

Transgender/SOFFA:

Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault Resource Sheet

LGBT organizers and service providers (and non-LGBTs) often report that there are no transgender-specific resources available on domestic violence or sexual assault.

While it is true that professional journals have not published research on trans+/SOFFA SA or DV (namely because the research has not been conducted), there are many consumer-generated resources available. Likewise, many LGBT resources and articles state prevalence and demographic information on "LGBT" populations impacted by SA and DV. Quite often, this data is inaccurately including bisexual and transgender people, when they are only reporting on lesbians and gay men.

Turn to page four of this handout to learn some specific tactics used *against* transgender victims and *by* transgender abusers.

Service Impacts on Trans/SOFFA clients

- Transgender people and SOFFAs who have been abused have fewer services available to them.
- Many transgender/SOFFA individuals do not want to challenge the myth of community non-violence.
- As an already oppressed minority, trans+/SOFFAs are often hesitant to address issues that many fear will further "taint" the community. The LGBT community often wonders why they need to take on this issue as well as the others facing the community.
- The "battered women's" movement often avoids the fact that women batter, and men are victims. The pervasiveness of this myth has led police, hospital workers, and people in the criminal justice system to deny male victims or female perpetrators. (This is further "muddied" when people are not clearly "male" or "female".)
- Transgender and SOFFA individuals may be cautious in approaching medical providers, police, or the courts due to past experiences related to gender. These individuals may fear revictimization through transphobia, degradation, hostility or accusations from these service providers/public safety workers.
- Shelters are typically "male-" or "female"-only. Transgender people and SOFFAs may not be allowed entrance into shelters or emergency housing facilities due to their gender/genital/legal status.
- Because transness is eroticized and sexualized, many providers believe that S&M is a common practice among transgender people. The belief that all trans+ people want to be objectified and abused, totally denies the prevalence of DV in relationships involving a trans person.
- Even in larger cities, service providers who specifically outreach to transgender/SOFFA people may be limited. Many victims fear losing their privacy or not being able to maintain anonymity within care settings.
- There have been many custody cases lately involving trans+ people. The risk of losing custody of a child might influence a trans+ or SOFFA individual from coming forward about abusive behavior.
- The isolation that accompanies domestic violence can be compounded by being trans or in a relationship with a trans+ partner in a transphobic society. Silence about domestic violence within the trans+/SOFFA community further isolates the victim, giving more

Trans+ /SOFFA

Articles

Trans and Intersex Survivors of Domestic Violence: Defining Terms, Barriers, & Responsibilities

By Diana Courvant and Loree Cook-Daniels
www.survivorproject.org/defbarresp.html

Connectivity, Volume 7, Issue 2-3 - Mental Health

www.forge-forward.org/newsletters/v07i02/

- Giving Voice: Gender Identity and Sexual Trauma
(michael munson)

- Ask GearHead (question on spouses reaction to her trans lovers balding and similarities to her abuser)

A Walking Map Through the Oppression Of Trans & Intersex People

By Diana Courvant, Survivor Project
www.survivorproject.org/walkingmap.html

Why Serve Trans or Intersex Survivors?

By Diana Courvant, Survivor Project
www.survivorproject.org/whyserve.html

Gender Non-Conforming Youth and Sexual Assault

By Shannon Wyss
www.survivorproject.org/wyss.html

When Love Gets Rough

By Crystal H. Weston, J.D.
www.survivorproject.org/monique.html

Lesbian, Gay Male, Bisexual and Transgendered Elders: Elder Abuse and Neglect Issues

By Loree Cook-Daniels
www.forge-forward.org/handouts/tgelderabuse-neglect.html

Trans accessibility project: Making women's shelters accessible to transgendered women.

by Cope, A. & Darke, J. (1999). Toronto, ON: Ontario Ministry of Education and Training.
www.queensu.ca/humanrights/tap/

Trans inclusion policy manual for women's organizations. Vancouver, BC: Trans Alliance Society.

By Darke, J., & Cope, A. (2002).
www.transalliancesociety.org/documents/Policy_Manual_3.pdf

Trans survivors of domestic violence: Defining terms, barriers and responsibilities.

By Courvant, D., & Cook-Daniels, L. (1998).
<http://www.survivorproject.org/defbarresp.html>

Making the Transition: Providing Services to Trans and Intersex Survivors of Violence and Abuse

By Joshua Goldberg
In press. Soon to be available at the Trans Alliance website: www.transalliancesociety.org/education/publications.html

Family Violence Prevention Fund (2001). Responding to domestic violence in lesbian, gay, transgender, and bisexual (LGTB) communities.

San Francisco, CA: Family Violence Prevention Fund. Available at no charge by email (ordering@fvpf.org) or by visiting website at <http://endabuse.org/>

In your house: Responding when you suspect relationship abuse.

Avoid Strange Men, 1(1), 21-29. Gunn, J. L., & Goldberg, J. M. (2002).

Investigating women's shelters.

Gendertrash, 3, 7-10. Ross, M.-S. (1995).

Re/defining gender and sex: Educating for trans, transsexual, and intersex access and inclusion to sexual assault centres and transition houses.

By White, C. (2003).
<http://www.transalliancesociety.org/education/documents/03cwhitethesis.pdf>

Lines in the sand, cries of desire.

By Wilchins, R. A. (1997).
In C. Queen & L. Schimel (Eds.), *Pomosexuals: Challenging assumptions about gender and sexuality* (pp. 138-149). San Francisco: Cleis Press.
<http://www.annelawrence.com/linesinsand.html>

Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Resource Sheet

Web Sites

Survivor Project

www.survivorproject.org/

- information for survivors
- articles on DV related to people who are transgender or intersex
- links to other resources

FORGE Newsletter on DV (November 1999)

my.execpc.com/~dmmunson/Nov99_1.htm

Including:

- Medical Abuse "Domestic" Violence: Not Just a "Family" Matter (michael munson)
- Domestic/Sexual Violence & Gender Identity: You wanna talk complex? (Lindsay McBride)
- Domestic Violence within our Community (Rich Jentzen)
- labels and lies (tamlin)
- Sexual Assault in the Transgender Communities (Arlene Istar Lev and S. Sundance Lev)
- Are you in a domestically violent relationship?
- Men Who Beat the Men Who Love Them

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Email List

Trans_Survivors

To join our list, send an email to majordomo@groups.queernet.org. In the body of the email (not the subject line) type: subscribe trans_survivors

Trans+ /SOFFA

LGBT Anti-Violence Web Resources (may not be trans-specific)

Community United Against Violence

www.cuav.org/

Working to end violence against and within lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) communities.

Minnesota Center Against Violence & Abuse Electronic Clearinghouse

www.mincava.umn.edu/vaw.asp

Section on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans (GLBT) resources.

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs

www.avp.org/

Coalition of over 20 American lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender survivor programs.

Northwest Network

www.nwnetwork.org/

Resources on concerns of bisexual, trans, lesbian & gay survivors of abuse and dating violence.

The Network/La Red

www.thenetworklared.org/english/index.html

Formerly known as the Network for Battered Lesbians and Bisexual Women, was founded in 1989 to address abuse issues in queer women's and trans communities.

Remember Our Dead

www.gender.org/remember/

Memorial to people who have died as a result of transphobic violence.

Stop Abuse For Everyone (SAFE)

www.safe4all.org/

Stop Abuse For Everyone (SAFE) is a human rights organization that provides services, publications, and training to serve those who typically fall between the cracks of domestic violence services. These groups include men, gays and lesbians, teens, the elderly, and immigrants.

Tactics used against transgender victims

- Using pronouns not preferred by you or calling you "it"
- Calling you pejorative names
- Ridiculing how your body looks
- Telling you you are not a real man/woman
- Telling you that nobody would believe you because you're transgender
- Ridiculing or belittling your identity as a bisexual, trans, femme, butch, genderqueer....
- Claiming they are more "politically correct" and using their status as an L, G, B, and/or T person against you
- Claiming they know what's best for you, how you should dress or wear makeup (or not), etc.
- Denying access to medical treatment or hormones or coercing you to not pursue medical treatment
- Hiding or throwing away hormones, binders, clothes, etc.
- Eroticizing/fetishizing your body against your will
- Touching body parts you don't want touched, or calling them by terms they know you find offensive
- Telling you they thought you liked "rough sex" or "this is how *real* men/women like sex"
- Telling you that nobody will ever love you
- Telling you you don't deserve better and/or would never find a better partner
- Threatening to "out" you to your employer, friends, or family members
- Negating your personal decisions
- Threatening to take the children or turn them against you
- Forbidding you to talk to others about transgender topics

Tactics used by transgender abusers

- Claiming they are just being "butch" or that "it's the hormones" (to explain their violent behavior)
- Ridiculing or belittling your identity as a bisexual, trans, femme, butch, genderqueer....
- Claiming that your identity "undermines" or is "disrespectful" of theirs
- Charging you with "not being supportive" if you ask to discuss questions of transitioning timing and/or expense
- Denying that you are affected by the transition or by being partnered with a trans person
- Accusing you of not allowing him to have a "proper adolescence"
- Forbidding you to talk to others about transgender topics
- Telling you you would harm the LGB and/or T community if you exposed what was happening
- Negating your personal decisions
- Claiming they are more "politically correct" and using their status as an L, G, B, and/or T person against you