CONSENT PLEDGE
BY MACALESTER COLLEGE STUDENTS

Though dating, relationships and ‘hookups’ are common and often even casual, they are nonetheless characterized by a certain degree of trust - and thus vulnerability - for both parties. As a matter of fact, most sexual assault cases on college campuses occur between people who know each other. It is often hard for either party to objectively judge and question the interaction, resulting in doubt, guilt and under-reporting of assault cases.

This pledge is to remind us, as a community, of our rights and responsibilities within relationships of any sort. Whether you are in a long term relationship, looking to have some fun or not interested in sex at all, it isn’t a bad idea to remember that you have the power to influence the outcomes of any intimate experience you participate in or witness.

I have the right to trust my own instincts and experiences.
I have the right to leave any situation without explaining myself.
I have the right to feel and express anger when I feel mistreated or pressured.
I have the right to refuse anyone or anything, no matter the expectations.
If I do not want physical closeness, I have the right to say “NO” at any point in the interaction.
I have the right to decide for myself how seductively, macho, masculine or feminine I like to act, without feeling pressured to adopt any of these traits.
I have the right to start a relationship slowly and not feel pressured into being physically close for as long as I like.
I have the right to be my own self without changing to suit others.
I have the right to feel safe.
I have the right to mutually consensual, pleasurable physical experiences.
I have the right to tell someone when I feel I’ve been mistreated.
I have the right to do what pleases me without being judged, as long as I do not harm others.
I have the right to change my mind whenever I want.
I have the right to tell my partner what I want physically and emotionally.
I have the right to be heard and respected.

I have the responsibility to accept “No” for an answer.
I have the responsibility to think, in advance, about what I want or do not want.
I have the responsibility to check my actions and decisions to make sure they are good for me and others.
I have the responsibility to educate myself about sex and intimacy.
I have the responsibility to know when I am too tired, drunk or otherwise incapable of making the a responsible decision.
I have the responsibility to ask when I am unclear about the other person’s needs and wants.
I have the responsibility to ensure all parties actively want each step of the interaction to occur.
I have the responsibility to admit it to myself when I have made a decision that hurt someone.
I have the responsibility to communicate when I am uncomfortable.
I have the responsibility to ensure my partner is comfortable.
I have the responsibility of dealing with the repercussions of a sexual encounter no matter my relationship with the other person.
I have the responsibility to interfere when I think someone else is being mistreated or coerced and is unable to fend for themselves.

I pledge to remember these rights and responsibilities and to incorporate them in my decisions whenever appropriate.

Name:

Email address:

Signature: