

## Parenting Issues for Women with Disabilities

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Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA), the national peak body representing women with all types of disabilities in Australia, has recently published a Policy Paper entitled 'Parenting Issues for Women with Disabilities in Australia'. WWDA's Policy Paper canvasses issues relating to parenting for women with disabilities in Australia, and stems from the identified concerns of the members of Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA), along with the dearth of Australian research in the area.

The right to found a family and to reproductive freedom is clearly articulated in a number of international human rights treaties to which Australia is a signatory. Yet, for many women with disabilities in Australia who are parents or seeking to become parents, these fundamental human rights are not achievable. Instead, as WWDA's Policy Paper demonstrates, disabled women experience a range of barriers and restrictions in realising their rights to full reproductive freedoms, particularly their right to found and raise a family. These economic, social and environmental barriers and restrictions are many, varied, and entrenched – yet remain largely ignored in Australian family related research, legislation, policies, and services.

WWDA's Policy Paper includes a number of key recommendations to the Australian Government, in particular the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), which is the Australian Government's principal source of advice on social policy. In the context of the Australia Government's recent ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) the key recommendations include the urgent need for a National Public Inquiry into the removal and/or threat of removal of babies and children from parents with intellectual disabilities; parents with mental health illnesses and parents with psychiatric disabilities. The need for the Australian Government to act immediately to investigate and address the barriers to reproductive autonomy and procreative choice for women with disabilities, is also a priority recommendation.

WWDA's Policy Paper 'Parenting Issues for Women with Disabilities in Australia' is available for download from WWDA's website in either PDF or Word format. You can find it at: [www.wwda.org.au/subs2006.htm](http://www.wwda.org.au/subs2006.htm) [1].

Alternatively, if you would prefer a copy emailed to you, please contact WWDA at [wwda@wwda.org.au](mailto:wwda@wwda.org.au) [2] Both the PDF version and the Word version are approx 400 KB in size.

- [Positive women](#)
- [Positive Women's Network](#)
- [pregnancy and childbirth](#)

### Links:

[1] <http://www.wwda.org.au/subs2006.htm>

[2] <mailto:wwda@wwda.org.au>