



Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) Update Report May/June 2006

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) is the peak organisation for women with all types of disabilities in Australia. It is a not-for-profit organisation constituted and driven by women with disabilities. It is the only organisation of its kind in Australia and one of only a very small number internationally. WWDA is inclusive and does not discriminate against any disability. WWDA is unique, in that it operates as a national disability organisation; a national women's organisation; and a national human rights organisation (more information about WWDA can be found at the organisation's extensive website: www.wwda.org.au). Please find below a brief Update Report from WWDA for the months of May/June 2006. If you have any questions, or would like more information on anything in this report, please email Carolyn or Angela at: wwda@wwda.org.au.

Contents:

1. Submission to the Federal Government's 'Reducing Red Tape' Initiative
 2. Submission to the Senate Inquiry into Women in Sport and Recreation in Australia
 3. Resource Manual on Violence Against Women With Disabilities Project - Update
 4. Advancement through Advocacy for Women With Disabilities Project - Update
 5. Senate Inquiry into the Commonwealth/State/Territory Disability Agreement
 6. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Update
 7. 2006 CLW Leadership Achievement Award For Women
 8. Telecommunications Consumer Representation Grant Project
 9. 14th Attorney-General's NGO Forum on Domestic Human Rights
 10. WomenSpeak Face-to-Face meetings in Melbourne
 11. International Women's Development Agency Symposium - Canberra
 12. Workplace Training Advisory of Australia "Australian Women & Leadership Forum"
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1. Submission to the Federal Government's 'Reducing Red Tape' Initiative

The Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) has undertaken a process to focus on reducing red tape whilst at the same time maintaining appropriate standards of transparency and accountability for government. FaCSIA is looking at how its programs and processes might be streamlined to increase consistency and reduce unnecessary variations. Some areas which have already been identified are:

- standardising reporting requirements, financial and other types of reports, including performance frameworks;
- standardising funding arrangements, including standard funding agreements and applications;
- consistency in review activities.

WWDA recently provided a written submission to the *'Reducing Red Tape'* Initiative. WWDA's detailed submission addressed a number of issues under the themes: Funding Processes & Related Issues; Stakeholder Relations; Reporting Processes & Issues. WWDA's Submission also contained a wide range of suggestions for consideration in relation to the concerns we identified. Some of the main issues WWDA raised in the Submission included:

- The need for three year funding cycles;
- Development of consistent processes and procedures throughout FaCSIA for the administration of grant funding;
- Improved timing of payment of grant installments;
- The need for a centralized point with FaCSIA which acts as the one coordinating point for peak bodies and organisations funded by FaCSIA;
- Improved communication on the part of FaCSIA;
- Development of standard minimum timeframe standards for FaCSIA Reviews, Inquiries, Consultations;
- Reporting requirements must be streamlined and simplified.

A copy of WWDA's Submission to the *'Reducing Red Tape'* Initiative will soon be available on WWDA's website. If anyone would like a copy of the Submission emailed to them, please contact the WWDA Office via email on: wwda@wwda.org.au

2. Submission to the Senate Inquiry into Women in Sport and Recreation in Australia

The Australian Government recently undertook a Senate Inquiry into Women in Sport and Recreation in Australia. The Inquiry, conducted by the Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Committee, is to be reported on to the Australian Parliament by September 2006. The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry include:

- the health benefits of women participating in sport and recreation activities;
- the accessibility for women of all ages to participate in organised sport, fitness and recreation activities, with additional reference to state and federal programs;
- the portrayal of women's sport in the media;
- women in leadership roles in sport.

In late May, WWDA provided a written Submission to this Senate Inquiry. WWDA addressed the Terms of Reference in the context of women with disabilities and sport/recreation in Australia. WWDA's Submission noted, in part, the failure of the Australian Government (past and present) to collect any baseline data on any aspect of the lives of women with disabilities. This neglect was noted by the United Nations Commission (for the) Elimination (of all forms of) Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) concluding comments on the Australian Government 2000 and 2004 Reports to the Commission on the Status of Women. It was noted that the Australian Government lacks research and data on women with disabilities and that this group is also marginalised by their lack of access to health programs. Both these oversight are pertinent considerations in any examination of the participation of women with disabilities in sport, fitness and recreation activities. The benefits to individuals, communities and society, and to the alleviation of costs to the community cannot be examined in either a quantitative or qualitative way because of this lack of research and data.

WWDA's Submission contained several recommendations, including:

- Pro-active programs targeting women with disabilities are needed which cater for sport, fitness and recreation activities at a community level.

- A publicity campaign is instigated to encourage commercial fitness establishments and community groups to develop integrated sport, fitness and recreation programs for women with disabilities.
- A Federal Government incentive scheme be instigated to encourage programs which enable women with disabilities to train as leaders, coaches and fitness instructors.
- A Federal Government sport inclusion incentive program be instituted. This program could be similar to the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership Awards scheme, and must include a component for inclusion of women with disabilities.

A copy of WWDA's Submission to the '*Senate Inquiry into Women in Sport and Recreation in Australia*' will soon be available on WWDA's website. If anyone would like a copy of the Submission emailed to them, please contact the WWDA Office via email on: wwda@wwda.org.au

3. Resource Manual on Violence Against Women With Disabilities Project - Update

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) is currently undertaking a national project under the Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault funding program (Australian Government, Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs). WWDA's project is focusing on the development and production of a Resource Manual on Violence Against Women With Disabilities.

The information WWDA is incorporating into the Resource Manual includes:

- Information for women's refuges and crisis services about how to develop accessible services and programs;
- Information about violence against women with disabilities – for women with disabilities; service providers; and the broader community;
- A comprehensive literature review, including an annotated bibliography of published literature on the issue;
- An annotated bibliography of resource materials worldwide;
- Narratives, poetry, and artwork from women with disabilities who have experienced violence including strategies they used to break the cycle;
- A guide to services and support at national, state/territory and regional levels.

This information will be presented in a series of booklets, with accompanying accessible versions on CD Rom.

WWDA has recently completed a Progress Report on the Project, which details progress to date against the Project Plan. If anyone would like a copy of the Progress Report on the Project emailed to them, please contact the WWDA Office via email on: wwda@wwda.org.au.

WWDA is currently seeking input from women with disabilities to contribute their stories and artworks for inclusion into the Resource Manual. A flier is attached to this Update Bulletin, and we would appreciate your assistance in disseminating the flier.

4. Advancement through Advocacy for Women With Disabilities Project - Update

The overall aim and long term goal of this project is to improve the status of women with disabilities through systemic advocacy. The major objective of the Project is: 'to enhance WWDA's capacity to promote the participation of women with disabilities in all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life.' Specifically, the Project will:

- Develop systems and processes whereby women with disabilities can be identified, trained and recruited to act as advocates to improve the status of women with disabilities;
- Develop the necessary tools to support women with disabilities in their representative and advocacy roles;
- Research and identify representation, leadership and systemic advocacy opportunities for women with disabilities.

The first information dissemination phase of the Project is completed. The call for women with disabilities to register with WWDA as potential representatives has been keenly answered. There are now 80 women on the register, coming from a diverse range of locations, including all capital cities, and regional and rural centres.

We continue to explore the most economic and efficient way of registering applicants directly online. As an adjunct to this exercise, negotiations have been opened with the Commonwealth Women on Boards register directors, and with the State/Territory offices of similar registers to have disability included as an option for disclosure when women with disabilities register for mainstream representative work.

Our thanks go to Sheila King in Hervey Bay who is contacting consumer advisory bodies, both government and non government, Australia-wide to build up our matching Database of potential representative positions. Louise Bannister has collected a number of exemplars of consumer organisations' policies, protocols and procedures for representatives, is evaluating them, has obtained copyright permission to adapt them, and will soon start drafting the WWDA papers.

In response to enquiries, the fledgling register has already been used to make two 'matches' for short term representation work in participation at strategic forums. If you would like to be on the Register, or are a member of or secretariat to an advisory body or board, please contact Project Officer, Sue Salthouse on : 02 6291 6842 or sudata@optusnet.com.au.

This Project is funded by the Commonwealth under the Women's Leadership and Development Program from the Office for Women.

5. Senate Inquiry into the Commonwealth/State/Territory Disability Agreement

On 11 May 2006 the Australian Senate announced an Inquiry into an examination of the funding and operation of the Commonwealth-State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA). The Inquiry, being undertaken by the Community Affairs References Committee, is to report its findings to the Senate by 7 December 2006.

The Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) provides the national framework for the delivery, funding and development of specialist disability services for people with disabilities. Under the three agreements signed to date (the first being in 1991) all parties are responsible for funding specialist services for people with disabilities:

- the Australian Government has responsibility for the planning, policy setting and management of specialised employment assistance;
- state and territory governments have similar responsibilities for accommodation support, community support, community access and respite; and
- support for advocacy and print disability is a shared responsibility.

Through the Agreement, the Australian, State and Territory Governments strive to enhance the quality of life experienced by people with disabilities through assisting them to live as valued and participating members of the community. Under the current agreement, all Ministers with responsibility for disability services agree to pursue five strategic policy priorities through the Agreement. These are to:

- strengthen access to mainstream and generic services for people with disabilities;
- strengthen across government linkages;
- strengthen individuals and families;
- improve long-term strategies to respond to, and manage demand for, specialist disability services; and,
- improve accountability, performance reporting and quality of specialist disability services.

The terms of reference for the Inquiry into the funding and operation of the Commonwealth-State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) include:

- an examination of the intent and effect of the three CSTDAs to date;
- the appropriateness or otherwise of current Commonwealth/State/Territory joint funding arrangements, including an analysis of levels of unmet needs and, in particular, the unmet need for accommodation services and support;
- an examination of the ageing/disability interface with respect to health, aged care and other services, including the problems of jurisdictional overlap and inefficiency; and
- an examination of alternative funding, jurisdiction and administrative arrangements, including relevant examples from overseas.

WWDA will be aiming to submit a written Submission to this Inquiry.

Closing date for the receipt of submissions is 4 August 2006. For further details contact:

Committee Secretary

Phone: (02) 6277 3515

Fax: (02) 6277 5829.

E-mail: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

6. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Update

The seventh session of the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee negotiating the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held from 16 January-3rd February 2006. The Australian delegation which attended the seventh session comprised representatives of the Attorney-General's Department, the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, and the disability sector. The delegation participated in negotiations, making contributions to the discussion of issues such as the requirement for reasonable accommodation, education, guardianship and substituted decision-

making regimes, international monitoring and the recognition of those experiencing multiple disadvantages.

At the end of the seventh session, the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee made some useful closing remarks, and released a revised copy of the draft text of the Convention which takes account of the discussion and negotiations at that session. The Chair's closing remarks can be found at:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/ahc7chairclose.htm>

The revised working text of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities can be found at:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/ahc7ann2rep.htm>

The eighth session of the Ad Hoc Committee has been scheduled for 16-25 August 2006. The Chair has made it clear that the eighth session will only deal with articles that have issues remaining, and settled matters will not be revisited for discussion. The articles with 'difficult' issues remaining include:

Article 12 – Equal recognition as a person before the law;

Article 17 – Protecting the integrity of the person;

Article 25 – Health;

Article 34 – International monitoring

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) has concerns regarding the Australian Government's position on Article 34 – International monitoring. The position of Australian delegations to sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee to date, has been to NOT support a complaints mechanism in the final Convention. This position is on the basis that *'many of the rights are duplicated in other Conventions with existing complaints mechanisms, and the establishment of an additional complaints mechanism is not in accordance with Australia's treaty body reform objectives'* (Attorney General's Department & Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, June 2006).

WWDA **does not support** the Australian Government's position. It is clear that despite the existence of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and in fact, other human rights treaties, women with disabilities the world over continue to experience serious violations of their human rights, as well as failures to promote and fulfill their rights.

The Optional Protocol to CEDAW was adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly on 6 October 1999. The Optional Protocol contains two procedures: a communications procedure allowing individuals, or groups of individuals, to submit claims of violations of rights to the Committee on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women; and an inquiry procedure, enabling the Committee to initiate inquiries into situations of grave or systemic violations of women's rights. Individuals may make communications only if the nation concerned is a party to the protocol. As of September 2005, there were 76 signatories to the Optional Protocol. The Australian Government has, to date, refused to sign the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, meaning that women with disabilities in Australia have effectively been locked out of using an enforcement mechanism to investigate violations of their human rights.

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) believes that the final UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities MUST contain a complaints mechanism, and has communicated this in writing to the Australian Government.

7. Congratulations to Louise Bannister - 2006 CLW Leadership Achievement Award For Women

The Australian virtual Centre for Leadership for Women (CLW)'s Leadership Achievement Award was established in 2005 to recognise women in the community who use their own initiative to create and implement projects for the benefit of the community and in collaboration with the community. These individuals are recognised by CLW as Self-Appointed Leaders. This Award is unique in that it is a nation wide award for women who take on voluntary leadership roles in the community. The Leadership Achievement Award was free and open to all Australian women 18 years and above. It was sponsored by Fernwood Women's Health Club, motherInc.com.au and Living Now Magazine.

WWDA's congratulations go to Louise Bannister (WWDACT) who was one of the three finalists in the 2006 CLW Leadership Achievement Award for Women. Louise was recognized for her contribution to and establishment of the *Well and Able* pilot program. Louise forged a partnership between WWDACT, the *YMCA of Canberra*, and the *Women's Centre for Health Matters (WCHM)*, who were successful in obtaining a grant through the ACT Government's Community Inclusion Fund. The six month pilot program (May-November 2005) sought to integrate women with impaired mobility and able-bodied women in a weekly exercise class and social activity program which included healthy lunches and guest speaker sessions. The success of the *Well and Able* program was recognised on the International Day for People with Disabilities when it won the *2005 Rhodium Chief Minister's Inclusion Award* for the best program for a community organisation, and the overall award for *Excellence in Inclusion* in the ACT. As part of her ongoing commitment to the sustainability of the *Well and Able* program, Louise has successfully completed a Certificate III and IV in fitness through the *Australian Institute of Fitness (AIF)*. She received a scholarship from the AIF and a grant from *ACT Women's Sports and Recreation Grant Program* in order to undertake the necessary training.

To view Louise's profile go to:

<http://www.leadershipforwomen.com.au/CLW%20Leadership%20Award/Louise%20Bannister.htm>

and to learn about the other finalists go to:

http://www.leadershipforwomen.com.au/CLW%20Leadership%20Award/clw_leadership_achievement_award_WINNERS.htm

8. Telecommunications Consumer Representation Grant Project

8.1. New Grant Application

The Telecommunications Consumer Representation Grant Project (TEL06) has run for just nine months this time, as the Department of Communications Information Technology & the Arts (DCITA) re-orientates itself to allocating grants on a financial year basis. WWDA has made application for a grant for the next financial year. If successful, it will be our 7th consecutive grant. WWDA thanks go to the 7 members of the WWDA Telecommunications Group who, between them, now have amassed a great deal of consumer expertise on telecommunications and communications matters – Louise Bannister, Margaret Cooper, Margherita Coppolino; Joyce Deering, Jo-An Partridge, Christine Tilly and Sue Salthouse. WWDA is the only disability organisation involved in communications representation, and one of very few consumer organisations, which has developed and empowered a team of people for representation in this

field. This representation model gives our organisation considerable strength and expertise across the country.

8.2. Guideline G: 586 - 2006

In early July 2006, the Australian Communication Industry Forum (ACIF) will publish for public comment Guideline G: 586-2006 *Disability Matters: Access to Communications Technologies for People with Disabilities and the Elderly*. This Guideline is of great importance in the industry because it sets the parameters that consideration of people with disabilities should underpin every facet of the industry in the development of products, services and information. Sue Salthouse and Gunela Astbrink have undertaken the re-writing of G: 586 with the secretariat support of Holly Raiche from ACIF.

8.3. ACIF Registration process

The findings of a review of ACIF undertaken in 2005 recommended that the process of engaging consumer participation needed to be formalised. ACIF has completed the protocols for registration of consumer organisations. It will now refer to this register to select representatives to its two consumer advisory councils – the Disability Council and the Consumer Council. The ACIF Disability Council is most likely to retain its current 9-member council in the immediate future. The Consumer Council is in a re-election process at present with numbers to be reduced from 15 to 9 members.

8.4. ACIF Disability Council Meeting

The quarterly meeting of ACIF DC was held in mid May. Discussion about the adequacy of current regulation and rollout of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and Video over Internet Protocol (Video oIP) phone services continues. At this meeting we also discussed a draft international agreement on standards for real time Text over IP and other packet switch protocols which will enable much more accessible and equitable communications for people with a range of disabilities. Consumer issues including the ongoing discussion on the draft of a Single Consumer Code continue, along with consideration of industry interactions with the Australian Communication Management Authority. The meeting offers an excellent opportunity for update from DC members and ACIF personnel on international standards. A full report on the meeting is available from WWDA on request.

8.5. Disability Equipment Program

DCITA commissioned Allen Consulting Pty Ltd to undertake an Australia-wide review of the Disability Equipment Program (DEP). WWDA understands that their consultancy brief limited them to conducting a maximum of 8 focus groups and a number of interviews with key informants. A total of 64 people attended the forums. Sue Salthouse met with Consultant Tanuja Doss in mid-May to discuss a number of different DEP models in use around the world. Allen Consulting noted that the WWDA 2003-04 publication *Consumer Issues in Telecommunications* provided them with comprehensive consumer information in a number of areas under investigation.

9. 14th Attorney-General's Non-Government Organisation Forum on Domestic Human Rights

Representatives from about 40 non-government organisations, plus Human Rights Commissioner (Graeme Innes), Acting Disability Discrimination Commissioner (Elena Dow) and Racial Discrimination Commissioner (Tom Calma) were represented at the Forum on 2 June. Sue

Salthouse represented WWDA. The forum was attended by about 15 staff from the Attorney-General's (A-G's) Department. Proceedings commenced with an update from the Human Rights Branch (Matt Minogue, Assistant Secretary) and the Office of International Law (Greg Manning, Assistant Secretary). This was followed by an update of HREOC activities. Of topical mention was the Virgin Blue Airline's announcement of its highly discriminatory new travel policy for wheelchair users, and the consequent HREOC action taken to have amendments to the policy made as a first step. An HREOC-airline industry meeting has also been set up with a view to even better rationalisation of the policy and prevention of a repetition of similar discriminatory actions. The forum was not as tightly structured as in previous years and ad hoc questions were taken from the delegates throughout the day. Attorney General, Phillip Ruddock, attended a 2-hour session of questions between morning tea and lunch time.

A paper giving a summary of the status of all International Instruments on Human Rights was tabled and briefly discussed.

Issues raised by delegates were confined to more insular topics of interest to the organisations represented. Australia's non ratification of UN Conventions was not raised, nor was wider community issues such as the erosion of Human Rights under anti-terrorism legislation, treatment of asylum seekers, or excision of territories.

Nevertheless the forum offered a unique opportunity to make contact, and have more in-depth discussion with key personnel from the Disability Section in the A-G's Department. Forum proceedings will be available in due course.

10. WomenSpeak Face-to-Face meetings in Melbourne

WWDA is a member of the WomenSpeak secretariat funded through the Office for Women (Department of Family & Community Services and Immigration Affairs [FaCSIA]). It holds two face-to-face meetings per year, with the first one for 2006 being held over 4 days in Melbourne (June 1-4).

The first half-day of the get-together was devoted to discussion of childcare issues affecting women in our society and impinging on achievement of an acceptable work life balance. WWDA did not have a representative at this meeting. Due to representatives' illness, WWDA was also unable to attend the second day of the conference. This day was dedicated to discussion of WomenSpeak issues, preceded by a morning of update sessions from member organisations. The topics covered included internal management issues, International issues and a facilitated session on building relationships and consulting with Indigenous community groups.

Both Sue Salthouse and Vicki Alipasinopolous attended the third day which was devoted to a Cross-Secretariats meeting involving the four women secretariats (WomenSpeak, National Rural Women's Coalition, Security4Women, and the Australian Women's Coalition). Commencing with an address from Kerry Flanagan, Director of the Office for Women, the day continued with a tight schedule in which a number of panels presented information followed by a brief open discussion session. Whilst the panels were informative, this structure left little time for strategic planning on important issues. Topics covered included: Economic Security for Women; Family Violence; Health Issues for the Women of Australia (on which panel Sue S gave a short presentation on the complex health needs of women with disabilities and participated in panel discussion); and International Issues.

The final day half day conference was devoted to a meeting with personnel from the Office for Women.

The women's groups benefit from these meetings in being able to formulate united strategies on matters of importance, e.g. a working group was formed to follow up the work from the 2005 *What Women Want* initiatives on WorkChoices and Welfare to Work; and a press release on family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was drawn up by indigenous representative Dot Henry and endorsed and dispatched by a large number of participating organisations several days after the forum.

11. International Women's Development Agency Symposium - Canberra

The International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) held a 2-day Symposium on *'The harmonisation of gender indicators'* in Canberra in mid-June. The project was funded by the Commonwealth from the Office for Women as one of WomenSpeak's key projects for the year. Four WomenSpeak delegates attended. The keynote speaker and facilitator, Dr Geeta Rao Gupta, is a former UN employee, and was the Coordinator of the UN Millennium Project Taskforce Report on *'Gender Equality'* (Millennium Development Goal #3) and is now President of the International Centre for Research on Women (Washington). Guest Speaker at the Conference Dinner was Mr. Salil Sheety a leading authority, and chronicler of activities on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was sobering to note how little the MDGs impacted on Australian society in 2005, when so many other countries held large and repeated demonstrations of support and solidarity for the MDG aims.

The calibre of all speakers was superb, and a wide range of aspects of women's development was covered. There was particular emphasis on development issues in the Pacific Region, and practitioners' theories were grounded by the contribution from the 3 delegates from the South Pacific Commission who attended. Issues facing women in the developed world are similar in scope, but not in severity to those faced by women in emerging economies.

The position of women with disabilities in emerging economies was not raised until a panel session on education, when it was pointed out that women in developing countries are not a homogenous group and in fact consist of numerous indigenous sub-groups, a range of socio economic and education levels, and including predominantly marginalised and excluded group of women with disabilities. It was gratifying to see that all these groups, particularly women with disabilities, were included in the summary sessions on the second day.

It should be noted that an integral part of MDG #3 is the necessity to collect gender disaggregated data, that this is applicable world wide, and is a recommended practice for State/Territory and Commonwealth Governments. It was also one of the recommendations to the Australian Government from the 2005 UN Review of the Australian Report to the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

More information on the UN Millennium Project can be viewed at: <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org>.

12. Workplace Training Advisory of Australia ‘Australian Women & Leadership Forum’

Two Management Committee members have attended these Forums. Sheila King attended the Forum conducted in Hervey Bay and Sue Salthouse attended the Canberra Forum.

Information about the Workplace Training Advisory of Australia (WTAA) may be found at: <http://www.wtaa.com.au/>.

The forums aim to give women an insight into workplace dynamics, elements of leadership; contemporary challenges for women in leadership, analysis of differences in gender styles with potential conflicts and complementarities, conflict resolution, importance of mentoring and role models, and career planning.

WWDA has initiated discussion with the WTAA to explore whether a workable long term relationship with the company may assist us in giving WWDA members leadership training and support, in a process where the company develops a disability policy with positive action to make forums fully accessible and affordable for women with disabilities.



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Women
With
Disabilities
Australia
(WWDA)

Survivors of Violence – Send Us Your Stories!!!!

For women with disabilities the incidence of domestic, workplace and community violence is high - too high - and at least double that of able bodied women. Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA), as the peak organisation for women with all types of disabilities in Australia, has the elimination of that violence as one of its major long term objectives. WWDA is currently working on a Project to develop a '**Resource Manual on Violence Against Women With Disabilities**'. The Manual will have one Booklet dedicated to the stories of survivors, to inspire, guide and give hope to our fellow travellers who have yet to break the cycle of violence in their lives.

Wherever you are on this pathway,
send us your stories of survival in Prose, Poetry & Pictures.....

"I was always taught to be grateful for what I've got. Well, I'm bloody sick of being grateful....."

"One day I just found the strength to leave...."

"Sharing my story with other disabled women has given me strength and a sense of belonging....."

By sharing our experiences we can gain strength from one another and find the power to change our circumstances – individually and collectively. Your story, poem, painting, drawing – might be just the catalyst to empower another woman to break the cycle of violence.

So....Get Involved!!!!

Contact:

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PLEASE SEND US YOUR INFORMATION BY END JULY 2006

The development of the Resource Manual on Violence Against Women With Disabilities is made possible through a funding grant from the Department of Families, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) Office for Women. Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) gratefully acknowledges the Australian Government for this support.