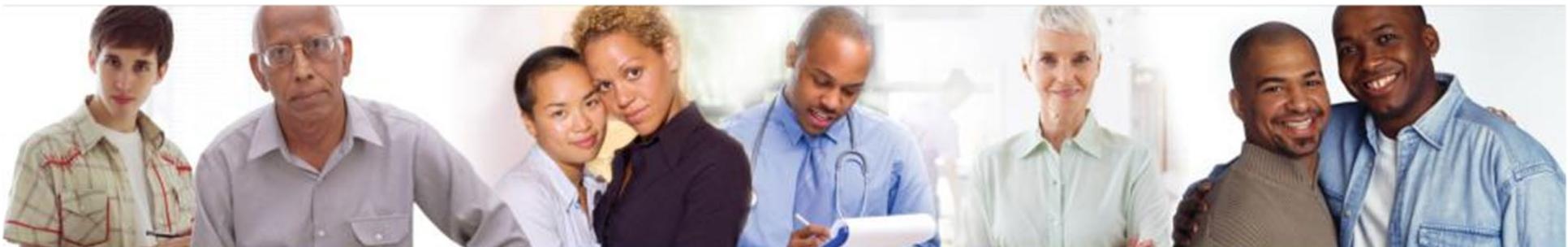




NATIONAL LGBT HEALTH
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Intimate Partner Violence in LGBTQ communities

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Manager of the Violence Recovery Program

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Our Roots

Fenway Health

- Independent 501(c)(3) FQHC
- Founded 1971
- Integrated Primary Care Model, including Behavioral Health, HIV/STI prevention and care
- 35,000 patients
 - Half LGBT
 - 10% transgender

The Fenway Institute

- Research, Education and Training, Policy



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Today's Faculty

Xavier Quinn, LICSW

**Manager of the Violence Recovery
Program**

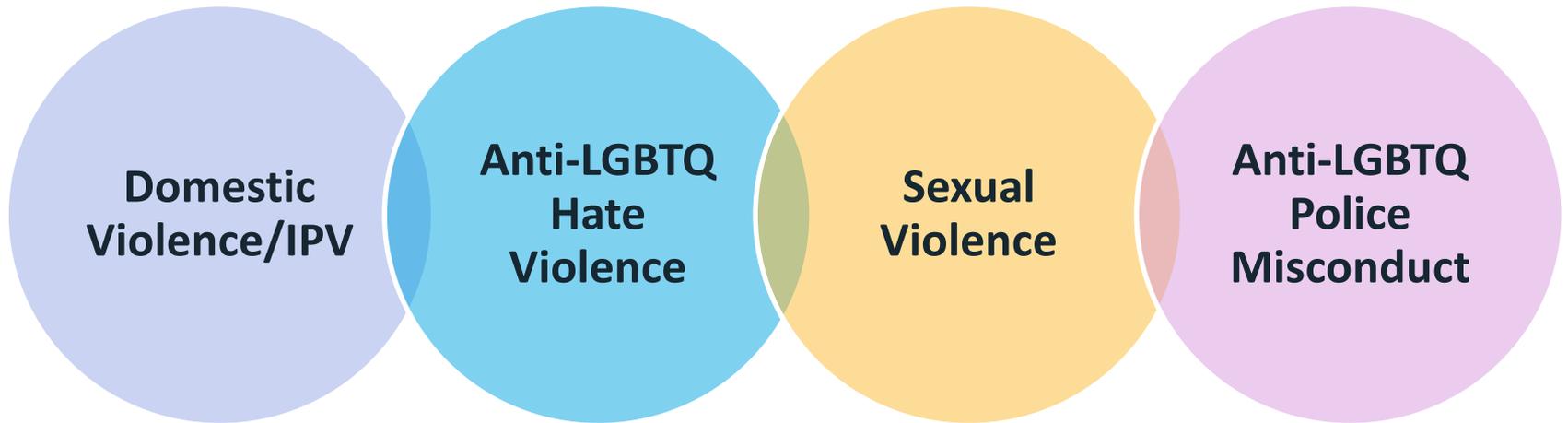
Disclosure

I have no financial conflicts of interest.

Learning objectives

Violence Recovery Program

617.927.6250 or 1.800.834.3242 or TTY 617.859.1256



- Free advocacy, counseling, support groups, and legal services
- Specialized in serving the LGBTQ community
- Services available in Boston, Western MA, Fall River and Cape Cod
- Community engagement & education



Existing research shows

LGBTQ individuals experience intimate partner violence at similar or higher rates than of straight cisgender individuals.

Bisexual and transgender individuals are at higher risk of IPV.



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Brown, T and Herman, J. 2015. *Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Abuse among LGBT people: A review of existing research.*

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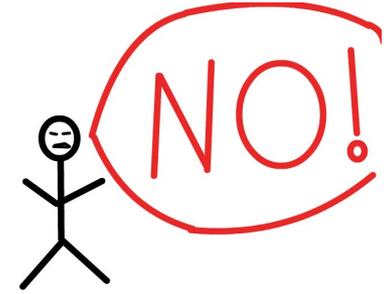
Definition of Intimate Partner violence

A pattern of behavior used by one person in an intimate relationship to assert power and control over the other person

- *IPV does not have to include physical violence
- *IPV is also called domestic violence, partner abuse, or dating violence



Intimate Partner Violence *is not...*



About size, strength, who is “butch” or more masculine

- Anyone can be abusive regardless of gender or size

Not mutual

- There is no such thing as “mutual abuse.” When someone uses self-defense, it is not an attempt to control, but rather a reaction to abuse.

Partner abuse is not a ‘cat-fight’ between women or ‘boys being boys’

- It is a myth that women are not violent and that men can’t be abused.

Intimate Partner Violence *is not...*

An anger management problem.

- Most people who are abusive manage their anger towards bosses and friends, yet are abusive to their partner

Individuals who are abusive do not lose control. They *take* control.

- Except in rare cases, abusive partners have the ability to restrain themselves from abuse, but choose not to do so.
- For example, most people who are abusive would not hurt their partners in front of a police officer.

Cycle of Abuse

Phase II:

Tension building

- The abusive partner may make threats, angry gestures, or looks.
- The survivor feels like they are “walking on eggshells” to avoid upsetting their partner

Phase III:

Abusive incidents

- The abusive partner uses tactics of abuse, is unpredictable, claims a loss of control, or blames their partner
- The survivor may feel traumatized, afraid, trapped. The survivor is most likely to leave at this time.

Phase I:

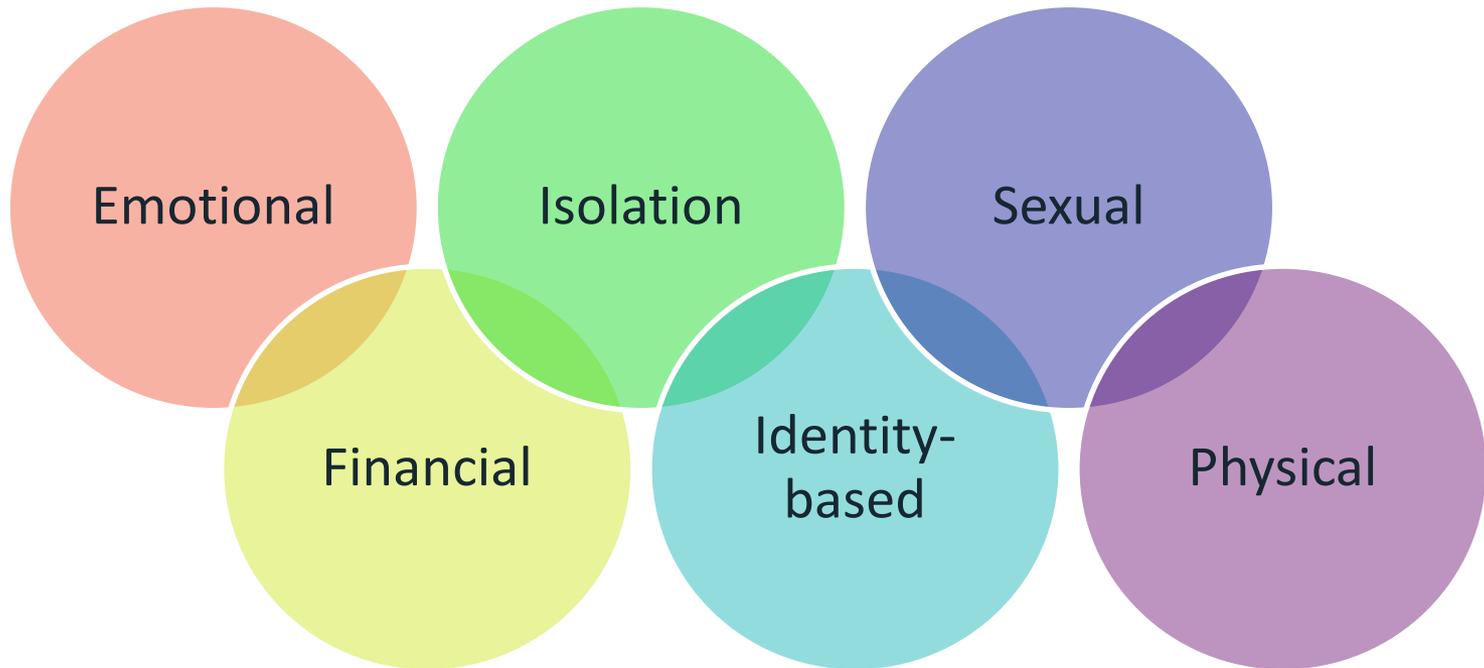
Kindness and loving

- The abusive partner may be loving, apologetic, attentive, or promise change.
- The survivor may feel guilty, responsible, minimize the abuse, or consider reconciliation

Increase in tension

Decrease in tension

Tactics of abuse may INCLUDE:



Emotional Abuse

Examples include:

- Verbal threats
- Demeaning the partner in front of friends, family or strangers
- Name-calling and use of abusive language
- Constant criticism or humiliation
- Disproportionate anger or yelling to intimidate
- Irrational blaming of the partner
- Withholding affection, approval or appreciation as a punishment
- Obsessive jealousy and accusations of unfaithfulness
- Instilling in the partner the belief that “nothing he does will ever be good enough”

LGBTQ-specific Emotional abuse

Blaming abuse on
the partner's
LGBTQ identity

Turning mutual
friends against the
survivor

Denying abuse can
exist in LGBTQ
communities

Pressuring partner
to be out

Defining abusive
behaviors as a
normal part of
LGBTQ relationships

Isolation

The abusive partner cuts off the survivor from contact with other people, creating a social deprivation that leads the survivor to be more dependent on the abusive partner and more susceptible to the abusive partner's worldview. Social isolation also prevents the partner from seeking support from others.

Behaviors commonly used:

- Monitoring phone calls, mail or visits
- Demanding an account of the partner's daily activities
- Insulting, threatening or assaulting the partner's friends or family; driving them away
- Forcing the partner to choose between the relationship and loved ones
- Creating public scenes or disturbances when the partner is out with others
- Stalking the partner and other forms of surveillance

LGBTQ-specific Isolation

Denying the survivor access to LGBTQ community

Causing scenes at Pride or other LGBTQ events

Using biphobia as an excuse to isolate a bisexual survivor from women and men

Outing a survivor to family, their work, or their religious group

Convincing the survivor they will be rejected by others for their LGBTQ identity

Using anti-LGBTQ discrimination to justify an “us against the world” mentality

Identity/Cultural Abuse

Identity abuse, sometimes referred to as Cultural Abuse, is using personal characteristics to demean, manipulate and control the partner. Some of these tactics overlap with other forms of abuse, particularly emotional abuse.

This category is comprised of oppressions including racism, sexism, classism, ageism, able-ism, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

LGBTQ-specific identity abuse

Saying the survivor is “too much” or “not enough” of their LGBTQ identity

Denying the survivor’s gender or sexual orientation

Intentionally using the wrong pronouns or name for the survivor

Using anti-LGBTQ slurs or stereotypes

Defining what it means to be LGBTQ for the survivor

Controlling how the survivor expresses their gender or sexual orientation

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is any forced or coerced sexual act or behavior

Examples include:

- Unwanted touching
- Demeaning remarks about the partner's body or appearance
- Minimization of the partner's sexual needs
- Berating the partner about his sexual history
- Refusing to comply with the partner's request for safe sex
- Coercing the partner into sex with others
- Purposefully and repeatedly crossing the partner's sexual boundaries

LGBTQ-specific Sexual abuse

Using LGBTQ stereotypes to coerce survivor into particular sex acts

Saying that women cannot rape or that men cannot be raped

Using gender roles to control how the survivor has sex

Using words for the client's body parts that don't align with their gender

Forcing sex in exchange for housing

Convincing the partner not to use sexual protection because LGBTQ sex is "safer"

Financial Abuse

- Controlling finances in the relationship
- Denying partner access to money
- Coercing the partner to pay for all expenses, including rent, food and utilities
- Stealing the partner's property, such as valuables or assets
- Destroying or threatening to destroy the partner's property as a means of affecting his financial situation
- Taking credit cards, money or checkbook

LGBTQ-specific Financial

Threatening to out the survivor at work

Identity theft (easier when partner is the same gender)

Demanding the survivor pay for hormones or surgeries

Using gender roles as a way to demand the survivor pays more

Using anti-LGBTQ discrimination as an excuse to not find work

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the threat of harm or any forceful physical behavior that intentionally or accidentally causes bodily harm, including the following:

Hitting, beating, choking, pushing, slapping, kicking, pulling hair, biting, punching, backhanding, arm twisting, shoving, kicking or burning

Holding the partner down or preventing the partner from leaving

Throwing and/or threatening with objects

Locking the partner out of the home

Refusal to get the partner help or medical attention

LGBTQ-specific Physical abuse

Targeting genitals
or chest for
physical violence

Not letting the
survivor heal from
gender-related
surgeries

Denying the
survivor access to
hormones

Public displays of
affection in
dangerous areas

Threats of suicide
(higher rates in
LGBTQ
communities)

Unique obstacles to accessing resources in LGBTQ Partner Abuse

*Screening

- It may be difficult to figure out who is the **abuser** and who is the **survivor**.

'Mutual'

- Either person may present the abuse as mutual, even when it is power and control.

Community Disbelief

- The partner may be disbelieved or downplayed by other members of the LGBT community.

Legal systems

- Police and the **judicial system** may not understand the **dynamics** of same-sex domestic violence and may discount it altogether.

Dual Arrest

- Police are 10 to 15 times as likely to make a dual arrest in cases of same-sex intimate partner violence than in heterosexual ones (NCAVP, 2009).

Mutual Restraining Orders

- Judges are more likely to issue mutual restraining orders to same sex partners; this is both unfair and traumatizing for the survivor.

Privacy and Safety

- In the hospital emergency room, the abuser **might introduce him/herself as a friend** and may be allowed to accompany the **survivor** through the medical visit, **compromising the survivor's privacy and safety**

Heterosexism, homophobia, & transphobia

- Friends and family may blame abuse on their identity:
 - “You chose this lifestyle.”
 - “That’s just how gay relationships are.”

Shelter

- LGBT victims of domestic violence may have difficulty finding a **safe shelter**. 61.6% of survivors who sought shelter were denied access. (NCAVP, 2011)

Do's and Don'ts in Working With a LGBTQ individual Who Has Experienced Intimate Partner Violence

General Don'ts...

- Assume the person is heterosexual .
- Assume that someone was assaulted because they are LGBTQ
- Assume the gender of the abusive partner.
- Presume that because a person told you that they identify as LGBTQ that they are “out” to everyone.
- Tell the person they must leave their partner.
- Ask the person who is being abused what they did to provoke the abuse
- Express discomfort or be squeamish

Don't: Victim-BLAme



The abuser will often blame the survivor for the abuse:

- “You made me so angry I had to lash out”
- “I wouldn’t yell if you just did...”

The survivor will often:

- Blame themselves for the abuse
- Wonder if it actually was abuse

Don't:

- ask what they did to cause the abuse
- Respond with doubt or disbelief

Better responses to victim blaming



General Do's...

- Use gender neutral language to refer to clients (they, them) until you learn otherwise
- Affirm the person for seeking support.
- Tell them it is not their fault.
- Advocate for health care services for the person
- Be able to refer to an LGBTQ-specific organization.
- Be realistic about homophobia & gender bias a person might encounter. Respect their choice if they opt not to enter a system they perceive to be biased.
- Have images that reflect the diversity of people you serve in your office and promotional materials.
- Be aware of your own areas of discomfort and biases
- Get more training and educate others, **especially providers.**

LGBTQ-Specific IPV Resources

- Fenway's Violence Recovery Program: 617-927-6250, fenwayhealth.org/care/behavioral-health/violence-recovery
- FORGE- Trans-specific anti-violence resources: forge-forward.org
- The Network/La Red- 24 hour Hotline: 617-742-4911, TNLR.org
- National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs: www.avp.org
- The Northwest Network: nwnetwork.org
- National LGBTQ Institute on IPV: LGBTQIPV.org
- VAWA special collections:
 - Serving trans and non-binary survivors of domestic violence: vawnet.org/sc/serving-trans-and-non-binary-survivors-domestic-and-sexual-violence
 - Preventing and Responding to Domestic Violence in LGBTQ communities: vawnet.org/sc/preventing-and-responding-domestic-violence-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-or-queer-lgbtq

Questions





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Thank you!

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