

What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence is a broad term that encompasses a continuum of words and actions varying in degree from harassing comments of a sexual nature to sexual contact (including, but not limited to sexual intercourse) when such contact is achieved:

- Without consent; or
- With the use of physical force, coercion, deception or threat, or,
- When the victim/survivor is mentally incapacitated, or impaired, physically helpless, asleep or unconscious

What is same-sex sexual assault?

- Same-sex sexual assault may include (but is not limited to) forced vaginal or anal penetration, forced oral sex, forced touching, or any additional form of forced sexual activity.
- Same-sex sexual assault may occur on a date, between friends, partners, or strangers.

A sexual assault is an attack not only on a person's body, but also on her/his dignity and emotional well-being. A sexual assault is never the fault of the survivor.

Does sexual violence happen to LGBTQ people?

Sexual assaults happen to, and are committed by, people of all sexual orientations. Regrettably there is limited research on the prevalence of rape in the LGBTQ community.

According to research, LGBT people are at approximately the same risk as heterosexuals of being sexually assaulted by someone they know.

♦ 52% of participants in a study of sexual coercion in gay/lesbian relationships reported at least one incident of sexual assault/coercion. 5

♦ In this study, gay men reported 1.6 incidents per person on average; in comparison the 1.2 incidents per person reported by lesbians. 5

Are LGBTQ people more likely to be perpetrators of sexual violence?

No. Due to the oppression of LGBTQ individuals, they have faced discrimination for their gender orientation and sexual orientation; their sexual activities have been criminalized. In the vast majority of cases, perpetrators are heterosexual men. One common myth for LGBTQ individuals is that they are pedophiles. Actually, several studies have reported that heterosexual adults are more likely to be a threat to children than LGBTQ individuals.

Are LGBTQ people more likely than heterosexuals to be sexually assaulted from a stranger?

Regrettably, the answer is yes. Due to the heightened homo and trans-phobia in the United States, LGBTQ individuals are at greater risk for sexual assault by strangers. Perpetrators frequently use sexual assaults against LGBTQ individuals (and individuals perceived to be LGBTQ) to punish and humiliate them. This can be seen when an individual believes that they can "change" a woman's sexual orientation by specifically targeting lesbian and bisexual women for sexual assaults.

"We are strongly committed to affirming diversity in a broad sense, to treating all with dignity and respect, and to opposing discrimination, prejudice, and oppression".

~Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) OSU

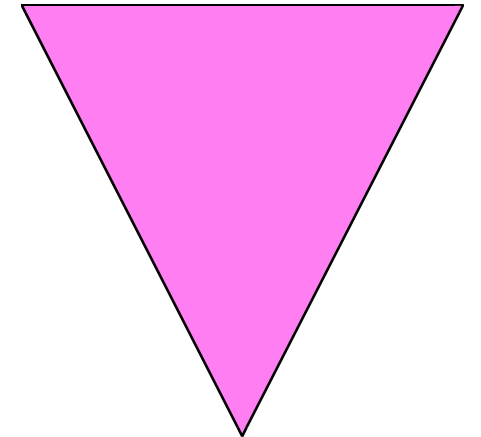
Issues regarding sexual assault that are unique to the LGBTQ community:

- Survivors who are not "out" may find sharing and/or reporting the sexual assault difficult or impossible.
- Lack of awareness of same-sex sexual assault in the LGBTQ community may make silence appear the only option.
- If the survivor's community is small, the fear of skepticism and/or people "taking sides" may cause the survivor to keep silent.
- Guilt and self-blame (which are common symptoms of all survivors) may lead to questioning one's sexual identity and sexuality.
- One's own internalized homophobia may further complicate the complexities of sexual assault
- Gay/bi male survivors may be apprehensive to report and fear being ignored and/or rejected as overly sensitive due to the stereotype that they are promiscuous and invited the assault upon themselves.
- Lesbian/bi women survivors may face being ignored or having their claims discarded if their attacker is a female because women are not socially seen as sexual perpetrators.

Sexual assault can happen to anyone regardless of their race, class, age, appearance, or sexual orientation. Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people are subject to the same spectrum of sexual violence as the general population

Common Fears of LGBTQ sexual violence survivors:

- Not being taken seriously or having their experience minimized
- Not having their experience labeled as sexual assault or rape
- Having their experience sensationalized.
- Having to have explain how the assault happened in more detail than one would as a survivor of opposite-sex assault
- Being blamed for the assault
- Not being understood or being blamed if it happened in an S & M environment
- Being treated in a homophobic manner by the police, hospital, rape crisis center and others
- Mistakenly being perceived as the perpetrator
- Being "outed"



How can I help my friend or partner?

- Believe your friend or partner who has been sexually assaulted, it is very uncommon for individuals to create a false story.
- Respect their need for confidentiality.
- Avoid judgment.
- Ask how you can be of assistance rather than giving them advice.
- Respect their decision even when yours may be different.
- Be a good listener.
- Avoid pressure to resume any form of sexual activity until initiated by your partner.
- Offer your unconditional love and support.

LGBTQ Statistics Survivor Information

- Relationship violence occurs within same-sex relationships with the same statistical frequency as in heterosexual relationships (25-33%) (AARDVARC).
- Each year between 50,000 and 100,000 Lesbian women and as many as 500,000 Gay men are battered (AARDVARC).
- In 2002, 5,092 incidents of domestic violence affected lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender victims in the United States. 4 of these incidents resulted in murder (Baum 2003).
- 52% of the LGBT domestic violence victims were male, 42% were female, and 2% were transgender, while gender identity was not known for 4% of the victims (Baum 2003).
- More than half of all LGBT victims of domestic violence in 2002 were in the age range 30-44 (52%), 1 in 5 were between 23 and 29 (19%), 13% were 45-64, while 18 to 22 year olds comprised 10% of the victims (Baum 2003).

What resources are available for LGBTQ people who are victims of sexual violence?

OSU Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS), 541-737-7604, Part of CAPS, 500 Snell Hall Confidential support and/or counseling for any OSU student who has experienced unwanted sexual contact or relationship violence. Provides information and advocacy for survivors who choose to contact other agencies. SASS is open during business hours, see CARDV for 24 hour needs.

Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV), 541-754-0110, 800-927-0197 Provides 24 hour confidential crisis response, hospital advocacy, hotline support, and support groups. CARDV can also help with the process of obtaining a restraining or stalking protective order.

Medical

OSU Student Health Services (SHS), 541-737-9355, Plageman Building Provides services to address both short-term and long-term medical concerns. SHS also offers forensic evidence collection (SAFE) exams if a survivor is considering reporting an assault to police (must be done within 84 hours post-assault). Survivors may report the assault to the police at the time of the SAFE exam or at a later date. Available during business hours.

Good Samaritan Emergency Department, 541-768-5021, 3600 NW Samaritan Drive, Corvallis For immediate medical needs 24-7, or to have forensic evidence collection (SAFE exam).

Please refer to the OSU Sexual Assault web site at <http://oregonstate.edu/sexualassault> for more information about these and other resources. You may also file an ANONYMOUS REPORT at this website.

REFERENCES

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0.1 Baum R. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Domestic Violence in 2002: A Report of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. New York, NY: National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs; 2003.

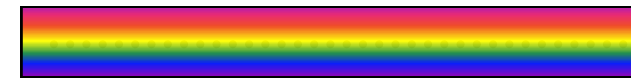
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2. Groth, A. N., & Gary, T. S. (1982). Heterosexuality, homosexuality, and pedophilia: Sexual offenses against children and adult sexual orientation. In A.M. Scacco (Ed.), Male rape: A casebook of sexual aggressions (pp. 143-152). New York: AMS Press.
3. Jenny, C., Roesler, T. A., & Poyer, K. L. (1994). Are children at risk for sexual abuse by homosexuals? Pediatrics, 94(1), 41-44
4. Renzetti, C. 1992. Violent Betrayal: partner Abuse in Lesbian Relationships. Newbury park: Sage.
5. Waldner-Haugrud, Lisa K., & Vaden Gratch, Linda. (1997). Sexual Coercion in Gay/Lesbian Relationships Descriptives and Gender.

RESOURCES

<http://www.nwnetwork.org/>

<http://www.cuav.org/>

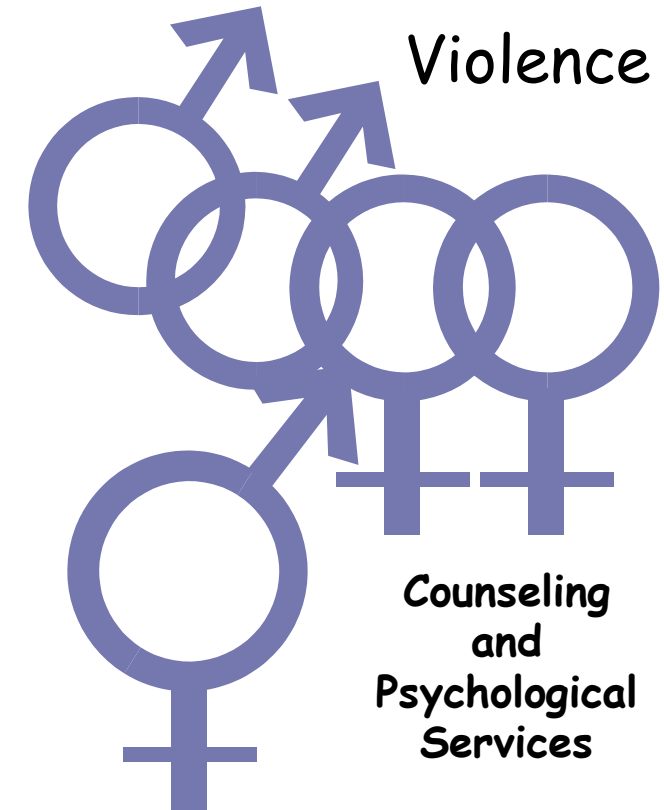
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LGBTQ

(Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning)

Sexual Violence



Counseling and Psychological Services

500 Snell Hall

This publication will be made available in accessible formats upon request. Please call 737-2131 for further information.

