

Fact Sheet 1: Taking Action

Challenging the drivers of violence against women with disability

Drivers (causes) of violence against women with disability are perceptions, world views or myths that reinforce the view that violence against women with disability does not exist or is normalised. Here are some common myths about domestic family violence (DFV) and some anti-violence messages you can use to contribute to preventing violence against women with disability.

Call out myths about domestic and family violence using facts

Myth: Drugs, alcohol, stress or mental illness are the causes of DFV.

Fact: Most perpetrators of DFV don't commit violence in other aspects of their life.

While these other issues may cause additional challenges, they are not the cause of DFV.

Myth: Women are just as guilty of DFV as men.

Fact: The statistics are very clear. DFV is predominantly perpetrated by men against women.

Myth: Women exaggerate about DFV.

Fact: DFV is under-reported due to stigma and shame about experiencing domestic and family violence particularly for women with disability.

Myth: DFV is mostly one-off instances of physical violence.

Fact: DFV is a pattern of control that may or may not include physical violence.

Violence against women with disability includes exploitation of vulnerabilities which may be well hidden.

Myth: DFV is not very common, it only happens to certain 'types' of people.

Fact: DFV is a global problem which can impact anyone. Women with disability, LGBTIQ+ people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds experience challenges that can heighten the likelihood, severity, and impact of DFV.

Myth: DFV is normal in some cultural groups.

Fact: Some groups face a higher risk of being subjected to DFV. This does not mean DFV should be normalised or is acceptable within these diverse groups.

Use anti-violence messaging to challenge drivers

Driver	Example	Message
Victim blaming	She is so high maintenance, such a burden, probably deserved it.	Women with disability have a right to safety, respect and equality.
Excusing the perpetrator of violence	He must have been stressed out taking care of her.	Violence is a choice. Lots of people feel stressed and they manage without becoming violent.
Deficit language	Women with disability are vulnerable to violence.	Women with disability are targeted for violence using their vulnerabilities. Deficit based language suggests that a person's disability is a reason for violence against them.

Trivialising violence

He was just being a bit rough – probably having a bad day. Violence against women is not ok, not ever.

Challenge the condoning of violence against women with disability.

Challenge stereotypes about women with disability

Promote women with disability independence and decision making.

Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships.

Tip

One in 20 Australian’s believe violence against women may be justified.

