work or both. This meant that a comprehensive supervision structure was implemented with all Consent Response shifts being conducted by an experienced member of the team or there being a Consent Supervisor available during the entire shift.

Event-time consent response involved checking the written reporting drop boxes (which was increased to three boxes this year), responding to any consent reports through the drop boxes, online report form, consent email, adult theme camp WhatsApp chat group and any direct calls for service in person or over the radio.

The Burning Nest Consent Team provided cover for approximately 90 hours of event time, with the Consent Cafe officially open for 15 hours event time. In total approximately 300 person hours were utilised before and during the event, for meetings, training, reading, build, shifts, consent report resolution and strike. This number does not include the management of consent reports before or after the event.

Before Burning Nest 2024

The Consent Team assisted with progressing reports relating to 4 people.

- 1 online form report could not be managed by the Consent Team due to an accusation of conflict of interest. This was referred to the Nest Board of Directors.
- 1 person was asked not to attend. This followed an in depth investigation, interview and escalation to the Nest Board of Directors.
- 1 person decided not to attend. This followed an in depth investigation, interview, and voluntary input from other participants
- 1 person would not engage in formal processes. There was an attempt to manage the risk through other informal methods.

During Burning Nest 2024

The Consent Team received 6 written reports through the on-site written report drop boxes. No online form reports or consent emails were received during the event.

- 1 report of unsafe provision of intoxicants (commonly known as 'dosing') due to feeling pressured - a warning was given.
- 1 report of unsafe provision of intoxicants due to being given more than requested - a warning was given.
- 1 report of harassment due to being followed and disrupted for 4 hours - the Consent Lead requested the activation of an Incident Command Team with an aim to evict the person from the site. The person was asked to remove themselves voluntarily but security were present and assisted in the departure.
- 1 report of abuse of power due to failure to disclose relevant information - no further action was taken. This was outside of the remit of the Consent Team.

- 1 report of language and behaviour that amounted to a consent violation - a discussion was had with the person after Nest concluding in making them aware of how their behaviour negatively impacted upon others.
- 1 handwritten note to request the return of posters in the toilets - due to a lack of time, not enough posters were printed and some destined for toilets were given to theme camps and other spaces. This year, posters were laminated and will be retained, so there should be enough for future events.

After Burning Nest 2024

The Consent Team have so far received 6 online form reports, 1 email, and direct messages from 5 people. These reports are being progressed and may not have been concluded:

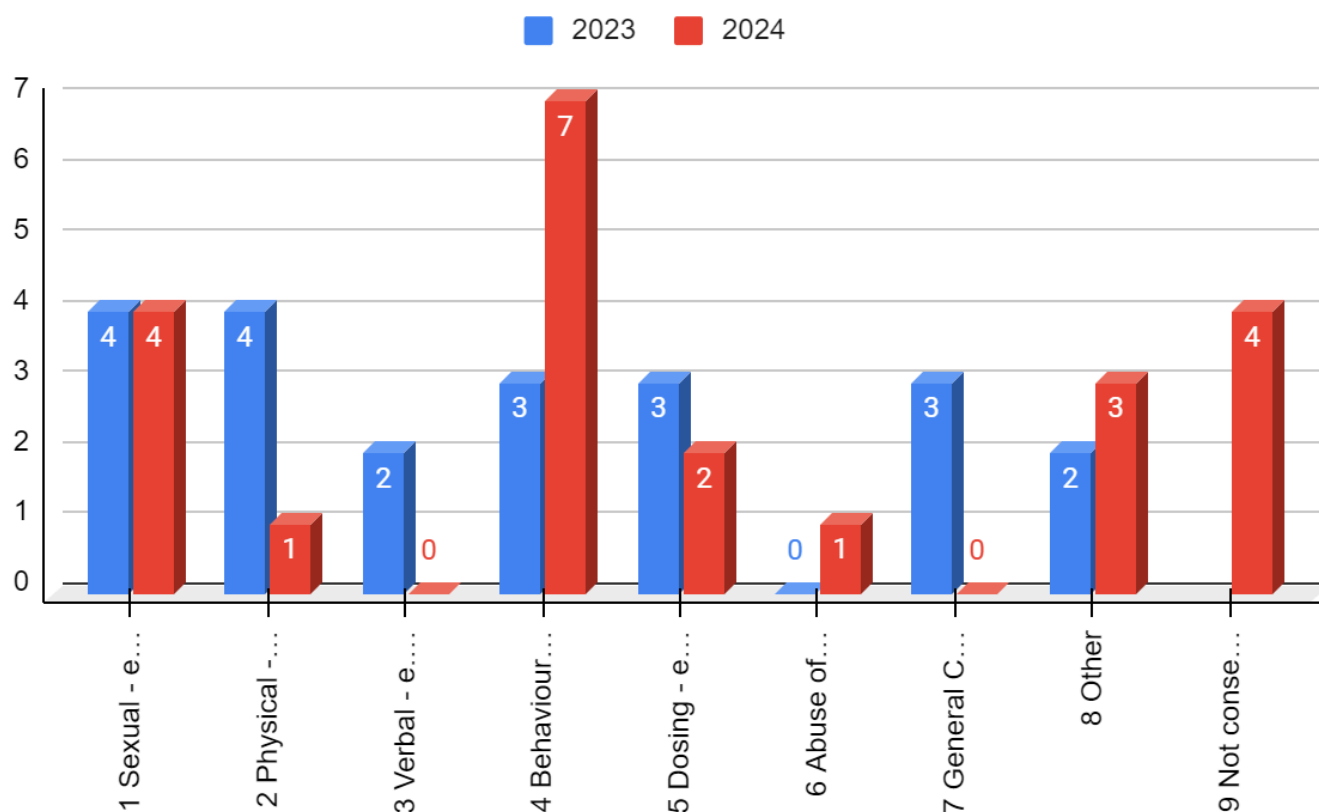
- 1 report related to an incident already being managed by the Consent Team.
- 1 report of uncomfortable behaviour.
- 1 report related to an incident already being managed by the Consent Team, in addition to information related to event safety and child safeguarding and not related to consent or Burning Nest. Parts of this report have been referred to other events and UK Burning Man Regional Contacts.
- 1 report of an issue during the cabaret. Determined not to be a consent issue but support provided to the reporting party.
- 1 report of a member of security videoing people with flow toys without consent. This will be referred to the Nest Event Lead and Edge of Chaos (Event Ops). The Consent Team will provide guidance for events and event support staff (e.g. security, medics, venue staff etc.) regarding the consent rules and expectations at burn events.
- 1 report of disruption caused by a request to take a photo and also unnecessary physical contact. It is unlikely that the person responsible will be identified so further community-wide communication regarding photo consent and physical contact will be issued.
- 1 report of bullying behaviour and abuse of power, this has been referred to the Nest Board of Directors.
- 1 report regarding the person who was asked to leave the event site.
- 1 question relating to an event safety issue.
- 1 report of sharing of personal information without permission. This was dealt with by the reporting party and no further action by the Consent Team was requested.
- 1 report of misuse of theme camp space and equipment by a non-camp member. This was deemed a code of conduct issue and the reporting party was requested to contact event organisers.

Consent Reporting Data and Year on Year Comparison

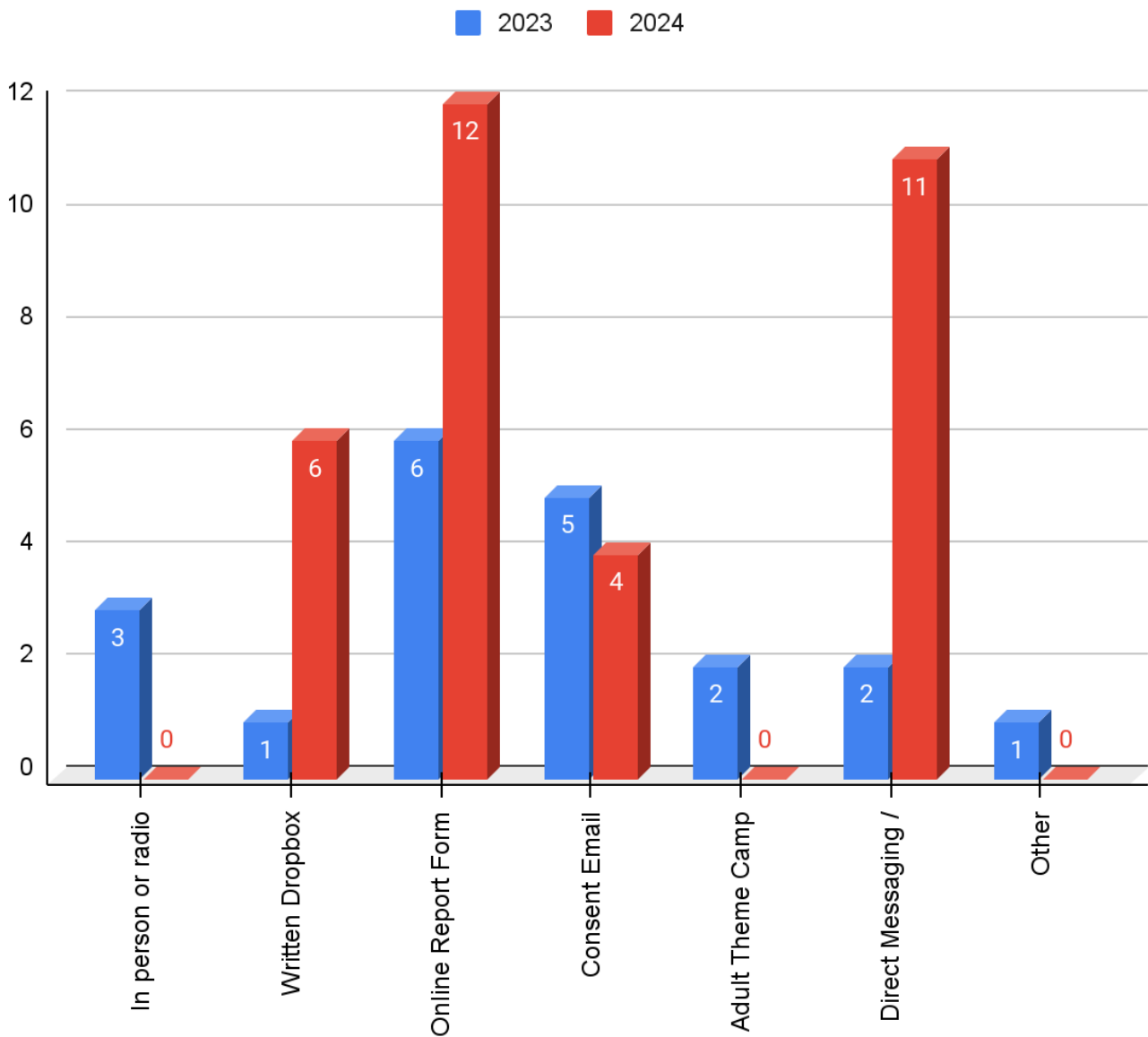
NB. some consent reports relate to multiple people or multiple incidents; some reports relate to the same person or the same incident. Therefore some of the numerical totals for category and report method data do not match each other.

Consent Report Category	Nest Report Received			2024 TOTAL (by category)	2023 TOTAL (by category)
	Before	During	After		
1 Sexual - e.g. sexual assault (including by touching), stealthing, non-consensual overt sexual activity	3	0	1	4	4
2 Physical - e.g. assault (not including sexual), non-consensual/unnecessary touching	0	0	1	1	4
3 Verbal - e.g. harassment, manipulation, gas lighting, discriminatory language	0	0	0	0	2
4 Behaviour - e.g. intimidation, unwanted attention, coercion, photo/video consent breach	1	2	4	7	3
5 Dosing - e.g. unsafe provision of intoxicants, spiking	0	2	0	2	3
6 Abuse of position of power/authority/trust - e.g. misuse of personal information, use of position to gain an unfair advantage	0	0	1	1	0
7 General Consent Concern	0	0	0	0	3
8 Other	0	1	2	3	2
9 Not consent related	0	1	3	4	0*
TOTAL (by receipt period)	4	6	12	22	21

*data not recorded



Initial Report Method	Nest Report Received			2024 TOTAL (by Method)	2023 TOTAL (by Method)
	Before	During	After		
In person or radio (event time only)	0	0	0	0	3
Written Dropbox (event time only)	0	6	0	6	1
Online Report Form	6	0	6	12	6
Consent Email Reports (per thread)	3	0	1	4	5
Adult Theme Camp WhatsApp Chat	0	0	0	0	2
Direct Messaging / Contact (per person)	6	0	5	11	2
Other	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL (by receipt period)	15	6	12	33	20



Consent Education

Consent education was provided through consent social media posts, on site posters and a Consent Cafe drop-in physical presence.

1 handwritten note was received in a reporting drop box requesting the return of posters in the toilets like in previous years.

Due to reduced availability and a late change in volunteers, consent education was not at the level hoped for. Not enough posters were printed and some destined for toilets were given to theme camps and other spaces. This year, posters were laminated and will be retained for use at future events.

Consent Cafe

The Consent Cafe was a pink gazebo in the plaza in free camping designed to be a sober, safer drop-in space open 11am-2pm Wednesday-Sunday. Developed from a basic plan introduced at MicroBurn 2023.

Due to its obvious colour and placement, there were a number of engagements during the cafe build phase and outside of opening hours, including one engagement relating to a serious event safety matter which was escalated to Site Lead.

The Consent Cafe also acted as a HQ for the Consent Team for storage of materials, charging of radios and as a team meeting and training location.

Two Consent Team members provided dedicated support for the Consent Cafe including providing home made baked goods and the provision of tea, coffee and fruit juices. The Consent Cafe was planned to allow for both consent related discussions as well as general conversations. That way participants could get to know the Consent Team members before deciding to make an incident report. No consent incident reports were received via the Consent Cafe.

The Consent Cafe had a variety of consent related material including Consent FIRES (the consent acronym we use across the UK Regional Burns) as well as consent education literature like a book called The Joy of Consent.

The attendance data does not accurately reflect upon the positive impact the Consent Cafe had in terms of overall awareness of a consent presence at Burning Nest but also improving consent understanding by anyone engaging in the space, listening to other people's opinions or simply reading the posters

Many conversations revolved around personal relationship issues, especially those involving more complicated relationship dynamics like polyamory.

By holding a safer space, the consent volunteers enabled others to express themselves freely, even if options were controversial. Other people present were also able to engage in discussions with the consent volunteers facilitating the conversation and not obstructing the flow unnecessarily.

A number of positive comments were made to the Consent Cafe volunteers, several people attended a number of times throughout the week, expressing their gratitude for hosting such a space.

The consent volunteers for the Cafe felt that the space was 'Welfare-like' or 'Pre-Welfare'. No one explicitly needed physical or mental health support but having such a space where conversations could be had and

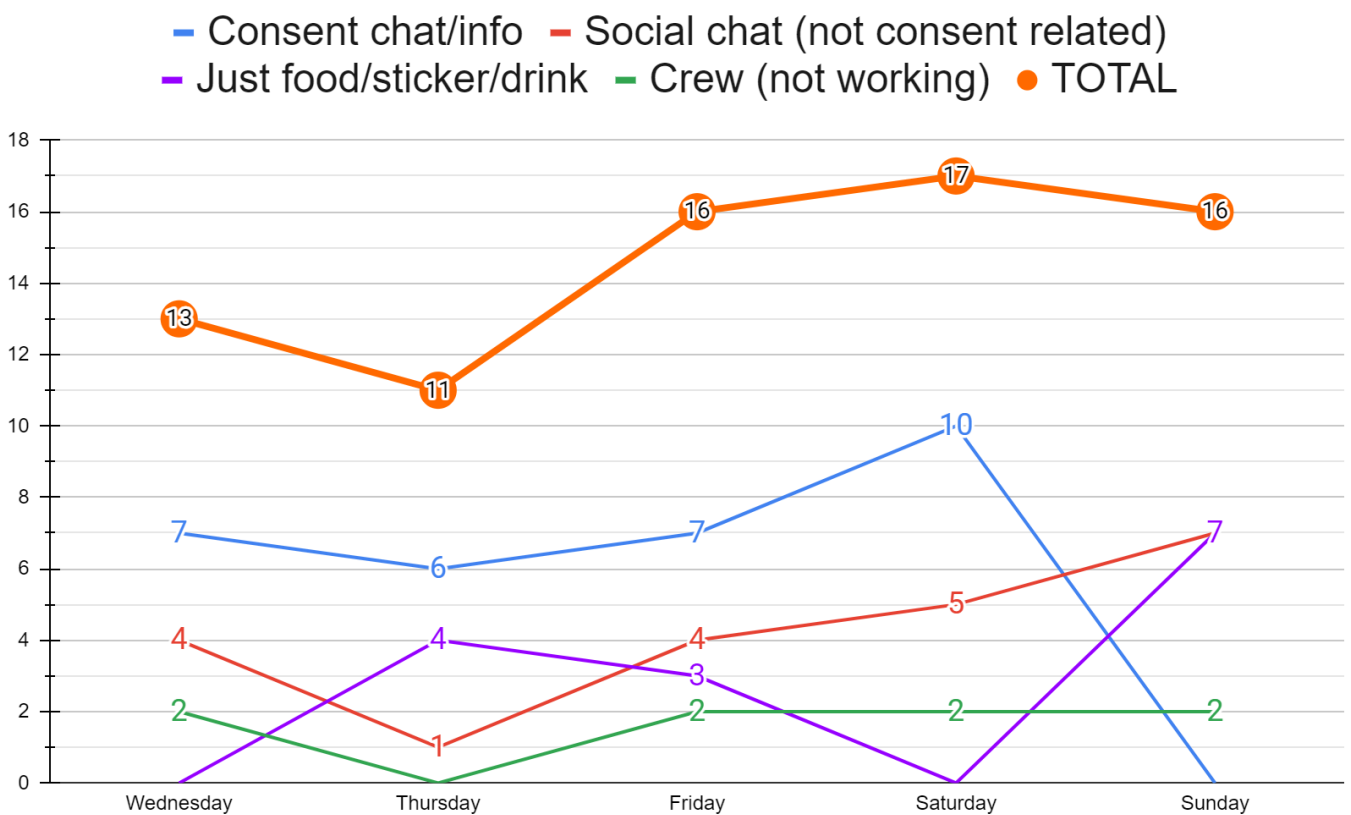
differing opinions shared may have helped support participants and possibly prevented the need to attend Welfare.

The future plans for the Consent Cafe would be to increase the number of volunteers present, this would share the workload and also possibly allow for increased opening hours.

There are also discussions on whether this space should be removed from the Consent remit and instead be a general engagement space. Ongoing discussions are being had between the Consent Lead and the Consent Cafe hosts.

Consent Cafe Attendance Data - Burning Nest 2024

Consent Cafe attendance data does not include anyone that read the consent information and posters but did not stop (which would also include when the Cafe was closed).









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CONSENT FIRES
E
Every person, assumed or intended, consent to that consent, starting pressure on someone to do something, permanently making it impossible to not consent, given consent, A consent is not consent, can not consent.

CONSENT F.I.R.E.S.
I
Informed consent is the only way to ensure that someone is not being pressured into something, permanently making it impossible to not consent, given consent, A consent is not consent, can not consent.

CONSENT F.I.R.E.S.
R
Respect for the person's autonomy is the only way to ensure that someone is not being pressured into something, permanently making it impossible to not consent, given consent, A consent is not consent, can not consent.

CONSENT F.I.R.E.S.
S
Specific consent is not consent, everyone should be making a decision for themselves, the greater the need of autonomy, the bigger the autonomy should be, "Yes" is not "No" and "No" is not "Yes".

CONSENT F.I.R.E.S.
S
Specific consent is not consent, not mean yes to anything, agree on what you are doing to do before starting, be clear on what you want and don't want to do, changing the activity to something that was not agreed upon is breaching someone's consent.

Consent Cafe
opening times
11am - 2pm
Wed - Sun





