

ANOTHER CLOSET

Domestic Violence in Same Sex Relationships

Information for people who may be experiencing domestic violence in a same sex relationship.

ONLY TAKE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOU IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.

GETTING HELP AND SUPPORT

▶ The Police

The police have the power and the responsibility to protect you from violence and abuse. In an emergency call **000**. To speak with a Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer or to a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer you can call the police switchboard on **9281 0000** and ask to be put through to you local station.

▶ The Domestic Violence Line

The DV Line is the primary contact for people experiencing domestic violence in NSW. They can offer confidential support and information on:

- your legal rights including applying for an Apprehended Violence Order;

- accommodation options and;

- referrals to other services like refugees, counsellors and legal centres.

The DV Line is open 24-hours / 7-days a week on
Freecall **1800 65 64 63** TTY 1800 67 14 42

Please note: Calls made from a mobile will be charged to your account and will appear on you bill. Calls made from landlines and public phones are free and don't appear on your bill.

▶ Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project

The AVP runs a Report-Line and information and referral service. Calls to the Report-line can be made confidentially. This is not a crisis line. For emergencies call the police or the DV Line.

The AVP Report-Line is open Monday to Friday 10am - 6pm on
Phone **9206 2116** Freecall **1800 06 30 60**.



Attorney General's
department of NSW



For further info about same sex domestic violence including what to do if you are experiencing it and more contact numbers look at <http://ssdv.acon.org.au>

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence is any type of abusive behaviour by one partner that attempts to gain and maintain control over the other. It is about power and control.

Domestic violence causes, fear, physical injuries and/or psychological harm.

Abuse does not have to be physical to be domestic violence. All types of domestic violence are wrong and some like physical violence, sexual assault and stalking are crimes.

Domestic violence and its consequences are the sole responsibility of the person committing them.

TYPES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- ▶ **Emotional abuse** - Threats of violence, verbal abuse, 'outing', humiliation, put-downs.
- ▶ **Social abuse** - Being stopped from seeing friends or family and being isolated from the community.
- ▶ **Financial Abuse** - Having no access to or control over your money, having to account for every cent.
- ▶ **Sexual Abuse** - Sexual assault or being made to do sexual things you don't want to, eg threesomes.
- ▶ **Physical Assault** - Punching, kicking, pushing, slapping, choking, use of weapons.
- ▶ **Stalking** - Intimidation by phone, e-mail or text, constant watching or following.

ABUSE IN SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS

Even though it isn't often talked about domestic violence happens in gay and lesbian relationships.

Many people don't recognise or identify the abuse they or their friends may be experiencing as domestic violence. They may think it is just fighting. Once it starts domestic violence usually gets worse over time.

Domestic violence in same sex relationships is more than a mutual fight - it is about power and control. Women can be abusive and violent to their female partners and men can be the victims of abuse and violence.

An abusive partner will often try to minimise the abuse and violence, say they are sorry and that it won't happen again, or deny their responsibility for it. Blaming drugs, alcohol, stress or a 'bad' childhood are some ways of doing this. However, the abusive partner is responsible for their actions.

EFFECTS OF ABUSE

The effect of domestic violence on the abused partner varies from person to person. But in all cases it has an effect. These can include: fear; physical injuries; embarrassment and guilt; social isolation and loneliness; anxiety and depression and loss of confidence and self-esteem.

In many cases the abused partner also feels responsible for the abuse - as if they have done something to deserve or provoke it. This isn't true. Most abused partners use a range of strategies to prevent their partner getting upset or angry. Standing up for themselves is not a justification for abuse or violence. The abusive partner is solely responsible for the abuse and violence.

All of these potential effects are a natural reaction to experiencing abuse and violence. There is help and support available. Talk to a trusted friend or family member or one of the organisations listed overleaf.