

## Campaign to help disabled workers struggling against employer bias

# End this job apartheid



**Focus on skills:** Liz Ellis has been hunting for a job.  
Picture: CHRIS SCOTT

PEOPLE with disabilities are victims of an unintentional jobs apartheid by employers, says Workplace Relations Minister Bill Shorten, who today launches a campaign to change attitudes.

Mr Shorten said Australians supported and respected elite athletes at the Paralympics and it should be the same in the workplace.

"It's almost an unintentional jobs apartheid where people with disabilities are the victims of an unconscious bias," he said.

"They're not getting the interviews, they're not getting the promotions, they're not getting considered, they're not getting short listed.

"We're a generous, easy-going, warm people, but when it comes to disability employment it would

**Phillip Hudson**  
national political editor

appear we're uncomfortable with people who look and sound different to us. Yet, ironically, a person with a disability could be any one of us in the blink of an eye in a car crash."

In a speech to employers, Mr Shorten will call for new thinking.

He said companies might not even realise there was a problem.

"When you hear the stories, when you look at the hiring practices and look at the numbers, people with disabilities are not getting their fair share of Australia's jobs growth," he said.

"I'm not blaming anyone, but I'm just saying there's clearly a problem that needs to be addressed and not just by the Government

throwing money at the problem."

Mr Shorten said our Paralympians would probably do better in the London Games than the able-bodied Olympians.

"At a certain point when you watch the Paralympics you stop looking at the impairment and you start looking at the elite athlete and respecting the elite athlete and it should be the same in the jobs market," he said.

Liz Ellis, who has cerebral palsy, is a qualified social worker who has been hunting for a job for seven months, fearing her disability has stopped her being chosen.

"I have something I can't avoid and they can all see," Ms Ellis said. "You rely on people to see you for who you are and the skills you have."

## Violent viewing diet a dangerous habit

Elissa Doherty

SCHOOLS should teach children that the principle "you are what you eat" also applies to violent video games and movies, experts say.

A major review of research has found repeated exposure to media violence increases the risk of aggression.

The findings, by the peak body for scientists studying aggression, have renewed calls for an overhaul of the classification system.

The Media Violence Commission, established by the International Society for Research on Aggression, found that "every player or viewer" is affected in some way.

The report found violent media can trigger aggressive memories. If repeatedly activated they can become "chronically



**Dangerous games**

accessible" and more likely to influence behaviour. Australian academic Dr Wayne Warburton, one of the authors, said there was still a public conception that the "jury is out" on the media violence issue. "The vast majority of the scientific community does not agree with that viewpoint," he said.

The study said ratings systems were too vague.

"Schools may help parents by teaching children from an early age to be critical consumers of the media and that, just like food, the 'you are what you eat' principle applies to healthy media consumption," it says.

Prof Elizabeth Handsley, president of the Council on Children and the Media, said our classification system should be based on scientific evidence.

"The present system is based on concepts like offence and confusion that have no basis in science," she said.

"Research tells us which kinds of violence raise the risk of an adverse influence on children at different ages.

"The criteria should be revised to reflect this knowledge."

## Aussie brewers cap it off

FOREIGN beers brewed in Australia have beaten the same brands imported here in a taste test.

In a *Choice* survey, a panel of six experts tested Peroni Nastro, Stella, Becks, Heineken, Grolsch, Kronenbourg 1664 and Corona.

Each was reviewed for appearance, aroma, flavour and technical composition.

*Choice* spokeswoman Ingrid Just said the locally brewed beers had advantages.

"Many factors influence the flavour of a beer, including deterioration over time," Ms Just said.

"Some imported beers can take up to eight weeks to get to Australia and

can then spend up to six weeks sitting in very warm conditions in containers on the docks."

The top-rated beer was Grolsch, produced in NSW, which was found to have a "lively, full flavour" compared with the imported version, which was "stale" and "hard to love".

Ms Just said local breweries often imported ingredients to better match the flavours of imported beers.

"When you consider all these factors, it's not surprising the locally brewed foreign labels compete very well with the home country's product," she said.

The Italian Peroni Nastro was the highest-ranked imported beer.

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