



# Intimate Partner Violence and the LGB+ Community

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This information focuses on relationships between lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals and people of a sexual orientation that is not heterosexual (LGB+).

## What is intimate partner violence (IPV)?

- Gender-based violence caused by a current or former intimate partner or spouse
- Can include physical abuse, stalking, sexual violence, emotional/financial/spiritual abuse, coercive control, reproductive coercion, and cyberviolence

## IPV warning signs and abuse tactics unique to LGB+ survivors

- Homophobic/bisexual slurs by the perpetrator
- Questioning the validity of the partner's sexual orientation
- Controlling how partner expresses their sexuality
- Threatening to reveal partner's sexual orientation to friends, family, children, community, or employer to coerce a certain act or outcome

## Barriers to seeking help unique to LGB+ survivors

- Most IPV support literature presumes a heterosexual female audience
- Stigma and community denial that abuse can occur in same-sex relationships
- Since certain LGB+ communities may be small and tight-knit, victims may feel hesitant about disclosure and seeking help due to a lack of discretion or anonymity
- LGB+ victims might have greater mistrust of police, discouraging them from seeking intervention in serious incidents

## Canadian LGB+ women IPV statistics :

- LGB+ women experience higher rates of intimate partner violence since 15 years of age (67%) compared to heterosexual women (44%) – [Statistics Canada](#)
- LGB+ women report physical/sexual assault by intimate partner since 15 years of age almost twice as common (49%) compared to heterosexual women (25%) – [Statistics Canada](#)
- LGB+ women have experienced some form of IPV (20%) about double the rate of heterosexual women (12%) – [Statistics Canada](#)
- 55% of sexual minority women shared their experience with a friend or neighbour, 40% told a family member – [Statistics Canada](#)