



Your decision

Deciding whether to
report to the Police

Deciding to report a sexual assault or sexual abuse is very personal and can be a difficult choice. It should be based on your needs alone, not the needs of other people. The right decision is whatever feels best for you and no one else should make the decision for you.

We understand that coming to terms with what has happened to you is very upsetting and you might have many questions...

It happened a while ago. Can I still report it?

Yes – you can report a sexual assault or rape that happened at any time, even if this was months, years or decades ago. The Police take every report seriously, no matter how much time has passed. We understand that there are lots of reasons why someone might delay telling anyone about what has happened. We also know it's common for victims to take time to realise that what has happened is a crime, or for a number of reasons, they may not feel ready to report the incident right away.

I'm worried that I can't report it because I feel like I am to blame

There are some common myths and stereotypes about sexual violence that might make you feel like you are to blame, such as...

"I didn't fight back"

Sometimes people are too scared to fight back. This might be because they 'freeze' instinctively or because not fighting back is the safest option at the time. Both of these are natural responses. Not having fought back doesn't mean you are to blame.

"I was wearing revealing clothing"

Sexual violence is about something that happened without your consent. This has nothing to do with clothing. Whatever you were wearing at the time, you are not to blame.

"I chose to go somewhere private with the person, like their home or a hotel room"

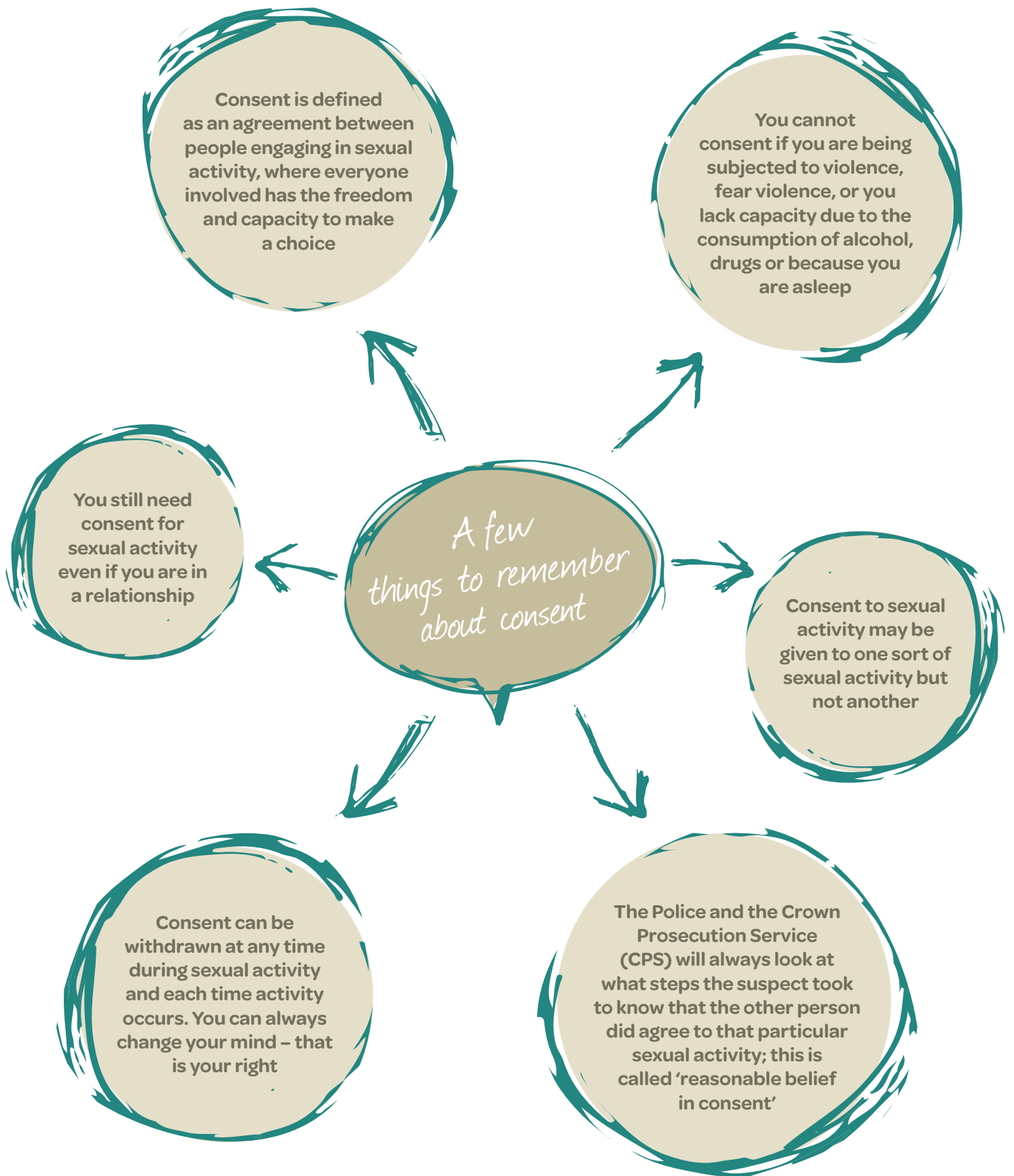
There are many reasons someone might choose to go to a private place with someone, and choosing to be in a private place is not the same as consenting to sexual activity. Going somewhere private does not mean you are to blame.

"I was drunk/I'd taken drugs"

If a person is drunk or has taken drugs, this does not mean they have consented to sex. However, it can mean that they are not able to give consent because they don't have the capacity to make a choice.

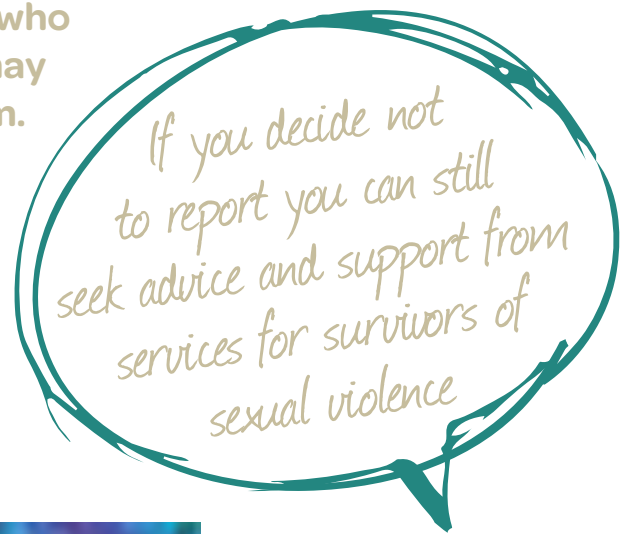
We understand that making a decision about whether to report can be difficult. If you want support with this or during the reporting process, please see the **Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)** and The Topaz Centre sections within the booklet.

Remember that the responsibility for all rape, sexual assaults or sexual abuse always belongs to the person who assaulted you. You are not to blame.



In Nottingham there are specialist sexual violence support organisations, who support people who have experienced sexual violence and you may benefit from making contact with one of them.

Some people choose not to report an offence to the Police and that is entirely your choice.



Topaz Centre
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

24hr Helpline Number: 0800 085 9993

www.topazcentre.org



Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services (Notts SVS Services)

0115 947 0064

www.nottssvss.org.uk



Nottinghamshire Police

Emergency Number: **999**

Non Emergency Number: **101**

www.nottinghamshire.police.uk



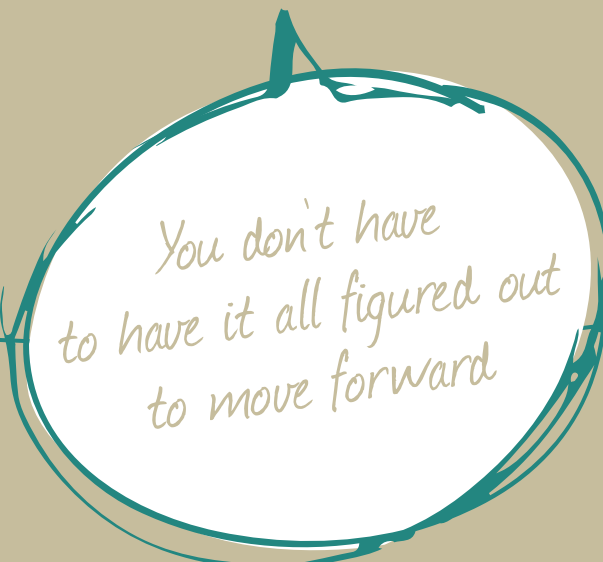
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
POLICE
PROUD TO SERVE

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

0808 800 0340

www.junowomensaid.org.uk





*You don't have
to have it all figured out
to move forward*

Please feel free to visit the Consent Coalition website
for more information and support nottssvss.org.uk/consent-coalition/

