

SA Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
Online submission

8 August, 2024

Dear Commissioner Stott Despoja,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Royal Commission.

Research in Disability and Community Inclusion at Flinders is framed around promoting inclusion and challenging marginalization. A central focus of our research over the last several years has been in work concerning the experiences of violence and abuse against people with disability. In the main, our work is focused on how to improve people's experience, such as challenging everyday harm, improving attitudes, addressing loneliness.

We would like to draw your attention to a particular set of research we conducted for Australia's National Research Organisation for Women (ANROWS) which was conducted in South Australia and relies on data from South Australia and Western Australia. The *Connecting the Dots* study is focused on the domestic and family violence experiences of children and young people with disability and their families.

The research comprises four reports:

- A data linkage study on the [nature and extent of DFV exposure for children and young people with disability](#)
- A report [understanding the DFV experiences of children and young people with disability](#), which discusses findings from the three phase study. This brings together phase one (above); qualitative research with children and young people with disability, family members and practitioners; and work to make policy more responsive to young people's priorities.
- A [plain English summary](#) report
- A [practice framework](#) for practitioners across sectors

Key findings from the research demonstrate the children and young people with disability need support quickly when they experience violence at home. This support needs to be trauma-informed and youth-focused. They also need support to help them recover.

The studies showed that the needs of children and young people with disability who experience domestic and family violence were not being well met. Children and young people's families and workers had to struggle, often for a long time, to get them the funding and support they needed.

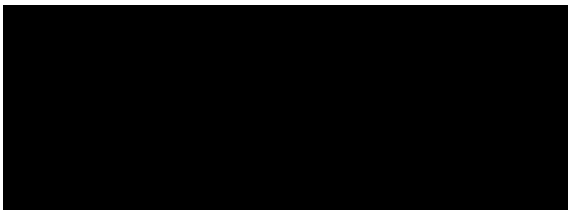
There were many reasons for this. Workers said children's and young people's problems didn't fit their role. Some workers thought the problems were too big, or that they couldn't help families by themselves. Instead of "dropping" them, workers from different services and systems need stronger and more effective collaboration systems and practices.

The research reports are attached and form the basis of our submission to the Commission.

We would also like to draw your attention to other related research which may be of interest to the Commission:

- [Violence prevention and early intervention for mothers and children with disability: building promising practice](#) – Sally Robinson, Kylie Valentine, BJ Newton, Ciara Smyth, Natalie Parmenter. Conducted for ANROWS.
- [‘Whatever it takes’: access for women with disabilities to domestic and family violence services.](#) Patsie Frawley, Sue Dyson, Sally Robinson. Conducted for ANROWS
- Robinson, S. (2024) Improving safety at home: responding to violence, abuse and neglect of people with intellectual disabilities across environments and settings. *Research and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23297018.2024.2331575>
- Davy, L., Robinson, S., Idle, J. & Valentine, K. (2024) Regulating vulnerability: policy approaches for preventing violence and abuse of people with disability in Australian service provision settings. *Disability & Society*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2024.2323456>.
- Robinson, S., Foley, K., Moore, T., Valentine, K., Burton, J., Marshall, A., O’Donnell, M. & Brebner, C. (2023) Prioritising children and young people with disability in research about domestic and family violence: methodological, ethical and pragmatic reflections. *Journal of Family Violence*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-023-00496-9>
- Robinson, S., Valentine, K. & Idle, J. (2021) Disability and family violence prevention: a case study on participation in evidence making. *Evidence and Policy* 17(2), 315-333 <https://doi.org/10.1332/174426421X16143457505305>
- Robinson, S. & Graham, A. (2021) Feeling safe, avoiding harm: safety priorities of children and young people with disability and high support needs. *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities*, 25, 4, 583-602, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744629520917496>
- Powell, M.A., Graham, A., Canosa, A., Anderson, D., Taylor, N. Robinson, S., Moore, T. & Thomas, N.P. (2021) Children and safety in Australian policy: Implications for organisations and practitioners. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 56, 17-41 DOI: 10.1002/ajs4.134
- Robinson, S., Frawley, P. & Dyson, S. (2020) Access and accessibility in domestic and family violence services for women with disabilities: widening the lens. *Violence against women*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801220909890>

Kind regards



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