

## Same-Sex Domestic Violence

Domestic abuse doesn't discriminate.

**Domestic Abuse is a serious issue among lesbians, gay men, bisexual, and transgender people. 25 to 30% of relationships are abusive regardless of gender or sexuality.**

[Click here to view the Power and Control Wheel for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Trans Relationships.](#)

### **How is lesbian and gay battering similar to battering in heterosexual relationships?**

No one deserves to be abused.

Abuse can be physical, sexual, or verbal behavior to coerce or humiliate, emotionally or psychologically.

Abuse often occurs in a cyclic fashion.

Abuse can be lethal.

The purpose of the abuse is to maintain control and power over one's partner.

Routine intimidation is used to gain that power.

The abused person feels isolated, afraid and usually convinced that they are at fault.

The incidence rate in relationships for gay/lesbian battering and heterosexual battering is approximately the same; 25% to 30% of relationships are abusive.

### **How is lesbian and gay battering different from heterosexual battering?**

Lesbians and gay men who are abused have much more difficulty finding appropriate support than heterosexual women do.

The myth that lesbian/gay domestic violence is "mutual" prevails

Using services such as the legal system or battered women's shelters is tantamount to "coming out" and a major life decision

Support services often minimize lesbian/gay domestic violence. Service providers may be ignorant of the severity of lesbian/gay battering.

Lesbian and gay survivors may know few or no other gays; leaving the abuser could mean total isolation from every community

The gay/lesbian community is small, and it is likely that everyone the survivor knows will soon know about the abuse.

The batterer can use blackmail to hold the victim in the relationship. Being "outed" at work

or to parents is sometimes more threatening than the abuse.

Service providers like law enforcement officers often feel GBLT abuse may be mutual due to gender and/or size of the abuser/abused.

If there are children in the relationship, seeking help will be “outed” and mean the survivor will never again see the abuser's children, since gays/lesbians have no parental rights.

Often for gays/lesbians, sympathetic friends are hard to find since the gay/lesbian community is not eager to acknowledge weaknesses that the heterosexual world will use to support homophobic stereotypes.

### **Battered Women's Project**

**24-hour hotline**

**1-800-439-2323 / out of state 207-769-8251**