

Understanding Domestic and Family Violence in LGBTQIA+ SB Communities

Domestic and family violence (DFV), including intimate partner violence (IPV), can happen to anyone. This includes people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, asexual, Sistergirl, Brotherboy, and/or queer (LGBTQIA+ SB).

More than 60% of LGBTQIA+ SB people have experienced domestic, family, or intimate partner violence in their lifetime. According to the Private Lives 3 survey conducted by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (2020), more than four in ten participants reported having been in a relationship where they experienced some form of abuse by their partner(s), and almost four in ten also reported feeling abused by a family member—whether from birth or chosen family.

Experiences of trauma and stress related to being part of a minority group—often referred to as minority stress—alongside the impacts of systemic discrimination and violence against queer people, can make it difficult for LGBTQIA+ SB individuals to recognise abuse within their relationships. These challenges can be further compounded by fears of being misidentified, a lack of inclusive services, and limited education about IPV in queer contexts.

Abuse can take unique forms in LGBTQIA+ SB communities, such as the threat of “outing,” denial of identity, and preventing access to gender-affirming healthcare or community connection.

RELATIONSHIP CHECKLIST

Are you concerned that you might be in an abusive or unhealthy relationship? Below are some questions that may help you identify possible warning signs:

Does your partner or loved one:

- Humiliate, insult, or call you names?
- Threaten to “out” you to others?
- Prevent you from attending LGBTQIA+ SB events or spaces?
- Deny or invalidate your identity?
- Threaten to harm you, themselves, or others?
- Prevent you from accessing healthcare or social services?
- Have frequent, unpredictable outbursts of anger?
- Demand to know where you are at all times?
- Threaten or hurt your pets?
- Physically or emotionally harm you or your children?
- Punch, hit, kick, or damage objects (e.g., walls or doors)?
- Make you feel unsafe or afraid?
- Make you doubt your own feelings, reality, or memory?
- Control how you spend your money or access financial resources?
- Pressure or force you into unwanted sexual activity?
- Prevent you from accessing gender-affirming care or medication?
- Say you're not "masculine," "feminine," or "queer enough"?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may be experiencing domestic or family violence. If you're unsure, you can also take a more detailed relationship quiz [here](#)

WHAT IS DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Domestic and family violence refers to any abusive behaviour used by one person to gain or maintain power and control over another person in a close or personal relationship. This can involve an intimate partner, family member, or informal (unpaid) carer.

DFV and IPV can include:

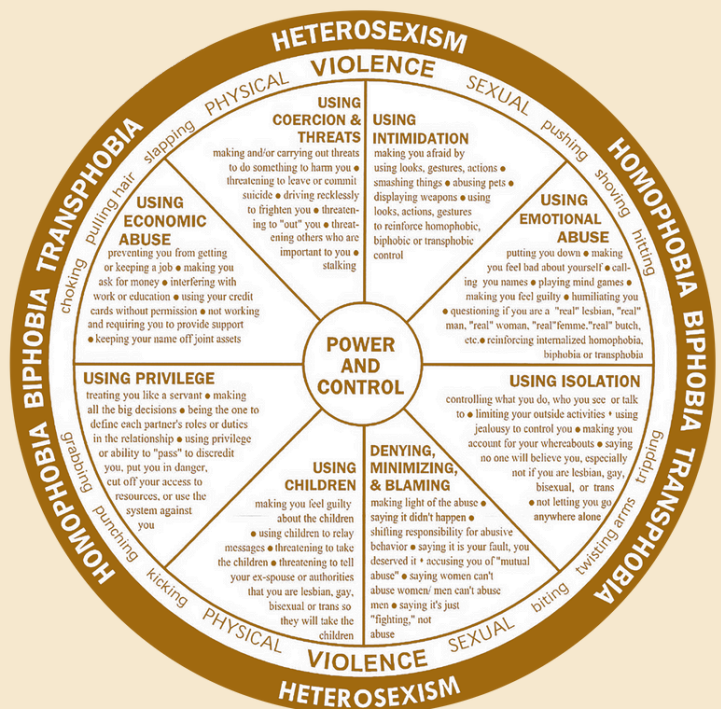
- Physical violence
- Sexual assault
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Social isolation or control
- Financial abuse
- Technology-facilitated abuse

In LGBTQIA+ SB communities, people may be more vulnerable to abuse during times of heightened identity-based stress—such as coming out, transitioning, or when facing community or family rejection. For example, people may experience abuse from a partner who threatens to out them, restricts access to affirming medical care, or isolates them from their cultural or queer communities. The social isolation many LGBTQIA+ SB individuals experience due to stigma, discrimination, or disconnection from family or faith-based communities can be used by abusers as a powerful tactic to maintain control.

LGBTQIA+ POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

Domestic and family violence doesn't always look the same in LGBTQIA+ SB relationships. The LGBTQIA+ Power and Control Wheel helps illustrate specific tactics commonly used to exert control, such as:

- Threatening to disclose someone's sexual orientation or gender identity
- Using slurs or invalidating someone's identity
- Limiting access to LGBTQIA+ affirming spaces or resources
- Preventing or sabotaging gender affirmation processes
- Justifying abuse through religious or cultural beliefs



IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING DFV OR IPV

Reaching out for support is a courageous step. Every LGBTQIA+ SB person deserves to feel safe, respected, and supported.

Here are some things you can do:

- Talk to someone you trust – This could be a friend, chosen family member, or peer. Speaking out can help you gain clarity and support.
- Contact a DFV service – Services such as DVNQ can help with safety planning, emergency accommodation, Domestic Violence Order (DVO) applications, police support, and court advocacy.
- Speak to a counsellor – Talking to a professional can help you assess your situation and explore your options. If you're transgender, gender diverse, or non-binary, a counsellor can support you without interfering with your gender affirmation process.
- Contact police if you're in danger – Call 000 in an emergency. For non-urgent matters, contact Policelink on 131 444. You can also ask to speak with an LGBTQIA+ Liaison Officer who is trained to offer respectful and discreet support.

SAFETY PLANNING

Whether you choose to stay in or leave the relationship, safety planning is important. DVNQ can help you develop a personalised safety plan.

For more information, visit our [Safety Planning Fact Sheet](#).

Support Services

- **DV Connect (Womensline – 24/7) – 1800 811 811** (If you identify as non-binary or gender fluid, you can call the helpline you feel most comfortable calling - Womensline or Mensline).
- **DV Connect (Mensline – 9am-midnight 7 days) – 1800 600 636** (If you identify as non-binary or gender fluid, you can call the helpline you feel most comfortable calling - Womensline or Mensline).
- **1800 Respect 24/7 National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service 1800 737 732**
- **Ask 1800Respect for a referral to your local Family and Domestic Violence services or click here** <https://www.1800respect.org.au/services>
- **DVNQ – 4721 2888**
- **LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation - [Get Help](#) | [LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation](#)**
- **Qlife: for LGBTQIA+ peer support, information and referral 3pm – midnight 1800 184 527**
- **Queensland Council for LGBTI Health – 07 4453 2209** this is the Townsville number
- **LGBTI Legal Service – 07 3124 7160 or Text 0485 908 380**
- **Queer Without Fear Booklet – [Click Here](#)**
- **Lifeline: 24/7 131 114**
- **LGBTQIA+ Police Liaison Officers - [LGBTQIA+ communities](#) | [QPS](#)**
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- **Lifeline: 24/7 131 114**