

Women with disabilities say...

**Equality is having allies who work alongside women with disabilities to take action against sexism and ableism.**



## Tips for allies in the lives of women with disabilities:

1. **Ask questions** of women with disabilities, **listen with empathy**, show up and speak up.
2. **Help** women with disabilities to **remove obstacles** they face due to sexism and ableism.
3. Remind women with disabilities that **you are there** if they need anything.
4. **Follow through** when you offer to help.
5. Provide **verbal encouragement** to women with disabilities.
6. Pay attention to signs of distress and **call out disrespect**.
7. **Listen and learn** from women with disabilities.

“ Although I can't always stand, **my voice** can stand for me. ”

“ **Having men back me up in addressing sexism is important.** I pointed out to someone that his treatment of his partner was a sexist double standard. A witness came to stand next to me and repeated what I had just said. ”

“ Socially, in a group, if someone says something negative about me, another person will **stand up positively for me and focus on what I can do.** ”

“ Step back and **let me take the lead**, to have confidence about what I can do. ”

**Gender equality** is the equal status, opportunities, rights and outcomes for people of all genders.

**Sexism** is discrimination based on gender, typically against women.

**Ableism** is the assumptions and behaviours that people without disabilities are better than people with disabilities – leading to discrimination, disadvantage and violence.

Together, **ableism and gender inequality** increase the disadvantages that women and non-binary people with disabilities experience.

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## Tips for allies of women with disabilities in the workplace:

1. **Understand the individual preferences** that women with disabilities have and help them to work through the barriers that might arise.
2. **Hold colleagues accountable** and work for changes in current practices that disadvantage women with disabilities.
3. Offer **information** in a range of **accessible formats**.
4. Provide opportunities for **meaningful involvement** in employment, advisory and consultation positions.
5. Create **meaningful roles** that empower women with disabilities, drawing on the **expertise of lived experience** organisations.
6. During meetings and discussions, refer back to and **support the ideas** put forward by women with disabilities.
7. Encourage women with disabilities to **take on leadership positions** in community groups, workplaces and in public life.

“ My doctor makes sure **I am in control of my health decisions**. It reminds me that I am capable and strong. ”

“ My support worker encourages me about what I can do and assists me make progress to achieve my goals. **She also gives me space to grow. She steps back and lets me take the lead.** She gives me confidence about what I can do... She helps me think through some ways around what I can't do. ”

“ **Organisations must respect and value the lived experience of women with disabilities.** Work alongside women with disabilities to avoid creating barriers to co-design roles, so that women with diverse experiences are involved in **meaningful ways.** ”