

FOR LGBTIQ+ PEOPLE

Within LGBTQ+ communities, we know that trans women – and especially trans women of colour – are disproportionately affected by family and intimate partner violence. We know that transphobia, trans misogyny and racism further drive and normalise this violence.

We all deserve to feel safe, equal and respected in our families and our relationships. It's vital that as a community we are seen, believed and that all support to end domestic violence is inclusive and respectful.

We'd like to elevate Transfemme (transfemme.com.au) a fantastic initiative by the Zoe Belle Gender Collective designed with lived experience to promote healthier relationships between trans women and cisgender men. "Transfemme is a space to celebrate and give visibility to our relationships, as well as recognise the barriers and unique challenges they may face."

For those in our LGBTQ+ communities who need to see this message: We see you, we hear you, we believe you, and we're here for you always.

DO YOU NEED HELP?

If you are feeling unsafe or would like to have a conversation with someone about what's going on in your relationship with your partner/s or family, please contact your preferred service below:

National support

Qlife: LGBTIQ+ peer support, information and referral | 1800 184 527 | 3pm – midnight

1800 Respect: 24/7 National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service
1800 737 732

Phone 1800Respect for a referral to your local Family and Domestic Violence services or head here: www.1800respect.org.au/services

Lifeline: 24/7 131 114

Support in your state

ACT Domestic Violence Crisis service:
(02) 6280 0900 (24/7)

WA 1800Respect: 1800 737 732 (24/7)

NSW RDVSA: LGBTIQ Violence service:
1800 497 212 (24/7)

VIC Safe Steps 1800 015 188 (24/7)

VIC Rainbow Door: 1800 729 367
(10-5pm, 7 days per week)

QLD DV Connect: 1800 811 811 (24/7)

TAS Family Violence Counselling and Support Service: 1800 608 122
(9-5 weekdays, 4-midnight weekends/
public holidays)

NT 1800Respect: 1800 737 732 (24/7)

SA 1800Respect: 1800 737 732 (24/7)

This tip sheet was developed by the staff of the Rainbow Door, a program of Switchboard Victoria, a free specialist LGBTIQ+ helpline providing information, support, and referral to all LGBTIQ+ Victorians, their friends and family.

FAMILY AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

A QLIFE GUIDE FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS & COMMUNITY WORKERS



CONTACT QLIFE

Health professionals wanting to know more can contact us at ask@qlife.org.au

QLife is available 365 days a year, 3pm - midnight.

call 1800 184 527 | webchat www.qlife.org.au

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FAMILY AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS & COMMUNITY WORKERS

Since its inauguration in Brisbane during 2020 by the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation, LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Day has rapidly expanded to be recognised annually in twelve countries across the globe. This annual day is the first of its kind to centre domestic and intimate partner violence within LGBTQ+ communities, to raise awareness and help end violence.

We know that many LGBTQ+ people have wonderful, healthy respectful relationships with partners, families and friends and yet we also know that people who are LGBTQ experience Family and Intimate Partner violence in similar rates to cisgender heterosexual women in the general population- about 1 in 3 in a past or present relationship. (source: *Say It Out-loud; sayitoutloud.org.au*)

Data from the Australian Research Centre into Sex Health and Society *Private Lives 3 Survey 2020* tells us that:

- More than 2/5 of people who completed the survey reported experiencing Intimate Partner Violence
- Almost 2/5 of people who completed the survey reported experiencing family violence (70% from parent, 30% from older sibling)
- Less than a third reported the violence to a relevant service.
- Almost half of people who completed survey reported that they had experienced being coerced or forced into a sexual act they did not want to engage in the last 12 months.

Forms of intimate partner and family violence that were identified in the survey are:

- physical violence (e.g., hitting, throwing heavy objects or threats and physical intimidation regardless of whether an injury resulted)
- verbal abuse (e.g., regular criticism, insults or demeaning language)
- sexual assault (e.g., undesired sexual behaviour through force or other means)
- financial abuse (e.g., had money stolen or access controlled, prevented from working or studying, had debts accrued by them in your name)
- emotional abuse (e.g., regularly manipulated, humiliated in front of others, gaslighted, bullied, blamed for abuse)
- harassment or stalking (e.g., monitoring movements, coerced into a relationship commitment or religious practice, forced to stop practicing your own religious or spiritual practices)
- property damage (e.g., destroying or threatening to destroy possessions or property, including pets)
- social isolation (e.g., made it difficult to see friends, family or community)
- threats of self-harm or suicide (e.g., partner or family member threatened self-harm or suicide)
- LGBTQ-related abuse (e.g., shamed you about being LGBTQ, threatened to out you or your HIV status, withheld hormones or medication)

TOP TIPS FOR INCLUSIVE RESPONSES TO LGBTIQ+ PEOPLE EXPERIENCING FAMILY VIOLENCE

1. Engagement:

When engaging with clients for the first time, don't assume you know their gender, sexuality or relationship status. Use open questions and non-gendered terms to support the person to feel comfortable in telling their story. Don't be afraid to ask somebody their preferred name or pronouns, and remember to introduce yourself with your pronouns.

2. Naming their experience as family violence:

LGBTIQ+ people may not see themselves in family violence narratives. Providing examples of where you can hear power and control can be extremely useful for people in making sense and locating their experiences. This can assist with supporting someone to identify their own risks, normalise their experiences and make decisions about their safety.

"What you have told me, I can hear as a pattern of behaviour that has made you feel intimidated, controlled, and scared. What you are describing to me is family violence."

3. Information gathering and sharing:

When assessing risk and safety, be transparent about why you are asking for the information. Recognise that for many in LGBTIQ+ communities collection and use of identifying information has been used as a tactic to cause harm and in a small community, may lead to somebody being identified/ outed when not safe to do so. Be mindful of how much information you are sharing with services and ensure to ask for consent when disclosing identity factors such as gender, sexuality, pronouns, what name they would like to be referred to as.

4. Risk assessment and risk management:

Ensure you are listening for and identifying risk indicators across a wide range of behaviors. When identifying use of power, control and coercion, consider factors such as concealment of the

relationship, threatening to out the victim survivor to friends and family, non-traditional family/parenting structures, and family violence perpetrated by family of origin not just intimate partners. Be aware of the increased rates of sexual violence, family violence and other forms of violence against trans people and other LGBTIQ+ people. Safety planning and support for LGBTIQ+ people may require you to be creative, flexible and strong advocates.

5. Referral:

The vast majority of family violence services are set up for cisgender women and children who are victim/ survivors of violence. You will need to assess what services are safe and appropriate for LGBTIQ+ clients and be prepared to advocate for them to access these services. If you're not sure what services exist, reach out to a service such as Rainbow Door for a secondary consult.

6. Reflective practice:

Regularly check in with the person you're supporting about their experience of the support and service. Ask if there are adjustments that can be made at the individual or service level that would make their experience more affirming.

7. Secondary consultation:

If you need further information or are unsure of how to best respond to LGBTIQ+ clients, please reach out to your local LGBTIQ+ peer support service for secondary consultation and support.



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