

CONSENT

What is consent?

Consent means giving your permission. Here in Canada, your word is usually not enough for an agreement. It is very common that you will be asked to sign your name- giving proof that you know something is happening and why it is happening.

When is consent needed?

Before your information is shared with anyone, you will be asked for consent. Remember, that means the permission to share your information, with whom and for how long.

Here are some examples of consent: A doctor will ask for consent before doing an operation. A teacher will ask for consent from a parent, before taking a child on a school trip. Other helpers may ask for consent before they help you, in order to make sure that you are accepting their help and that you understand what is happening

Before you give your consent, it is important that you understand why your information needs to be shared, what information will be shared with whom, and how the information will be used. This is called 'Informed Consent'.

Who can give consent?

In Canada, people over the age of 18 can give consent for themselves. People under 18 years old need consent from a parent. Remember the school trip I talked about? A student who is 17 or younger needs a parent's consent to go on a trip. If a student is 18 or older, they can give consent by themselves. In some situations, children at the age of 16 can give consent and do not need their parents' permission.

As a parent or guardian, you need to give permission for your child to engage in certain activities. If you are a parent, you may be required to sign a consent form for your child for school, at a clinic or hospital and so on. This means that you know about this activity and that you are in favour of it happening. At school, your children can only participate in a school trip if you have given your permission. Also, the nurse at school needs your permission to give your child a needle.

It is important to remember that if your child is over 18, their personal information is protected, and sometimes, even from you. Doctors, and other helpers have to protect their private information the same way they protect yours.

So, signing a paper means that you are agreeing to being helped and you are giving your permission for receive this help.

