

Common Fears of LGBT sexual violence survivors:

- Not being taken seriously or having their experience minimized.
- Not having their experience labeled as sexual assault or rape.
- Having their experience sensationalized.
- Having to explain how the assault happened in more detail than one would ask a survivor of opposite-sex assault.
- Being blamed for the assault.
- Not being understood or being blamed if it happened in an S&M environment.
- Being treated in a homophobic manner by the police, hospital, rape crisis center and others.
- Mistakenly being perceived as the perpetrator.
- Being “outed.”

How can I help my friend or partner?

- Believe your friend or partner who has been sexually assaulted/raped, it is very uncommon for individuals to create a false story of being raped.
- Respect their need for confidentiality.
- Avoid judgmental comments/jokes.
- Ask how you can be of assistance rather than giving them advice.
- Respect their decision even when yours may be different.
- Be a good listener.
- Avoid pressure to resume any form of sexual activity until initiated by your partner.
- Offer your unconditional love and support.

UMM Violence Prevention Center

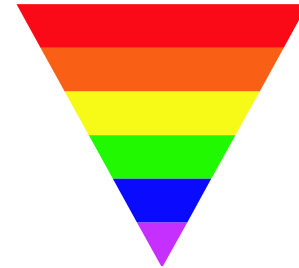
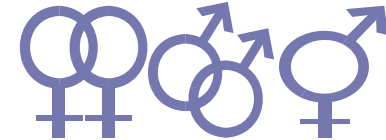
The UMM Violence Prevention Program offers free, confidential advocacy services for victims/survivors and concerned persons affected by sexual assault, relationship violence and stalking. All advocates are educated on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender concerns. The program also coordinates campus efforts to prevent violence.

Resources for the LGBT Community

- QIC- Queer Issues Committee
- Student Counseling
235 Behmler Hall
UMM
(320)589-6060
<http://www.morris.umn.edu/services/counseling/>
- California Coalition Against Sexual Assault
www.calcasa.org
- Community United Against Violence
www.cuav.org
- National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
<http://www.ncavp.org/>
- Northwest Network
www.nwnetwork.org
- The Network/La Red
<http://www.thenetworklared.org/>
- Survivor Project
<http://www.survivorproject.org/>
- OutFront MN
<http://www.outfront.org/>
- PFLAG
www.pflag.org

This project is supported by Grant No. 2006-WA-AX-0005 awarded by the Violence Against Women Office, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Sexual Violence



UMM Violence Prevention Center

Wellness Center
16-A Gay Hall
University of Minnesota, Morris
600 E. 4th St.
Morris, MN 56267
(320) 589-6061
1-800-974-3359 (24 Crisis Hotline)
[http://www.morris.umn.edu/services/counseling/
ViolencePrevention.html](http://www.morris.umn.edu/services/counseling/ViolencePrevention.html)

What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence is a broad term that encompasses a continuum of words and actions varying in degree from harassing comments of a sexual nature to sexual contact (including, but not limited to sexual intercourse) when such contact is achieved:

- Without consent; or
- With the use of physical force, coercion, deception or threat; or,
- When the victim/survivor is mentally incapacitated or impaired, physically helpless, asleep or unconscious.

Sexual violence includes rape, incest, child sexual assault, ritual abuse, stranger rape, date/acquaintance rape, partner/marital rape, sexual harassment, exposure and voyeurism.

What is same-sex sexual assault?

- *Same-sex sexual assault may include (but is not limited to) forced vaginal or anal penetration, forced oral sex, forced touching, or any additional form of forced sexual activity.*
- *Same-sex sexual assault may occur on a date, between friends, partners or strangers.*

A sexual assault is an attack not only on a person's body, but also on her/his dignity and emotional well-being. A sexual assault is NEVER the fault of the victim.

Does Sexual violence happen to LGBT people?

Sexual assaults happen to and are committed by, people of all sexual orientations.

Regrettably there is a lack of research on the prevalence of rape in the LGBT community.

In 1990 a study that was published in *Psychological Reports* concluded that 31% of lesbians and 12% of gay men had been raped. This study did not explain the type of relationship in which the rape occurred. Another study reported that 52% of the LGBT people had been raped by an individual of the same gender. This same study found that gay men reported 1.6 incidents per person on average; in comparison to the 1.2 incidents per person reported by lesbians.

It is estimated that approximately 10% of hate crimes against members of the LGBT communities involve sexual assault. This figure may be higher, because individuals who were assaulted may be unsure if they were targeted because of their sexual orientation.

Are LGBT people more likely than heterosexuals to be perpetrators of sexual violence?

No. Due to the oppression of LGBT individuals, they have faced discrimination for their gender orientation and sexual orientation; their sexual activities have been criminalized. In the vast majority of cases, perpetrators are heterosexual men. One common myth for LGBT individuals is that they are pedophiles. Actually, several studies have reported that heterosexual adults are more likely to be a threat to children than LGBT individuals.

Are LGBT people more likely than heterosexuals to be sexually assaulted by a stranger?

Regrettably, the answer is yes. Due to the heightened homophobia in the United States, LGBT individuals are at a greater risk for sexual assaults by strangers. Perpetrators frequently use

sexual assaults against LGBT individuals (and individuals perceived to be LGBT) to punish and humiliate them. This can be seen when an individual believes that they can "change" a woman's sexual orientation by specifically targeting lesbian and bisexual women for sexual assaults.

Issues regarding sexual assault that are unique to the LGBT community:

- Survivors who are not "out" may find sharing and/or reporting the sexual assault difficult or impossible.
- Due to the lack of awareness of same-sex sexual assault the LGBT community may make silence appear the only option.
- If the survivor's community is small, the fear of other's skepticism and/or people "taking sides" may cause the survivor to keep silent.
- Guilt and self-blame (which are common symptoms of all survivors) may lead to questioning ones sexual identity and sexuality.
- One's own internalized homophobia may further complicate the complexities of sexual assault.
- Gay/bi male survivors may be apprehensive to report and fears being ignored and/or rejected as overly sensitive due to the stereotype that they are promiscuous and invited upon themselves.
- Lesbian/bi women survivors may face being ignored or having their claims discarded if their attacker is a female because women are not socially seen as sexual perpetrators.