# Driver: 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 a lesser impact.

Examples of condoning of violence against women with disabilities include:

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

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.