



Royal Commission
into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
of People with Disability

Different experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation

Easy Read version



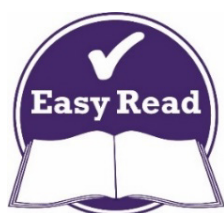
Final Report
Volume 3

How to use this report



The Disability Royal Commission
(the Royal Commission) wrote this report.

When you see the word 'we', it means
the Royal Commission.



We wrote this report in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



This report is a **summary** of Part 3 of our *Final report*.

A summary only includes the most important ideas.



In the *Final report*, Part 3 is called *Nature and extent of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation*.

Bold

Not bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



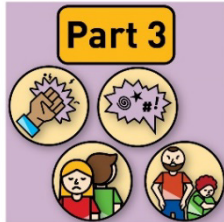
We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 38.



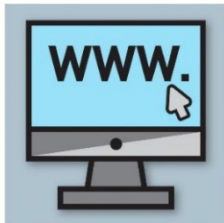
You can ask for help to read this report.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



Our *Final report* is in 12 parts.

This is Part 3 – Nature and extent of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.



You can find the rest of the *Final report* on our website.

www.disability.royalcommission.gov.au



In Part 3 we talk about things that might upset some people.

If you need support, you can contact the services on page 43.

Acknowledgement of Country



We recognise First Nations peoples as the traditional owners of the land we live on – Australia.



They were the first people to live on and use the:

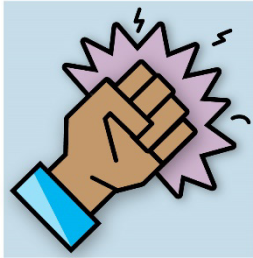
- land
- waters.

What's in Part 3?

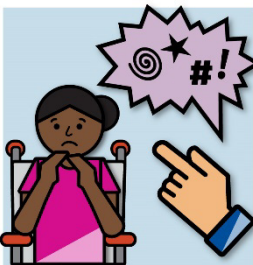
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What's the Disability Royal Commission?

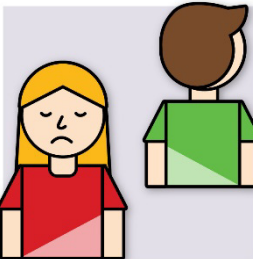
We wanted to work out the best ways to stop people with disability from experiencing:



- **violence** – when someone hurts you physically



- **abuse** – when someone treats you badly



- **neglect** – when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you



- **exploitation** – when someone takes advantage of you.



People with disability should have the same **rights** as everybody else.

Rights are rules that say you can choose how you live your own life.

And they explain how other people must treat you.



On 5 April 2019, the Australian Government created the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

We call it the **Royal Commission**.



A Royal Commission is an official way of looking into a big problem.

It helps us to work out what went wrong and what we need to improve.



The Royal Commission finished on 29 September 2023.



We have shared what we learned.

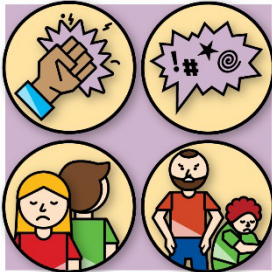


The last thing we need to do is share what we **recommend**.

When we recommend something, we share an idea about how to make things better for people with disability.

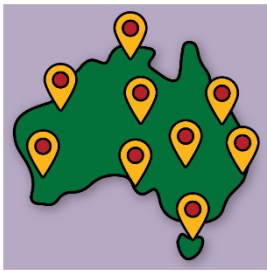
What's Part 3 about?

Part 3 is about how people with disability experience:

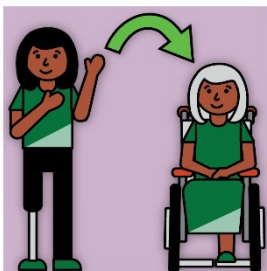


- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.

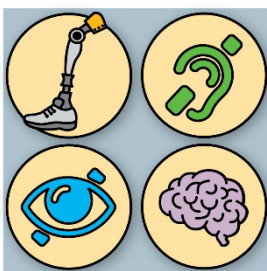
We explain how these experiences can be different for people with disability:



- in different places



- at different times in their lives



- with different disabilities.

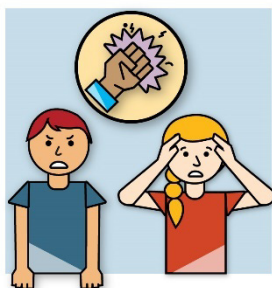
Different types of experiences people can have



People with disability can have many types of bad experiences.

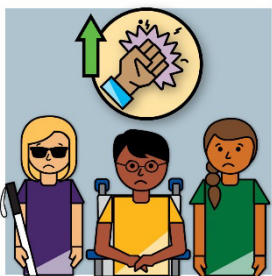
And they can affect people in different ways.

Violence



Violence includes when someone:

- hurts you
- scares you
- controls you.



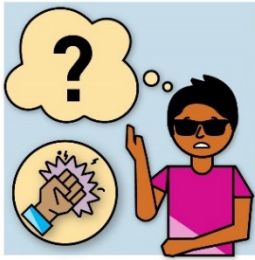
People with disability experience more violence than other people in Australia.

And they experience it more often.



They're also more likely to know the person who hurt them.

4 in 5 people with disability who experience violence know the person who hurt them.



And **nearly half** of people with disability in Australia have experienced violence from someone they don't know.



People with disability are more likely to experience violence in any relationship they have.

This includes their relationships with their:



- partner – like their husband or wife

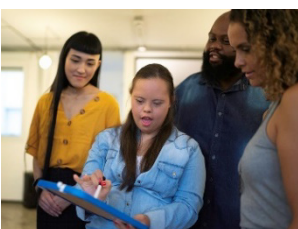


- family.

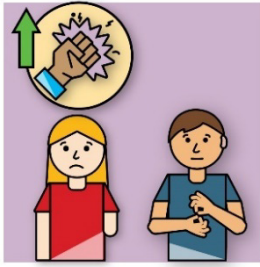
It also includes their relationships with other people, like their:



- friends



- co-workers.

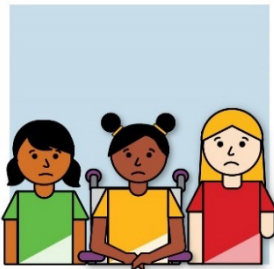


Some people with disability experience more violence than other people with disability.

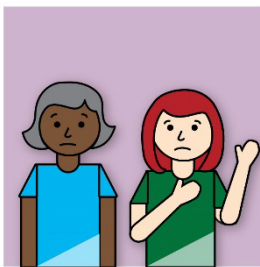
For example:



- First Nations women with disability



- young women with disability



- women with **intellectual disability**.

An intellectual disability affects how you:



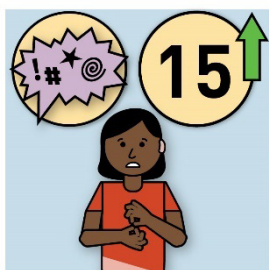
- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do things on your own.

Abuse

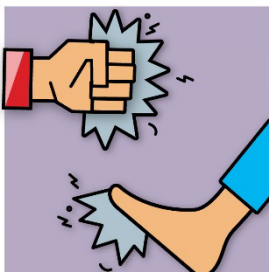


Abuse includes when someone:

- treats you unfairly because of your disability
- says or does something to make you feel bad
- keeps you away from other people.

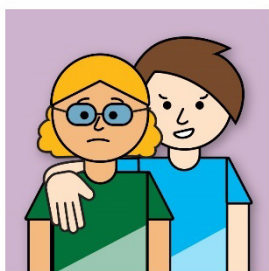


More than half of adults with disability have experienced abuse since the age of 15.



This includes physical abuse.

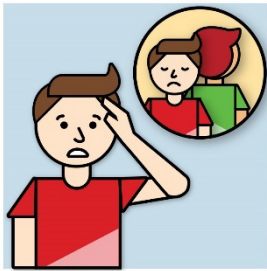
It also includes **sexual abuse**.



Sexual abuse is when someone makes you do sexual things you:

- don't want to do
- are too young to do.

Neglect



People with disability can experience neglect in many ways.



For example, someone who should help them might not make sure they have food or clothes.

They might not help them:



- do things in their day-to-day life

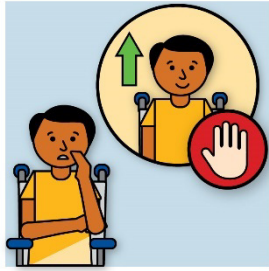


- take part in the community.



Or they might not help them:

- get an education
- get health care.



Neglect also includes not letting someone live in a way that helps them grow and learn.

Or stopping them from making friends.



It is also neglect when someone doesn't keep a person with disability safe from:

- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.

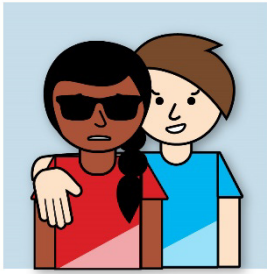
Exploitation



People with disability experience different types of exploitation.



For example, when someone uses the money of a person with disability for themselves.



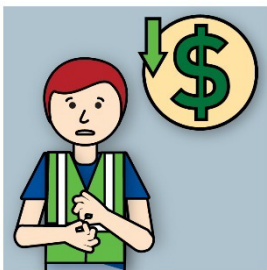
Or when someone makes a person with disability do something sexual that they don't want to do.



These experiences also include when a **provider** gets a person with disability to pay for services that they don't need.



Providers support people by delivering a service.



Exploitation also includes when someone doesn't pay a person with disability enough for the work they do.

How these experiences affect people with disability



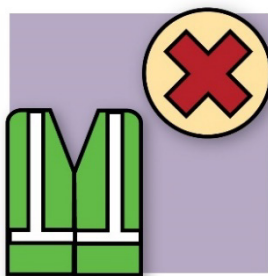
These experiences can affect the lives of people with disability a lot.

It can get worse over time.

And it can affect their whole life.



Every year, around **400** people with intellectual disability die when they could have lived longer.



And **nearly half** of all people with disability old enough to work don't have a job.

This has not changed in 25 years.



We need to keep collecting **data** about the experience of people with disability.

Data includes facts, information and records.



For example, we need more data about how people with disability experience:

- neglect
- exploitation.

People with disability in Australia



In 2018, there were **2.4 million** people with disability in Australia.



This means around **12%** of all Australians had a disability.



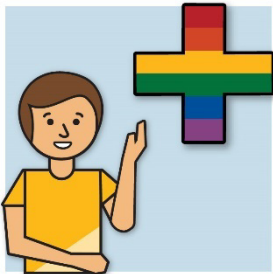
But this changes for different groups of people in the community.



Around **29%** of **LGBTIQA+** adults had a disability.



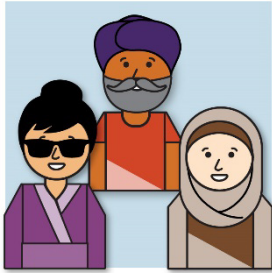
The letters LGBTIQA stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning and asexual.



The '+' is for people who are part of this community but don't talk about themselves using one of these words.



Around **35%** of First Nations adults had a disability.



And around **7%** of **culturally and linguistically diverse** people had a disability.

We just say CaLD people.



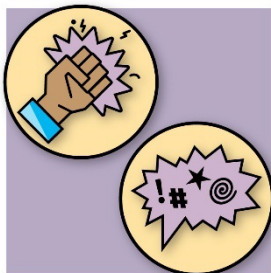
CaLD people:

- come from different cultures and backgrounds
- speak languages other than English.



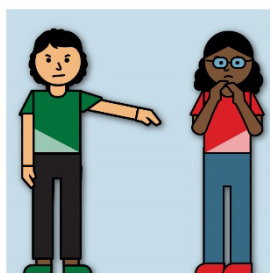
In 2022, there were **573,342** people with disability taking part in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Interpersonal experiences



People with disability are more likely to experience **interpersonal**:

- violence
- abuse.



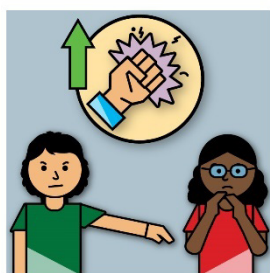
When an experience is interpersonal, it means a person does it to someone else.



Around **1 in 2** people with disability have experienced interpersonal violence.



But only **1 in 3** people without disability have experienced it.



People with disability are more likely to experience all types of interpersonal violence.

And they have these experiences more often than people without disability.

Younger people with disability experience more interpersonal violence than:



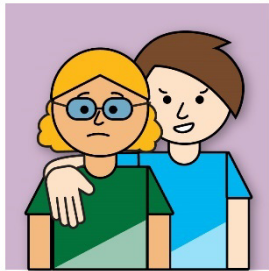
- older people with disability



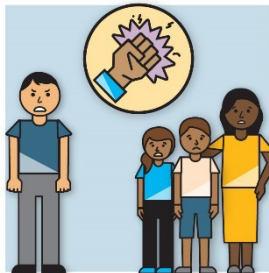
- younger people without disability.

Women and girls with disability

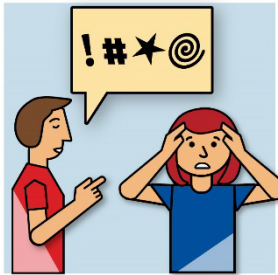
Women with disability experience a lot of:



- sexual violence and abuse



- family and partner violence.



They are also more likely to experience **emotional abuse**.

This includes when someone:

- says mean things or calls them names
- stops them from seeing friends and family.

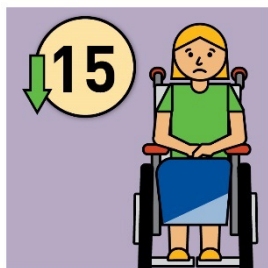
They are more likely to have these experiences than:



- men with disability



- women without disability.

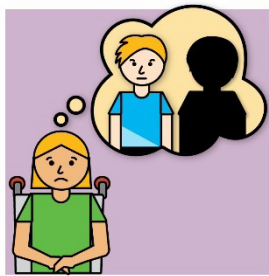


And they are more likely to have these experiences before they turn 15 years old.



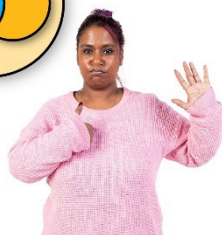
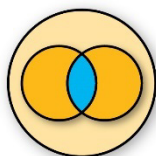
Women with different types of disability are more likely to have these experiences.

For example, women who have an intellectual disability.



Almost all women with disability who experience violence in their life know **at least one** of the people who did it.

Other things that affect these experiences



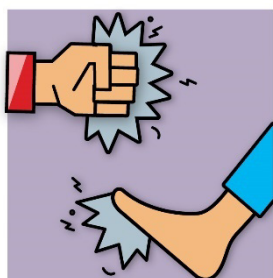
Intersectionality can also affect the experiences that people with disability have.

Intersectionality happens when people treat people with disability differently because of both:

- their disability
- other things about them that they cannot change, like their age or background.



First Nations people with disability



In one year, **1 in 5** First Nations people with disability experienced:

- physical violence
- threats of physical violence.

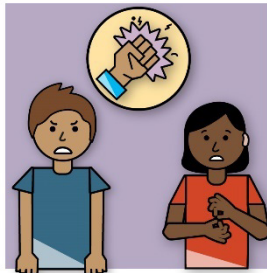


But only **1 in 10** First Nations people without disability experienced this.



From February to April 2020, First Nations women with disability started to experience more violence from their partner.

This was when COVID-19 started to affect Australia.



In this time, **42%** of First Nations women with disability experienced violence from their partner.

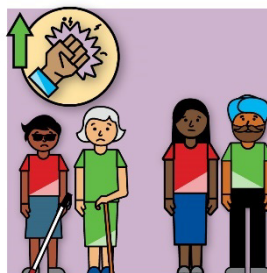


This happened to **16%** of women with disability from other backgrounds.

CaLD people with disability



We need more data about the experiences of CaLD people with disability.

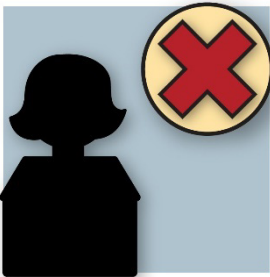


But we know that they experience more violence and abuse than CaLD people without disability.

LGBTIQA+ people with disability



LGBTIQA+ people with disability experience more violence and abuse than other LGBTIQA+ people.



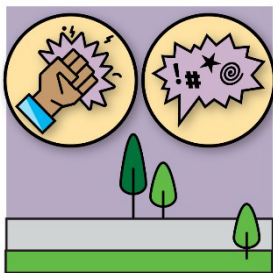
And they are also likely to think about ending their own life.

This is even more likely if they have experienced:



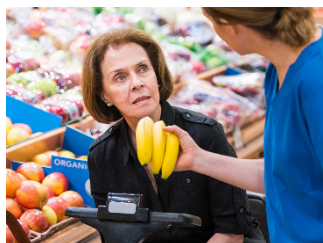
- violence
- abuse
- neglect
- exploitation.

Violence and abuse in public spaces



People with disability often experience violence and abuse in public spaces.

Public spaces include:



- shopping centres

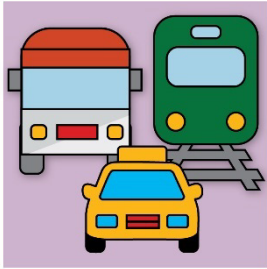


- parks

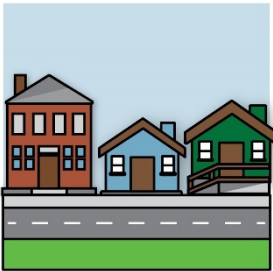


- places people go for social activities.

Public spaces also include:



- public transport



- on the street.



And public spaces also include online spaces, like websites.

People with disability might experience people:

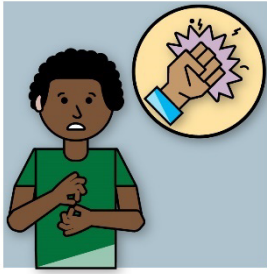


- saying mean things

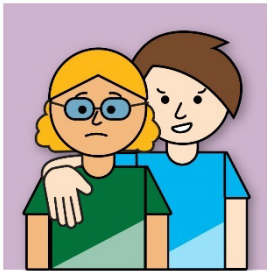


- stalking or following them.

People might also:



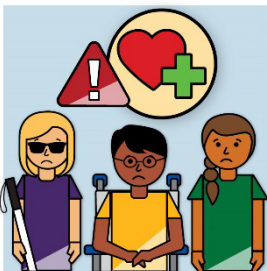
- hurt them



- use sexual violence.



Or people might take pictures or videos of them without asking.



These experiences can affect the health and wellbeing of people with disability.



When people with disability try to avoid these experiences, they can miss out on social activities.
Or chances to work and earn money.

How do people with disability avoid violence and abuse in public spaces?



People with disability often try to avoid people they don't know in public spaces.



They might avoid young people.
Or men.



They might avoid people in groups.
Or people drinking alcohol.

They might also avoid public places, like:



- public transport



- shopping centres.



Or they might avoid places young people go,
like bars.

Things that affect people with disability more than others



The community tries to support people with disability in many ways.

But sometimes these things make life worse for people with disability.

Restrictive practices



Restrictive practices are actions that stop people from:

- moving
- doing what they want.

This includes when someone:



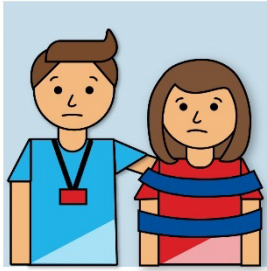
- holds another person's body so they can't move
- makes them take medicine so they are easier to control.

People use restrictive practices to stop people with disability from doing things that might put:



- themselves in danger
- other people in danger.

We call these behaviours of concern.



The NDIS let people use restrictive practices **5.58 million** times between 2021 and 2022.

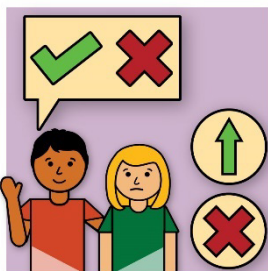


But the NDIS know that people used restrictive practices **1.42 million** times when they shouldn't have.

Substitute decision-making



Substitute decision-making is when someone else makes decisions for a person with disability. For example, a guardian.



People use substitute decision-making too much. And when they don't need to.



This happens a lot to people who take part in the NDIS.

Making legal decisions

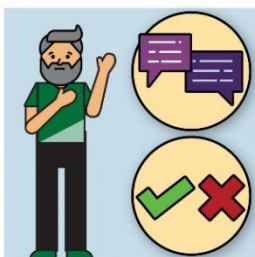


Sometimes the **justice system** will decide that a person can't make legal decisions.

The justice system includes:

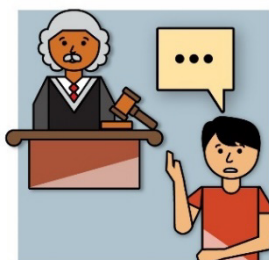


- police
- the courts
- the law
- prisons.



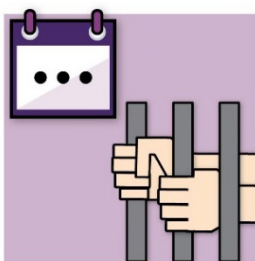
This mostly happens to people with a disability that affects how they:

- communicate
- make decisions.



This can make it hard for the person to:

- stand up for themselves in court
- explain what happened.



And they can stay locked up in prison for longer than they should be.

Segregated living



Segregated living is when people with disability live somewhere that keeps them away from the community.



And they only spend time with:

- other people with disability
- their support workers.



People with disability might be in segregated living because they need support for their day-to-day lives.



But sometimes they have to live there when they don't want or need to.

This can happen because there isn't anywhere else for them to live.



This means they can't take part in the community the way they want to.

And it's a type of abuse and neglect.

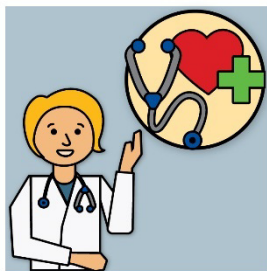
Abuse and neglect in government services



Many people use government services.

People with disability use these services too.

For example:



- health services



- education



- services to help people find a job



- the justice system.



These services help a lot of people.

But they often don't do enough to support people with disability to use them.

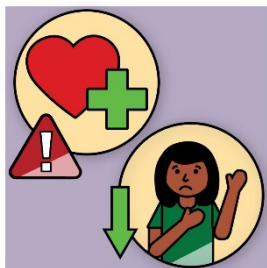


Because of this, it can be hard for people with disability to get good quality services.

And this can stop them from living a good life.



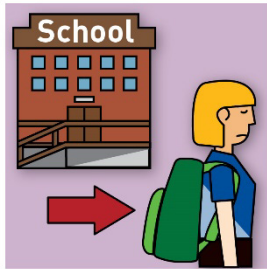
This can affect them in different ways to people without disability.



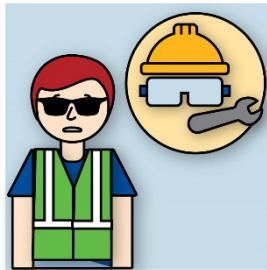
For example, it can mean people with disability:

- have more health problems
- live a shorter life.

Or they might:



- leave school at a younger age



- find it hard to get a job.

It can also make people with disability more likely to:



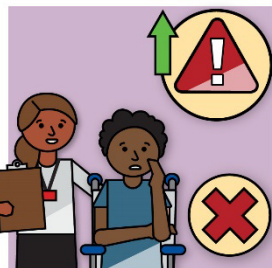
- be the victim of a crime



- commit a crime



- go to prison.



When services don't support First Nations people with disability, these issues can be worse.

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.



Abuse

Abuse is when someone treats you badly.



Culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD)

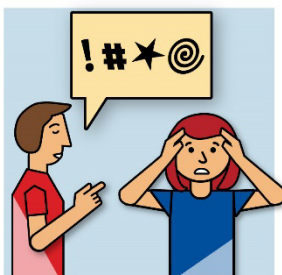
CaLD people:

- come from different cultures and backgrounds
- speak languages other than English.



Data

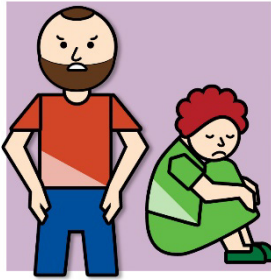
Data includes facts, information and records.



Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse includes when someone:

- says mean things or calls them names
- stops them from seeing friends and family.



Exploitation

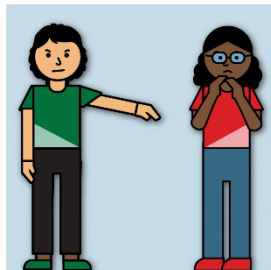
Exploitation is when someone takes advantage of you.

Intellectual disability

An intellectual disability affects how you:



- learn new things
- solve problems
- communicate
- do things on your own.



Interpersonal

When an experience is interpersonal, it means a person does it to someone else.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality happens when people treat people with disability differently because of both:



- their disability
- other things about them that they cannot change, like their age or background.

Justice system



The justice system includes:

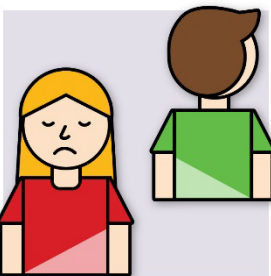
- police
- the courts
- the law
- prisons.

LGBTIQA+



The letters LGBTIQA stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning and asexual.

The '+' is for people who are part of this community but don't talk about themselves using one of these words.



Neglect

Neglect is when someone is not helping you the way they are supposed to help you.



Providers

Providers support people by delivering a service.



Recommend

When we recommend something, we share an idea about how to make things better for people with disability.



Restrictive practices

Restrictive practices are actions that stop people from:

- moving
- doing what they want.



Rights

Rights are rules that say you can choose how you live your own life.

And they explain how other people must treat you.



Royal Commission

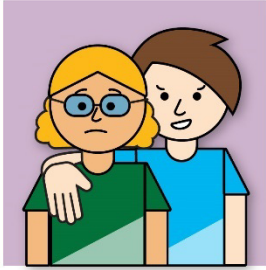
A Royal Commission is an official way of looking into a big problem.

It helps us to work out what went wrong and what we need to fix.



Segregated living

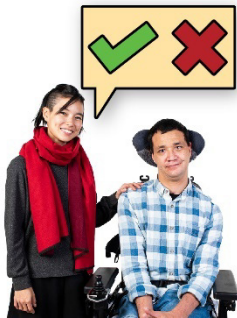
Segregated living is when people with disability live somewhere that keeps them away from the community.



Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone makes you do sexual things you:

- don't want to do
- are too young to do.



Substitute decision-making

Substitute decision-making is when someone else makes decisions for a person with disability.



Summary

A summary only includes the most important ideas.



Violence

Violence is when someone hurts you physically.

Support for you



Lifeline is a service for people at risk of suicide.

This is when someone ends their own life.



You can call Lifeline any time.

13 11 14



You can use Lifeline's online chat to talk to someone.

www.lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat



Beyond Blue is a service that can support you with your mental health.



You can call them any time.

1300 224 636

1800Respect is a phone service for people around Australia who experience:



- domestic and family violence
- sexual violence.



You can call them any time.

1800 737 732



Qlife is a service that supports people in the LGBTIQ+ community with their mental health.



You can call them any day from 3pm to 12am.

1800 184 527

Contact us



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department

The Disability Royal Commission has ended.

If you have questions, you can contact the Attorney-General's Department.



You can call them.

(02) 6141 6666



Or you can use the form on their website.

www.ag.gov.au/about-us/connect-us/contact-us



You can also contact them to make a complaint.

This is when you explain that something:

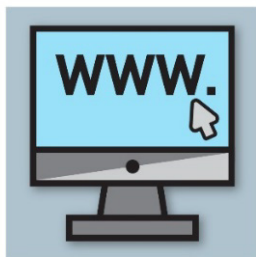
- has gone wrong
- isn't working well.

Support to contact the Attorney-General's Department



You can call the National Relay Service.

133 677



You can visit the Access Hub website to find the right service for you.

www.accesshub.gov.au/services



If you speak a language other than English, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS).

1800 131 450

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Royal Commission
into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and
Exploitation of People with Disability