

# GBV AND LGBTQIA2+ FOLKS

## CONTEXT

Homophobic and transphobic violence constitute a form of gender-based violence (GBV), driven by intentional or unintentional harmful behaviours targeting those seen as defying gender norms.<sup>1</sup> Intimate partner violence (IPV) can also occur in LGBTQIA2+ relationships.

LGBTQIA2+ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, Two-Spirit, and other marginalized genders and sexual identities.

There is limited research on the prevalence of IPV amongst LGBTQIA2+ individuals. However, the available data suggest that IPV occurs in LGBTQIA2+ relationships at rates equal to or higher than in cis-heterosexual relationships, with bisexual and transgender folks at especially high risk.<sup>2</sup> GBV, including IPV, may be physical, psychological, financial, or spiritual.

## FORMS OF GBV COMMON TO THE LGBTQIA2+ COMMUNITY

- Disclosing (or threatening to disclose) someone's sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) to people to whom the individual is not 'out'.

1 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity*.

2 OHCHR, *Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity*.

- Persistent use of wrong/old pronouns or names for a person.
- Denying or ridiculing a person's SOGIE and/or telling them they are 'confused' or it is 'just a phase'.
- Making fun of, belittling, or name-calling someone based on their SOGIE.
- Persistently using terms that are not aligned with a person's gender identity to refer to their body parts.
- Preventing a partner from accessing necessary and gender affirming medical and mental health care, or shaming them for doing so.
- Isolating one's partner socially, culturally, or spiritually.
- Forcing a partner to perform sexual activities that are not aligned with their gender identity and/or sexuality.
- Threatening to disclose a partner's HIV status.

## BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SUPPORT

- LGBTQIA2+ survivors of violence who are also members of other marginalized or oppressed groups may face discrimination and stigma on the basis of their SOGIE within their own cultural communities.
- LGBTQIA2+ survivors sometimes experience racism and xenophobia within the LGBTQIA2+ community.
- Due to overlapping forms of oppression, LGBTQIA2+ survivors may be forced to make difficult decisions about their safety, "often trading one kind of safety for another."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> OHCHR, *Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity*.

- Fear and/or distrust of law enforcement and/or healthcare providers.
- Not having safe, accessible or affirmative services available in their local community.
- Harmful stereotypes pertaining to SOGIE and racial minorities (e.g. lesbian relationships are assumed to be safe; people of colour are not believed to be queer).

## BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERVIEWING/WRITING ABOUT LGBTQIA2+ FOLKS

- Acknowledge any stereotypes or prejudices you may have intentionally or unintentionally learned.
- When writing about transgender folks, always use the person's chosen name.
- Ask people what pronouns they would like you to use for them (please see [language tips](#)).
- Never put quotations around a transgender person's chosen name or pronoun.
- Try to avoid using gendered language when discussing the past or history of a trans person's life — if gendered language is necessary when discussing the past, use the pronouns that correspond to their present gender identity.

## LANGUAGE TIPS

<b>Don't say...</b>	<b>Instead, say...</b>
Homosexual	gay, gay man, or lesbian; gay person/people
Sexual preference	Sexual orientation, or orientation
Special rights	Equal rights, equal protection
Preferred pronoun	Pronoun (it is not a preference, it is an identity. For example, ask “what pronouns do you use?” or “what are your pronouns?” rather than, “what are your preferred pronouns?”)
Admitted homosexual, avowed homosexual	Openly lesbian, openly gay, openly bisexual
Transgenders, transgendered; a transgender (as a noun)	Transgender people; a transgender person/man/woman; trans person/man/woman; trans community.
Transvestite, transsexual, tranny, fag, crossdresser	These are outdated and offensive terms that can only be used/reclaimed by folks who identify as such.

<b>Don't say...</b>	<b>Instead, say...</b>
Sex change, pre-operative, post-operative	Transition Transition-related surgeries, gender-affirming surgeries, or gender-confirming surgeries (use plural where possible)
Biologically male or female	If this information is specifically relevant to the story, use AFAB or AMAB (assigned female at birth or assigned male at birth).

## LOCAL LGBTQIA2+ ORGANIZATIONS & PROGRAMS

### **Catherine White Holman Wellness Centre**

<https://cwhwc.com/>

### **I Belong**

<https://www.mosaicbc.org/services/settlement/lgbtq/>

### **Love Intersections**

<https://loveintersections.com/>

### **Out In Schools**

<https://outinschools.com/>

### **QMUNITY**

<https://qmunity.ca/>

### **Rainbow Refugee**

<https://www.rainbowrefugee.com/>

## **Safe Choices**

<http://endingviolence.org/prevention-programs/safe-choices-program/>

## **Sher Vancouver**

<http://www.shervancouver.com>

## **Trans Care BC**

<http://www.phsa.ca/transcarebc/>

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*Developed in consultation with Kate Rossiter and Nazanin Moghadami, Safe Choices LGBT2SQ Support and Education Program, Ending Violence Association of BC.*

### FURTHER READING

[equalpress.ca/LGBTQIA2+](http://equalpress.ca/LGBTQIA2+) 