

Stereotyped constructions of masculinity, femininity, and disability, and the intersecting impacts of this for women with disabilities

This driver refers to the ideas and beliefs held up by society about what it means to be male and female, and to have a disability or not.

Some examples of gender and disability stereotypes, assumptions and expectations include:



Stereotypes can be harmful and limiting, and people who don't fit into the stereotypes can face criticism or punishment.

These gender and disability stereotypes are also a key driver of violence against women with disabilities because they:

- Define able-bodied people and men as being 'naturally' dominant and therefore 'naturally' superior.
- Define people with disabilities and women as being 'naturally' passive and submissive, which casts them as targets for exploitation and abuse.
- Define and reinforce masculinity as callous and insensitive, or suggest that men are 'naturally' more violent than women or are driven by uncontrollable sexual urges.
- May glorify male violence, especially sexual aggression towards women.
- Can lead to the assumption that people with disabilities don't have sex or intimate relationships, leading to the incorrect assumption that people with disabilities do not need access to respectful relationships education or sex education.
- Can suggest women and people with disabilities are inherently dishonest, unfaithful or need to be controlled.
- Contribute to sexist and ableist hierarchies where men have power over women and able-bodied people have power over people with disabilities.