

# Same Sex and Transgender Sexual Assault

*Sexual Violence in the LGBTQ Community*



Just as in any other community, sexual violence has scarred the lives of many people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer. Some people within this community were sexually abused as children by a parent or a "friend" of the family. Some were assaulted as teens by an older adolescent or adult. Others have been sexually harassed - either in a predominately heterosexual environment *or* in a predominately queer environment. And some have been (or are currently being) sexually violated within an abusive romantic relationship. **No matter what kind of relationship you are in, no matter how you identify your gender or sexuality, sexual violence is an issue that affects us all in some way or another.**

Different issues that prevent people in LGBTQ communities from seeking help:

- Fear of heterosexist response in medical and criminal justice systems
- Fear of "outing" oneself
- Fear of isolation from community
- Fear of reinforcing negative stereotypes
- Lack of community resources

**Sexual violence does happen in the LGBTQ community.** There is a tendency for us to believe that all LGBTQ people are "safe"; that sexual violence could not happen within a same sex relationship; that sexual harassment only happens between straight people. And that even if it does happen, it should be kept quiet because there is enough abuse coming from the outside. **But, by keeping sexual violence within the LGBTQ community silent, we are isolating victims/survivors.** We are reinforcing the messages our society sends survivors of sexual violence - it's your own fault, you just have to live with it, you are alone, that wasn't *really* rape.

*SVC provides services to people of all genders and sexual orientation and offers services specifically for members of the LGBTQ community. We offer support groups for LGBTQ victim/survivors in a safe and supportive environment. **Call the Sexual Violence 24 hour crisis-line at (612) 871-5111.***