

### European Blind Union

### Press release

### Paris, 25 November 2014

**THE RIGHT TO LIVE WITHOUT VIOLENCE**

**Did you Know....?**

Today, November 25, 2014 on the occasion of the International Day for the elimination of violence against women, EBU presents an awareness raising campaign in support of the right of visually impaired women and girls to live without violence.

Violence against women with disabilities remains difficult to monitor and to address. This is in part because of the invisibility of women with disabilities in general research on violence and gender. But data available from specific research show that women with disabilities experience various forms of violence at significantly high rates, more frequently, for longer, in more ways, and by more perpetrators.

But did you know that this also applies to blind and partially sighted women? EBU´s 2003 Daphne project showed that it does.

In addition to the different forms of gender-based violence that sighted women may fall victims to, blind and partially sighted women also face disability-based violence. These and other factors set blind and partially sighted women at an extremely high risk of violence. Being blind or partially sighted, means having to depend on others for support or care in certain activities. Having a visual disability also means it is far more difficult to flee, fight or find help. Blind and partially sighted women have considerably fewer pathways to safety, and are less likely to report violence. And yet programs and services for this group either do not exist, are extremely limited or not accessible, and professionals are often unaware of the specific risks and needs that a visual impairment entails.

This calls for action from all involved in the disability field, in health, social and other services, police as well as society in general and it starts with raising awareness. For those member organizations that do not already have awareness raising campaigns on violence and visual disability, EBU has developed campaign material aimed at professionals, national organizations of the blind and partially sighted and women with visual impairments.

The campaign information pack consists of one poster and two brochures entitled “**The Right to Live Without Violence**”. The first brochure aims to raise awareness among professionals in services and programs that support victims of violence. Increasing the professionals’ understanding of the high risk and specific needs of women with visual disabilities, enables them to better support, protect and assist (potential) victims in an efficient way. The second brochure aims to raise awareness among girls and women with visual disability and their organizations on the fundamental right to live without violence. The importance of how to recognize signs of violence, what you can do and ways to support women with visual impairment through cooperation with support services and prevention programs EBU calls upon its member organizations and you as reader to join this campaign and take action in support of the right to live without violence.
How?

Download the brochures and share the information at

[http://www.euroblind.org/working-areas/women/#ipack](http://www.euroblind.org/working-areas/women/%23ipack)

For more information please contact the EBU office ebu@euroblind.org

Remember: Every blind and partially sighted girl and woman in geographic Europe has the right to live without violence, and your action can actually save a life!!

### About EBU

EBU is a non-governmental, non-profit making European organisation founded in 1984. It is one of the six regional bodies of the World Blind Union. It protects and promotes the interests of blind and partially sighted people in Europe. It currently operates within a network of national organisations of the visually impaired in 45 European countries.

EBU

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