Driving a culture of consent in UL: obstacles and opportunities for growth

Name of institution and initiative lead
University of Limerick. Healthy UL - Sexual Health & Wellbeing Group

Date and timeframe
September 2021 – March 2023

What was the reach?
Increased awareness and engagement with both staff and students on understanding consent with over 3000 students engaging in the Active*Consent workshops across the University of Limerick.
Active*Consent roll out 2022/23 – Taking a whole campus approach to health and wellbeing, in particular sexual health.

Aims and Objectives
The aim of the Active*Consent Workshop rollout was to raise awareness in the area of consent, and the capacity to consent with the intention to establish a culture of consent across the University of Limerick Campus.

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There was a focus on educating students on what is meant by “Active Consent” and how communication is key in ensuring positive, respectful and safe sexual experiences, for all involved.

Aligned frameworks, policies, or strategies
University of Limerick Action Plan Tackling Sexual Violence, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment on campus
University of Limerick ‘Healthy UL’ Framework
University of Limerick Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024

Project Collaborators
Student orientation officers
UL Student Life
Healthy UL
We engaged with the Active*Consent team from the University of Galway and benefited from their expertise to aid in the rollout of the workshops.
Members of the Mid-West Rape Crisis Centre are also members of our Sexual Health & Wellbeing Group and our Consent Framework Steering and Policy Review Group.

Key Learning Points
A more structured setting in the facilitation of the Active*Consent workshops is needed for maximum engagement.
The University of Limerick has a very supportive campus community and by adopting a whole campus approach it delivers a stronger message.