

GBV AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

CONTEXT

People with disabilities may experience both gender-based and disability-based violence, which puts them at a very high risk of violence.

Intimate partner violence is more prevalent amongst persons with a disability.

Women with physical and cognitive disabilities experience violence two to three times more often than women living without disabilities.

60% of women with a disability experience some form of violence.¹

FORMS OF GBV COMMON TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Violations of privacy
- Strip searches
- Restraints
- Solitary confinement
- Forced abortion
- Forced sterilization
- Abuse by institutional caretakers and/or other residents
- Destruction of equipment and devices

1 Disabled Women's Network of Canada, *Factsheet: Women with Disabilities and Violence*, (2014).

- Denial or withholding of services, equipment, or medications
- Threats of being institutionalized

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SUPPORT

- Lack of access to information about services
- Difficulty making contact with services
- Difficulty accessing transportation
- Difficulty with communication
- Being prevented from using a necessary assistive device (e.g. cane or wheelchair)
- Fear of institutionalization
- Fear of losing benefits (housing, welfare, etc.)
- Fear of leaving their abuser (emotional, financial, or physical dependence)
- Fear of losing custody of children

WHEN INTERVIEWING/WRITING ABOUT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, REMEMBER TO

- Acknowledge any stereotypes or prejudices you may have intentionally or unintentionally learned.
- Treat the individual as you would any other person. Avoid patronizing terms.
- Ensure that people with developmental/intellectual disabilities can understand the information and questions. Avoid jargon, technical language, or idioms.

- Provide alternative formats in interviewing. If the person has communication disabilities, make sure to accommodate them.
- Offer interpreters for people who are deaf.
- Ask the individual if they have access needs — don't assume anything.
- Allow extra time for interviews.

LANGUAGE TIPS²

Type of Disability	Don't say	Instead, say, "a person..."
Visual Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The blind ▪ The visually impaired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ who is blind ▪ with vision loss
Hearing Loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The deaf ▪ The hearing impaired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ who is deaf ▪ who is deafened ▪ who is hard of hearing
Deaf-Blind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deaf and dumb ▪ Deaf mute ▪ The deaf-blind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ who is deaf-blind

Type of Disability	Don't say	Instead, say, "a person..."
Physical Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The cripple ▪ Crippled ▪ Lamé ▪ Physically challenged ▪ Confined to a wheelchair ▪ Wheelchair bound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ with a disability ▪ with a physical disability ▪ with arthritis ▪ who uses a wheelchair (or a walker or a scooter)
Speech or Language Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stutterer ▪ Mute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ who stutters ▪ who is non-speaking ▪ with a communication disability

Type of Disability	Don't say	Instead, say, "a person..."
Mental Health or Psychosocial Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crazy ▪ Insane ▪ Lunatic ▪ Psycho ▪ Mental ▪ Mental patient ▪ Maniac ▪ Neurotic ▪ Psychotic ▪ Unsound mind ▪ Schizophrenic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ with a mental illness ▪ with a mental disability ▪ with a mood disorder (for example, a person with bipolar disorder) ▪ with a personality disorder (for example, a person with an antisocial personality disorder) ▪ with an anxiety disorder (for example, a person with obsessive-compulsive disorder) ▪ with schizophrenia

Type of Disability	Don't say	Instead, say, "a person..."
Learning Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The learning disabled ▪ The learning disordered ▪ The dyslexic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ with a learning disability or people with learning disabilities ▪ with dyslexia
Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mentally retarded ▪ Idiot ▪ Simple ▪ Retarded ▪ Feeble-minded ▪ Imbecile ▪ Mongoloid ▪ Mongolism ▪ Downs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ with an intellectual disability ▪ with a developmental disability ▪ with Down Syndrome

LOCAL DISABILITY ORGANIZATIONS

Disability Alliance of BC

<http://disabilityalliancebc.org/>

Inclusion BC

<https://inclusionbc.org/>

Canadian National Institute for the Blind

<https://cnib.ca>

Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

<https://www.widhh.com>

Developed in consultation with Karen Martin, [Disability Alliance BC](#)

FURTHER READING

equalpress.ca/people-with-disabilities 