



Information about the right of women with disabilities to make their own choices about their lives



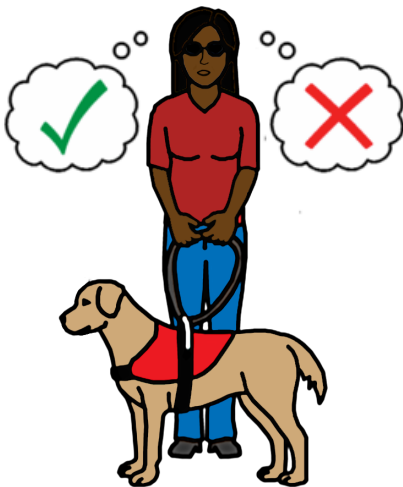
Legal Capacity of Women and Girls with Disabilities



What is this information about?



This information is about women with disabilities.



It is about their right to make their own choices about their lives.



Women with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else.

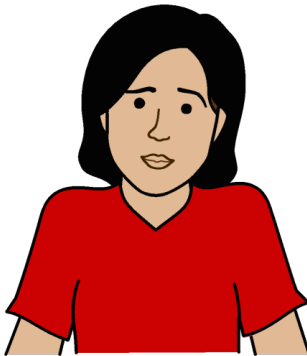
But people often stop women with disabilities from making their own choices and getting their rights.

What problems do women with disabilities face?



Wrong ideas about women with disabilities

Many people have wrong ideas about women with disabilities.



For example, people may think that women with disabilities:

- Cannot make their own choices
- Do not know what they are saying and cannot be trusted



- Do not want sex, relationships or children
- Should not have sex, relationships or children



Women with disabilities are often treated badly or unfairly because of these ideas.



Unfair laws and rules

Many laws and rules in the world still say that women with disabilities do not have the same rights as everyone else.



The laws and rules often stop women with disabilities from:

- Getting their rights
- Making their own choices about their bodies and lives



Making choices for women with disabilities

The law often allows other people to make choices for women with disabilities.



For example, choices about:

- Medical treatment they should have
- Where they live and who they live with
- If they can have sex, relationships and children



Women with disabilities may not have a say about who makes choices for them.

This means that:

- No one asks women with disabilities what they want
- People can choose what they think is best for women with disabilities



People often force women with disabilities to do things they may not want.



For example, people may force women with disabilities to:

- Live in hospitals or homes far away from their families
- Have medical treatment they do not want



Like medical treatment to stop them having children



This can stop women with disabilities from getting their other rights.

For example:

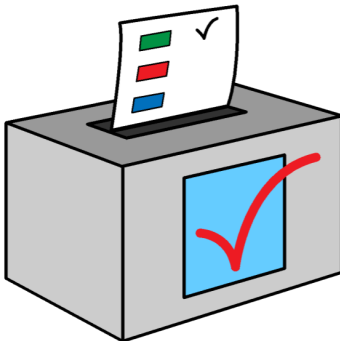
- Their right to take part in the community like everyone else



- Their right to work, get married and have a family



- Their right to choose where to live and who to live with



- Their right to vote and make decisions about the country



- Their right to get help from the police and courts if people stop them getting their rights

Information to help women with disabilities make their own choices



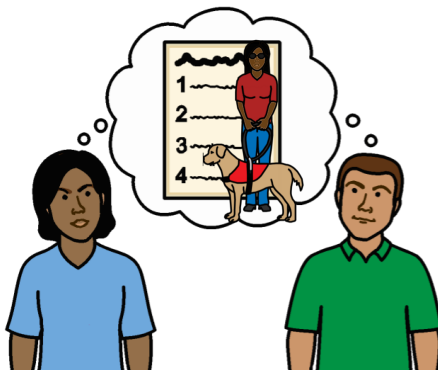
Women with disabilities need good information to help them choose what is best for them.

For example, information about their health, medical treatment and the choices they have.



But health information is often hard to understand.

And health staff may not have the right training to explain things to women with disabilities.



This makes it hard for women with disabilities to make their own choices.

It means other people can make choices for them.

What rights do women with disabilities have?



There are some documents about the rights of people with disabilities and the rights of women and girls.

This includes the right of women with disabilities to make their own choices.



For example:

- There is a document about the rights of people with disabilities.

It is called the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities or CRPD for short.



- There is a document about the rights of women

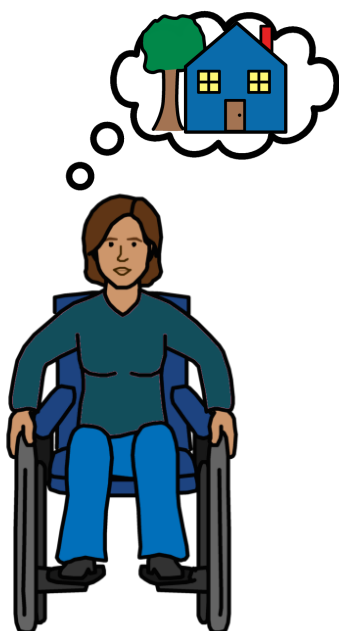
It is called the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women or CEDAW for short.



Many governments have promised to do what these documents say.

What must governments do?

Governments must make sure that:



- They support the right of women with disabilities to make choices about everything in their lives

For example, by making sure that women with disabilities can choose where to live and what to do with their bodies

No one should stop this from happening or make choices for them without them saying yes first.



- Women with disabilities can take action if people stop them making choices or force them to do something

For example, it should be safe and easy for women with disabilities to complain or go to court

Supporting women with disabilities to make their own choices

This is sometimes called supported decision making.



All women with disabilities should get support to make their own choices if they need it.

This includes women with disabilities who need more support.



The support might include:

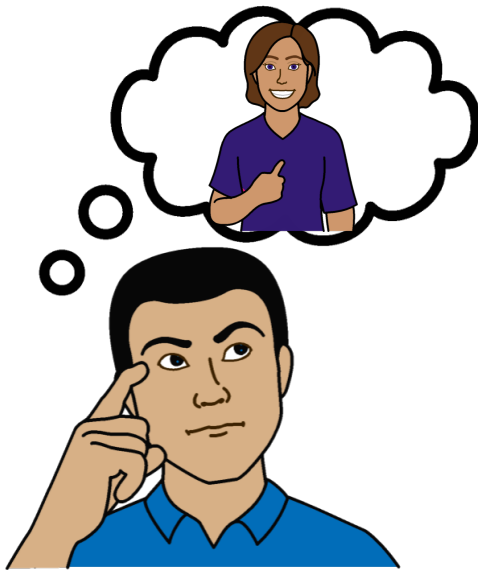
- Information that women with disabilities can understand to help them choose what is best for them



- Computers or equipment to help them say what they want



- Someone to support them to think about what they want



Some women with disabilities may find it very hard to make their own choices.

Other people can support them to make choices.

But the support should always be about what women with disabilities want.

It should never be about what someone else wants or thinks is best.



The support should be free or low cost so that women with disabilities can afford it.



Women with disabilities should be able to stop or change the support if they want to.

Women with disabilities should still get all their rights if they need support to make choices.

For example, they should still be able to get married, have children and vote.



People should get training to help women with disabilities make their own choices.

For example, doctors and people who work in courts, like judges.

What else should happen?



Laws and rules that countries make should say that:

- Women with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else
- Women with disabilities can make their own choices, with support if they need it



Women with disabilities should get information they can understand about their rights.

All services should be easy for women with disabilities to use and take part in.

For example, courts, hospitals and job centres.

