

Men’s control of decision-making, ableist control of decision-making, and limits to the independence of women with disabilities in public and private life

Examples of this include:

✘ Coercive decision-making around parenting, including making decisions for women with disabilities, not providing appropriate and accessible parenting support, and high rates of child removal

✘ Coercive reproductive practices, including forcing or pressuring women with disabilities to undergo sterilisation, use birth control or have a termination

✘ Discrimination in employment and under-representation in decision-making roles in society, such as high-paying work, leadership roles and in politics

✘ Lack of Respectful Relationships Education for people with disabilities

✘ Inaccessible transport, buildings, education, services, workplaces and spaces

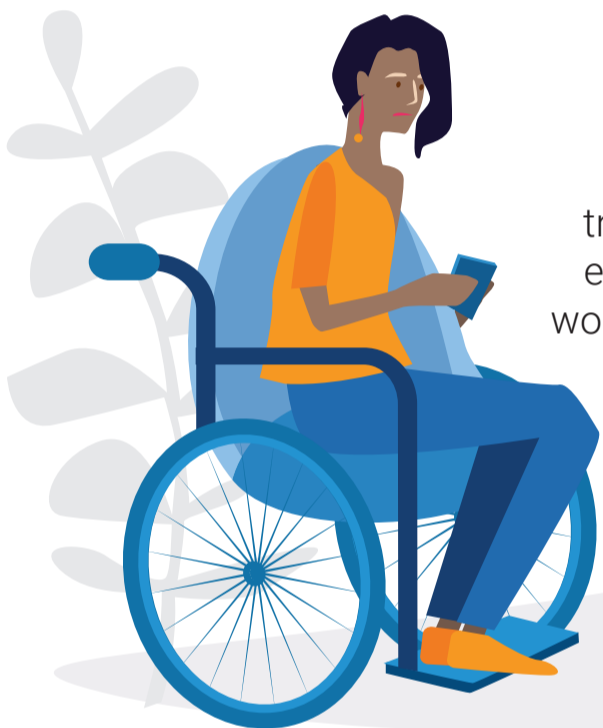
✘ Family members or carers making decisions about care or living arrangements without consulting



✘ Family members or carers controlling who she spends time with

✘ Men’s control in relationships is often normalised, in pop culture, in family relationships, in peer groups and in workplaces

✘ Family members or carers controlling how money is spent



These inequalities increase the likelihood of women with disabilities being targeted for violence in society. This is because they:

- Send a message that women with disabilities are less worthy of respect and are therefore perceived as more legitimate targets for violence.
- Make women with disabilities more economically, socially and physically dependent on men and on able-bodied people and institutions – this can lead to someone thinking that they can perpetrate violence against women with disabilities without consequence.
- Undermine women with disabilities’ participation in the public sphere, particularly in formal decision-making and civic action. This has a compounding impact because women with disabilities in positions of power are more likely than men and able-bodied people to make policy decisions to secure freedom from violence for women with disabilities.
- Make it difficult for those who do experience violence to be able to leave.

While some of these behaviours may start off well-intentioned and may reflect a family member’s or carer’s desire to protect a woman with disability, over time they can move into control and abuse.