

Villamanta



Winter Edition 2008

news

Villamanta advances the rights of people who have a disability.

Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc. is a Community Legal Centre that works on disability related legal issues for people who have a disability who live in Victoria.



A Guide for Advocates Attending VCAT Hearings

Villamanta, together with the Mental Health Legal Centre, has produced a guide for advocates representing people at the Guardianship List of the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

The project was funded by the Victoria Law Foundation and is recommended for legal Advocates. The guide is available on our website.

www.villamanta.org.au

Got a disability rights problem?

Want **FREE** phone information advice or referral?

Ring Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc. on
Free Call 1800 014 111
from anywhere in Victoria.

The advice line is open
1 pm to 3 pm
Monday to Friday

This number is for people who have a disability or anyone ringing for them. Other people may ring us on (03) 5229 2925.



**Villamanta Disability Rights
Legal Service Inc.**

HAPPY 1ST BIRTHDAY TO THE DISABILITY ACT 2006

The new Disability Act has been working for a year now. Here is a reminder about some of the important things the Act says.

The Act says there needs to be strong whole-of-government and whole-of-community work to make sure people who have a disability get their rights and needs met. The Act also gives a framework to make sure people get very good services and supports.

Easier access to disability services

The Act says people with disabilities may use disability services. The kinds of disabilities included are physical, sensory, neurological, acquired brain injury, intellectual disability or developmental delay. The Act changes the way people can get to use services. It is now meant to be simpler and the same for people with all sorts of disabilities to get services.

Planning for people — Guiding Principles

The Act has guiding **principles** for planning. The **principles** say planning should be:

- ◆ Individualised
- ◆ Directed by the person with the disability
- ◆ Consider and respect the person's family and other people who are important to the person with the disability
- ◆ Be underpinned by the right of the person with a disability to have control over their own life

Disability Service Providers

The Act says that disability service providers have to:

- ◆ Have a clear complaints making system
- ◆ Make sure people know how to make a complaint
- ◆ Give a report to the Disability Services Commissioner every year about how many complaints they got and what they did about them

Making rights in residential services stronger

Some people live in accommodation with staff to support them. This is called a residential service. The Act says there are rights and duties for people who live in these houses. The Act also says there are things the disability service provider who runs the houses must do. Some of these things are:

- ◆ Give a **residential statement** to a person with a disability when they start living in the house. The **residential statement** has to say what type of service it is, what the cost of the service is and that the person has a right to complain if they are not happy about something
- ◆ Make sure there is a balance of rights between the rights of a person and the safety of all the people who live in the house

Managing Money

The Act says a disability service provider is not allowed to manage the money of a person using their service, **BUT**, if the person, or their guardian or administrator, says in writing that it is OK, then a residential service may manage a small bit of the person's money.

Making a Complaint to the Disability Services Commissioner

The Act started up a new place to complain called the Disability Services Commissioner. The Disability Services Commissioner wants people to know it's OK to complain if you are not happy about the disability services you are getting. The Disability Services Commissioner will sometimes have a meeting to talk about a person's complaint.

Sometimes the Commissioner will investigate to find out what is going wrong and try to solve the problem. It is best to complain to your service provider first about the problem if you can.

You can call the Disability Services Commissioner on 1800 677 342

The Senior Practitioner and Restrictive Practices

The Disability Act also started up a new job called the Senior Practitioner. The Senior Practitioner's job is to make sure that people's rights are protected if any restrictive practices are used on them. Restrictive practices are things that are done to a person like locking them up or stopping them from doing things.

Sometimes this is done to make sure the person does not hurt himself or hurt someone else. The Senior Practitioner wants to make sure that high standards are met and things are done in a good way. The Senior Practitioner has lots of power and he can find out what is going on and tell disability service providers to stop doing something or to start doing something.

The Senior Practitioner's phone number is : (03) 9096 8427

Brain Injury Matters



BIM's Inspirations
images and words to light up your life

A high-quality artbook printed on 150 gsm silk paper with 310 gsm artboard paperback cover.

The perfect personal or corporate gift.

Price: \$20.00 (incl. GST)
Postage & Handling:
1 to 4 copies \$2.50
5 + copies \$Call

For orders please contact BIM — Formerly Bear in Mind on (03) 9639 7222

What are the big problems?

Villamanta wants to know what you think the big problems are for people who have an intellectual disability.

If you know a problem that needs some work done on it, give us a call on **1800 014 111** between 1 p.m. & 3 p.m. Monday to Friday,

Or email us at: legal@villamanta.org.au
Or write us a letter

Trish Jardine*Telephone Advice Worker*

Trish works on Villamanta's free call Telephone Advice Service. Trish is the person you will speak to if you call the Telephone Advice Service on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday; on Thursday and Friday other workers take a turn at staffing the Advice Service. People call us about lots of different things.

We aim to give our callers the best service we possibly can. We listen to our callers about their issues and help sort out what choices are available to give the best chance to get them what they want. We give information on rights and the law, and practical advice on ways to deal with situations; including ones where using the law might not be the best way for the person to get what they want. For some issues, our lawyers will do work for people. Sometimes giving people the best service means referring them to another service who know more about the caller's issue than Villamanta do.

You can call Villamanta's Telephone Advice Service for free on 1800 014 111 between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Monday to Friday, or leave a message at other times and someone will ring you back.

Trish has worked for Villamanta since 1990, since it first started. Outside Villamanta, Trish loves theatre, music and sharing food with friends, but mostly she is a passionate gardener. She particularly likes growing food and inspiring people to grow food where they live. She is privileged to have been Chair of Geelong Organic Gardeners for many years.



Family Planning Victoria support people **with** things to do **about** relationships and sexuality. They have a lot of experience at working for people with intellectual disability. They can do counselling, and teach people. They can help with things like:

- **What's OK in public and what needs to be private**
- **How the sexual parts of our bodies work**
- **Managing periods**
- **Feelings, including having "sexy feelings".**
- **Touching and sexual behaviour that is OK and touching and sexual behaviour that is not OK**
- **How to be assertive and speak up for yourself, including **keeping** yourself safe**
- **Different types of relationships**
- **Getting pregnant, how not to get pregnant, and sexually transmissible infections**

Family Planning Victoria are in Box Hill, and in Melbourne city.

You can ring them to get more information on:

Free Call 1800 013 952

Did You Know.....

Villamanta has a book called **YOUR RIGHTS YOUR CHOICES**, which is free to people who have a disability.

It is an easy to read book about legal rights for people who have an intellectual disability in Victoria.

If you would like a copy, or information about this and other Villamanta publications, please contact us on

1800 014 111 (1 pm—3 pm Mon -Frid)
or **(03) 5229 2925** or visit our website on
<http://www.villamanta.org.au>





Getting Free From Abuse

New Resources to Assist Women with Disabilities

Now available online:

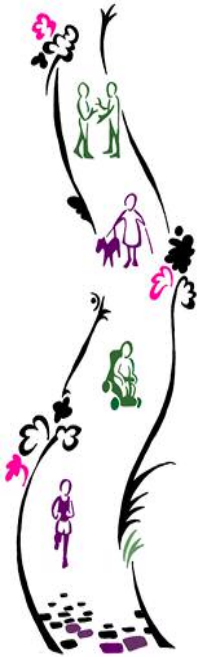
DVRC's [guide for women with disabilities](#) experiencing family violence (also available in [Vietnamese and Arabic](#)); and A [kit for service providers](#) who work with women with disabilities.

These products draw on interviews with women with disabilities who have experienced violence. The women told their stories in the hope that it would help others to deal with abuse.

Service providers can download a [useful resource on how to support women with disabilities](#) experiencing violence (also available in hard copy from [DVRC](#)). The resource provides suggestions from women with disabilities, as well as practical tips on what individual workers and agencies can do.

The [web-guide for women with disabilities](#) has a quiz to identify the warning signs of abuse by a partner, a family member, a carer, or someone else. It provides an understanding of the effects of abuse, and the steps women can take to get help. Women with disabilities tell their [stories](#) and share their [advice](#) for others on surviving abuse.

The main text of women's guide is also available in [Arabic and Vietnamese](#). 'When I was married he liked to control everything ... I felt I was a prisoner in my own home' (Isabella... [read her story](#) or see all [stories](#) or [advice](#)).



This project was developed by the [Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria \(2008\)](#) and was generously supported by the [Telematics Course Development Fund](#)

(c) Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria (Australia), 2008.

Ph. (03) 9486-9866. Email dvrcv@dvrcv.org.au. URL: <http://www.dvrcv.org.au>.

NECAS

Non-electronic Communication Aid Scheme

The Non-electronic Communication Aid Scheme (NECAS) is a pilot project that provides non-electronic communication aids to adults with complex communication needs in Victoria.

Non-electronic communication aids include boards, books and cards that have a series of pictures, letters, words or phrases printed on them that a person will use to communicate a message. It does not need power or batteries to work. You can use these communication aids to talk to others.



For More Information about
NECAS contact:

Communication Resource
Centre—(NECAS)

830 Whitehorse Road
BOX HILL VIC 3128

Phone: (03) 9843 2000
Free Call: 1800 888 824
Fax: (03) 9843 2033

Email: carn.crc@scopevic.org.au

Website: www.scopevic.gov.au

Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc.
44 Bellerine Street, Geelong Vic 3220

Postage
Paid

Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc.

ABN 32 690 988 235

A free state-wide legal service that works on disability related legal issues.

Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc. is part of the Australian Network of Disability Advocacy Services funded by the Australian Government

Telephone Advice Line for people who have a disability

Free call 1800 014 111 (1 pm - 3 pm Monday—Friday)

Email: legal@villamanta.org.au

Telephone: 03 5229 2925

Website: www.villamanta.org.au



We would like to send you our Newsletter by email

Please let us know:

- ◆ If you want to get our newsletter by email
- ◆ If you want it emailed or posted in larger print format
- ◆ Please note Villamanta no longer has a TTY service—Callers who are deaf, or have a hearing impairment are asked to email, fax or use the National Relay Service on **1800 555 677** - Callers who have a speech impairment can use Speech on Speech Relay on **1800 555 727** and quote Villamanta's Free Call number **1800 014 111** (Between 1 p.m. & 3 p.m. Monday — Friday)



**PLEASE PHONE VILLAMANTA on 1800 014 111 or
Email: legal@villamanta.org.au**