Barriers to services:

- Reporting process which “outs” the survivor.
- Stereotypes that violence in a GLBT relationship is “mutual”; a similar assumption is not made in heterosexual relationships.
- GLBT community may not be supportive of victims as they may want to maintain the myth that there are no problems of relationship violence within GLBT relationships.
- Lack of competent “queer-friendly” helpers who are sensitive to the issues; homophobic service providers.

Help is available and recovery is possible. Talking with someone aids your recovery. Free and confidential services are available.

Contact the Rape Abuse Incest National Network 24/7 at 1-800-656-HOPE

GLBT RESOURCES:

- Gay & Lesbian National Hotline 1-888-843-4564
- Gay -& Lesbian Youth Hotline 1-800-347-8336
- GLBT Youth Support Line 1-800-850-8078
- Rape, Abuse, Incest, National Network 1-800-656-HOPE
- www.lambda.org
- www.NCAVP.org
- www.ocadvsa.org

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Sexual Violence Affects us All

Just as in any other community, sexual violence has scarred the lives of many people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Some of us within this community were sexually abused as children by a parent or a "friend" of the family. Some of us were assaulted as teens by an older adolescent or adult. Others of us have been sexually harassed - either in a predominately heterosexual environment or in a predominately queer environment. And some of us 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.

SAME SEX ASSAULT

- Includes forced vaginal or anal penetration, forced oral sex, or other forced sexual activity.
- As with opposite sexual assaults, the assault may occur within the context of an otherwise consensual relationship.
- It may include a penis, fist, finger, dildo, or other object.
- Victims are even less likely than opposite-sex survivors to report the assault.
- Victims may blame their victimization on their sexual orientation.
- Reporting is deterred by concerns about being "outed", perceptions of police and care-givers as homophobic, being seen as a "traitor" to the gay community, and lack of "queer-friendly" services.
- Victims experience the same emotional reactions, and are in need of the same support and intervention services, as opposite sexual assault survivors.

Woman to Woman Assault:

- Survivors often experience a sense of betrayal and disbelief that a woman could assault another woman.
- Woman-to-woman assaults are often trivialized or viewed as harmless "cat fights" with no real victim and no injury. This is an inaccurate misperception.
- Woman-to-woman assaults are rarely perpetrated by strangers, or by heterosexual women.

Male to Male Assault:

- The most common male-to-male assault is the rape of a man who is perceived to be gay by a heterosexual man.
- An assault of a heterosexual man leads him to question his sexual orientation.
- Male-to-male assaults also occur between gay men.
- Male victims often react with more overt anger than women do.
- Male victims may be afraid to seek services as they perceive sexual assault services to be "for women only."

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Although there is typically no concern for pregnancy, there is the possibility of internal injuries and sexually transmitted infections.