

Take Action: Challenge the condoning of violence against women with disabilities

Use anti-violence messaging:

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| <p>✓ Reduce victim blaming</p> <p>Women with disabilities have a right to safety, respect and equality.</p> | <p>✓ Perpetrator accountability</p> <p>Lots of carers experience stress without becoming violent.</p> | <p>✓ There is no justification</p> <p>It's not ok, ever.</p> | <p>✓ Name the problem</p> <p>This is family violence. This is sexual assault. This is abuse.</p> |
| <p>✓ Systems of accountability</p> <p>This is unlawful.</p> | <p>✓ Challenge minimising</p> <p>It's a big deal, and it's wrong.</p> | <p>✓ Reduce victim blaming</p> <p>It's not her fault.</p> | <p>✓ Perpetrator accountability</p> <p>Violence is a choice. He chose to use power over her.</p> |

Frame disability using a strengths-based model:

Use factual language that doesn't reinforce stereotypes, imply weakness, alienate women or suggest disability is a reason for violence.

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| <p>Women with disabilities aren't "vulnerable to violence."</p> <p>Women with disabilities are targeted for violence.</p> | <p>She isn't "bound to a wheelchair." She is enabled by it.</p> <p>She uses a wheelchair.</p> | <p>She doesn't "have the mentality of a 3-year old."</p> <p>She's an adult woman with an intellectual disability.</p> | <p>She isn't "suffering from" or "struggling with" a disability.</p> <p>She has dementia.</p> |
| <p>She is not "dependent" on her partner. All relationships involve interdependence.</p> <p>Her partner provides her with support.</p> | <p>She doesn't need others to do everything for her.</p> <p>If she needs help, she'll ask for it.</p> | <p>She doesn't have a "lower quality of life."</p> <p>The presence or absence of disability is not what predicts quality of life.</p> | <p>She does not "have difficulty remembering."</p> <p>She has a brain injury and understands information best when a written summary is provided.</p> |

This resource was inspired by [a speech in 2018 by activist Sue Salthouse](#) on disability and language in the media.

Content adapted from *Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children in Australia*, Our Watch (2015).