

# violent relationships



## You Are Not Alone

Many people think violent relationships only happen between men and women; but it can happen to anyone—gay or straight, young or old, rich or poor, female or male. It happens to people of all races and in all cultures of the world.

## It Is Not Your Fault

Domestic violence happens when one person believes they can control another person, using certain tactics to establish power through fear and intimidation. It can include, but is not limited to, the threat or actual use of physical violence, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and isolation. Also, homophobia or heterosexism within society may enforce the silence that surrounds same-sex domestic violence.

## You Can Get Help

Nobody deserves to be in an abusive situation. This brochure provides examples of how an abuser might try to establish power or control over their partner. No two abusive situations are the same, and abusers may use many, some, or just a few of these behaviors, as well as other kinds of abuse. Also included in the pamphlet is a list of resources specifically geared towards, or accepting of all members of the GLBTQ community.

## Abuse Tactics

### *Using Coercion & Threats:*

making and/or carrying out threats to do something to harm you • threatening to leave or commit suicide • driving recklessly to frighten you • threatening to “out” you • threatening others who are important to you • stalking

### *Using Intimidation:*

making you afraid by using looks, gestures, and actions • smashing tilings • abusing pets • displaying weapons • using looks, actions, gestures to reinforce homophobia and control

### *Using Physical Abuse:*

threat or actual use of physical violence • hitting • punching • kicking • biting • choking • pulling hair • slapping • grabbing • twisting arms • tripping • shoving

### *Using Sexual Abuse:*

forcing you to have sex • using unwanted sexual comments, gestures, or actions • forcing you to engage in unwanted sexual contact

### *Using Emotional Abuse:*

making you feel bad about yourself • calling you names • playing mind games • making you feel guilty • humiliating you • questioning if you are a “real” gay or lesbian • reinforcing internalized homophobia

### *Using Isolation:*

controlling what you do, who you see, or who you talk to • limiting your outside activities • using jealousy to control you • making you account for your whereabouts • saying no one will believe you because you are gay or lesbian

### *Minimizing, Denying & Blaming:*

making light of the abuse • saying it didn’t happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying it is your fault, you deserved it • accusing you of “mutual abuse” • saying women can’t abuse women/men can’t abuse men

### *Using Children:*

making you feel guilty about the children • using children to relay messages • threatening to take the children • threatening to tell your ex-spouse or the authorities that you are gay or lesbian so they will take the kids

### *Using Privilege:*

treating you like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the “lord of the castle”—being the one to define each partner’s place or duties in the relationship

### *Using Economic Abuse:*

preventing you from getting/keeping a job • making you ask for money • interfering with work or education • using your credit cards without permission • not working and requiring you to support him/her • putting assets in partner’s name only

## violent relationships *continued*

You deserve a healthy relationship, free of abuse. There are many places to go for help. The following resources are specifically geared towards, or accepting of all members of the GLBTQ community:

### Civil Protection Orders (CPOs)

CPOs are available to all victims of domestic violence within the GLBTQ community. Information on how to get a CPO can be found on pages 17-19 of the Domestic Violence Handbook for Victims OR by calling the District of Columbia Domestic Violence Intake Center at (202) 879-0172.

### National

*The National Domestic Violence Hotline:* 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE). This is a countrywide hotline that gives callers resource numbers for a specified area.

### District of Columbia

*My Sister's Place Hotline:* 202-529-5991.  
Provides shelter, transitional housing, support groups, advocacy, case management and hotline. Provides workshops specifically on Gay and Lesbian domestic violence.

*DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence:* 202-299-1181.  
Provides domestic violence resource and referral services.

*Domestic Violence Intake Center:* 202-879-1000.  
Provides various free legal services.

*Gay & Lesbian Hotline:* 202-797-4444.  
A crisis intervention hotline through the Whitman-Walker Clinic; a therapist is on-call.

*Legal Aid Society of DC:* 202-628-1161.  
Provides free legal assistance related to domestic violence, family law, adoption, custody, and housing in DC. Provides outreach specifically to the Gay and Lesbian community regarding domestic violence.

### Northern Virginia

*Violence Intervention Program Hotline:* 703-228-4848.  
Offers violence intervention and counseling for domestic violence, sexual assault, and abusive behaviors.

*Virginians Against Domestic Violence/Lesbian Caucus:* 1-800-838-8238. A hotline and referral service.

### Maryland

*Community Anti-Violence Project:* 410-377-8111.  
A program of TurnAround. Specifically provides services to the Gay and Lesbian community, including counseling, shelter, advocacy, and training to hospital staff on Gay and Lesbian issues. Serves Baltimore city and county.

*House of Ruth:* 410-889-7884.  
Provides shelter, counseling, day-care- and legal services.