

## ***WEL National Policy on EDUCATION***

WEL affirms article 10 of CEDAW, which states women should have the same access to education in all forms as men, and that such access should not be barred on the basis on stereotyped conceptions of the roles of men and women. WEL calls on governments to redress inequities and discrimination in education against women and girls.

WEL affirms the responsibility of government to provide free education from preschool through tertiary and post secondary levels, funded from general revenue. In fulfilling this responsibility, governments must recognise that individuals' access to free education depends on the provision of adequate income support and appropriate infrastructure.

WEL opposes funding arrangements that benefit private schools at the expense of the public school system.

WEL believes all schools which receive government funding, whether public or private, should abide by relevant legislation such as anti discrimination legislation.

WEL recognises the value of the Adult and Community Education sector in providing women with knowledge, skills and competencies to return to learning and to employment.

WEL opposes the commercialisation of education and deplores the reimposition of fees on Tertiary education, including TAFE, first degrees and post-secondary students, on the grounds that fees have a differential impact on women and girls.

WEL supports the universal membership of student organisations at the tertiary level, in recognition of the vital role that student organisations play in creating campus environments that support women students

WEL supports programs which stress equality between men and women and that all students should be given opportunities to study gender equality issues and develop a wide range of communication skills, through assertiveness training and anger management programs for example. WEL supports mandatory gender equity programs for all students.

WEL believes that the political institutions and process of the three levels of government should be taught in primary and secondary schools as compulsory curriculum so students understand their voting rights before they leave school.

WEL supports the principle of education as a process which values knowledge for it's own sake, not just for learning vocational skills.

WEL supports the principles of lifelong learning and recognises the needs of women of all ages to be able to access education and retraining.

WEL believes that all students should be encouraged and supported to excel in the subjects in which they demonstrate aptitude.

WEL acknowledges and is concerned that women's and girls' traditional choice of education leads to career paths that are lower paid. WEL is concerned that "traditional" careers of women (eg. teaching, childcare) are undervalued in Australian society. Careers advisers should be required to alert girls to the financial and social implications of their career choices.

WEL recognises the need to encourage girls and boys into non-traditional areas.