



Condoning of violence against women with disabilities

This includes excusing or justifying perpetrator behaviour, shifting blame to the victim, trivialising and downplaying violence, and using deficit language.*

* Deficit language is when disability is framed as a tragedy, a weakness, or an extreme and unusual way of existing. When used in the context of violence against women, deficit language imposes the idea that women with disabilities are 'better off dead', or that violence against women with disabilities is inevitable, to be expected, or has lesser impact.



<p>Victim blaming</p> <p>Her disability makes her vulnerable to violence.</p>	<p>Perpetrator excusing</p> <p>He was just experiencing carer stress.</p>	<p>Deficit language</p> <p>She is severely disabled and has high needs.</p>	<p>Trivialising violence</p> <p>It was just a bit of rough handling.</p>
<p>Deficit language</p> <p>She has the mentality of a 3 year old.</p>	<p>Trivialising violence</p> <p>She doesn't know how good she has it.</p>	<p>Victim blaming</p> <p>Her disability causes her to have wild mood swings.</p>	<p>Perpetrator excusing</p> <p>He's actually a really devoted carer.</p>
<p>Trivialising violence</p> <p>It was for her own good.</p>	<p>Deficit language</p> <p>She has a lower quality of life.</p>	<p>Perpetrator excusing</p> <p>He was depressed and overwhelmed from having to care for her.</p>	<p>Victim blaming</p> <p>She is too demanding about her needs.</p>
<p>Victim blaming</p> <p>She is a burden.</p>	<p>Perpetrator excusing</p> <p>He's such a great guy for looking after her.</p>	<p>Trivialising violence</p> <p>Sometimes you have to use a bit of force on someone like that.</p>	<p>Deficit language</p> <p>She is 'afflicted with' and 'suffering from' her disability.</p>

Men who hold such beliefs are more likely to perpetrate violence against women with disabilities, and both women and men who hold such beliefs are less likely to take action to support victims and hold perpetrators to account.

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 from the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women and their Children in Australia*. Our Watch (2015).