

Understanding LGBTIQA+ Domestic and Family Violence



Domestic and family violence is preventable and we all need to be part of the solution. Violence and abuse is never acceptable. See more on preventing LGBTIQA+ domestic and family violence [HERE](#).

Domestic and family violence occurs in high rates across Australia, in families and relationships of all shapes and sizes. This information sheet is aimed to give some background on the domestic and family violence experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Asexual people (LGBTIQA+). Learn more about this acronym and related language [here](#).

There are many similarities to experiences of domestic and family violence amongst **endosex**, heterosexual and **cisgendered** people and LGBTIQA+ people, but there are also differences. Some LGBTIQA+ people experience violence in heterosexual relationships. LGBTIQA+ people experience higher rates of discrimination, there are less specialised services to attend for support, and “outing” or threatening to “out” someone because of their intersex traits, gender or sexuality is a form of abuse which is common. Experiences of violence look different in every instance, but can include physical, sexual, emotional, financial, social and spiritual abuse.



The statistics on domestic and family violence (DFV) in LGBTIQA+ communities

Note - different acronyms are used depending on the communities represented

More than 40% of LGBTQA+ people report experiencing abuse in an intimate partner relationship ([Hill, et al., 2020](#)).



More than six in ten LGBTQA+ people report ever experiencing family violence ([Hill et al., Private Lives 3, 2020](#)).

LGBTQ people experience domestic violence at higher rates than mainstream Australian women, of which 1 in 4 have experienced intimate partner violence ([Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Family, Sexual and Domestic Violence in Australia, 2019](#)).

Trans and gender diverse people report rates of sexual violence or coercion nearly four times higher than found in the general Australian public. ([Kirby Institute, Australian Trans and Gender Diverse Sexual Health Survey, 2018](#))

Intersex people also experience domestic and family violence ([UNSW, Calling It What It Really Is, 2014](#)), however more research is needed in this area. Always seek the input of intersex people when speaking about issues relating to their health and wellbeing and read the [Darlington Statement](#).

Some research suggests rates of violence are high amongst people identifying as asexual and other sexualities, however more research is needed ([ACT ACES, Asexual experiences survey, 2020](#)).



Higher rates of DFV can lead to poorer health outcomes, including mental health problems, disability and injury. LGBTQA+ young people experience higher rates of suicide than the mainstream population, with one report showing over 50% experienced suicidal ideation in the last 12 months ([Hill et al., Writing Themselves In 4, 2021](#)).

Understanding LGBTIQA+ Domestic and Family Violence



Help-seeking behaviours

LGBTQ people are less likely to report experiences of violence to the police (Hill et al., Private Lives 3, 2020).

LGBTQ people prefer to attend an inclusive mainstream domestic violence service, than a specific LGBTQ service (Hill et al., Private Lives 3, 2020).

Family violence and Children:

Hearing or seeing violence can have a similar impact on children as being harmed themselves.

Children exposed to family, domestic and sexual violence can experience long-term effects on their development and have increased risk of mental health issues, and behavioural and learning difficulties (Campo, Children's Exposure to Family and Domestic Violence, 2015).

More than two-thirds of mothers who had children in their care when they experienced violence said their children had seen or heard the violence (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Safety Study, 2017).

People who as children, witnessed partner violence against their parents were 2-4 times as likely to experience partner violence themselves (as adults) as people who had not (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Personal Safety Study, 2017).

Children with intersex variations may be more prone to family violence because of their physical differences (Jones et al., Intersex: Stories and statistics from Australia, 2016). The effects of early childhood medical interventions aimed at "fixing" intersex traits have been described as having similar impacts as sexual abuse.



What drives violence against LGBTIQA+ people?

Research shows us that the following community attitudes lead to these high rates of violence for LGBTQ people (Carman et al., Pride In Prevention Evidence Guide, 2020).



	Societal	System & institutional	Organisational & community	Individual & relationship
Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Rigid gender norms ▶ Cisnormativity ▶ Hetero-normativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Inequality in recognition of bodies, identities and relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Devaluation of bodies, identities and relationships ▶ Reproduction of norms and stereotypes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and intersexphobic behaviour ▶ Normalisation of violence and abuse
What do these lead to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and intersexphobia ▶ Gendered cultures of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Invalidation of identities and relationships ▶ Loss of bodily autonomy ▶ Discrimination ▶ Failure of responses to violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Stigma and discrimination ▶ Normalisation of inequality ▶ Failure to recognise violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Negative self-worth ▶ Perpetration of violence and abuse ▶ Poorer health outcomes

Important Information

[What is Intersex and Who are Intersex People?](#)

[Trans and Gender Diversity Crash course](#)

For more information or a referrals list visit [StrongSafeFabulous.online](https://www.strongsafeFabulous.org.au)