



# Intimate Partner Violence in LGBTQ communities

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# Violence Recovery Program

617.927.6250 or 1.800.834.3242 or TTY 617.859.1256

**Intimate  
Partner  
Violence**

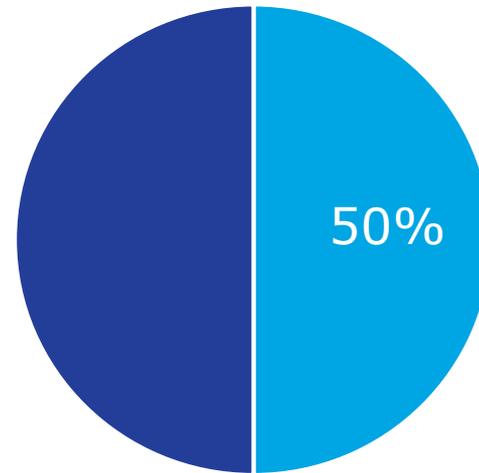
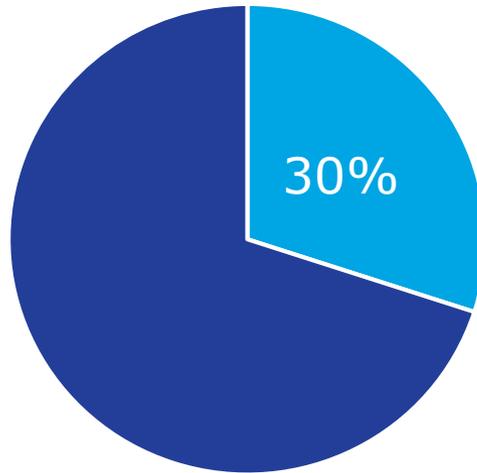
**Anti-  
LGBTQ  
Hate  
Violence**

**Sexual  
Violence**

**Anti-  
LGBTQ  
Police  
Misconduct**

- Free advocacy, counseling, support groups, and legal services
- Specialized in serving the LGBTQ community
- Services in Boston, Western MA, Fall River, and Cape Cod
- Education for providers
- Community events

# EXISTING RESEARCH SHOWS



**30% to 50% percent**  
**of transgender people experience intimate**  
**partner violence in their lifetime**

# DEFINITION OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

A **pattern of behavior** used by one person in an intimate relationship to assert **power and control** over the other person

\*IPV does not have to include physical violence

\*IPV is also called domestic violence, partner abuse, or dating violence



# CYCLE OF ABUSE

## Phase II:

### Tension building

- The abusive partner may make threats, angry gestures, or looks.
- The survivor feels like they are “walking on eggshells” to avoid upsetting their partner

**Increase in tension**

## Phase I:

### Kindness and loving

- The abusive partner may be loving, apologetic, attentive, or promise change.
- The survivor may feel guilty, responsible, minimize the abuse, or consider reconciliation

## Phase III:

### Abusive incidents

- The abusive partner uses tactics of abuse, is unpredictable, claims a loss of control, or blames their partner
- The survivor may feel traumatized, afraid, trapped. The survivor is most likely to leave at this time.

**Decrease in tension**

# THE IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNIZING ABUSE

Of trans survivors of IPV, it is estimated that 25% do not identify their experience as abuse.

As providers, we are in a position to help trans survivors identify IPV and get support.

# COMMON TACTICS OF ABUSE MAY INCLUDE:

## Emotional

Yelling

Blaming

Lying

Jealousy

## Isolation

Monitoring calls

Not allowing contact with others

Disrupting friendships

## Financial

Controlling money

Disrupting work or school

Not paying bills

## Sexual

Coercion

Assault

Sharing videos or photos

## Physical

Threats

Hitting

Kicking

Disrupting sleep

# WHY ISOLATION?

- creates a social deprivation
- creates dependence on the abusive partner
- allows dominance of abusive partner's worldview
- prevents friends and family from contradicting abusive partner
- prevents the partner from seeking support from others

# TRANS-SPECIFIC ISOLATION TACTICS

Denying the survivor access to trans community

Causing scenes at Pride or other LGBTQ events

Outing a survivor to family, their work, or their religious group

Convincing the survivor they will be rejected by others for their trans identity

Using the fear of external transphobia to as a justification to isolate

Acting as a gatekeeper to trans community

# CASE EXAMPLE

Lesbian cisgender woman isolates her partner, a transman, from LGBTQ community

# TRANS-SPECIFIC EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Blaming abuse on the partner's trans identity

Not allowing the partner to be out

Pressuring partner to be out

Saying they are embarrassed to be seen in public with their partner

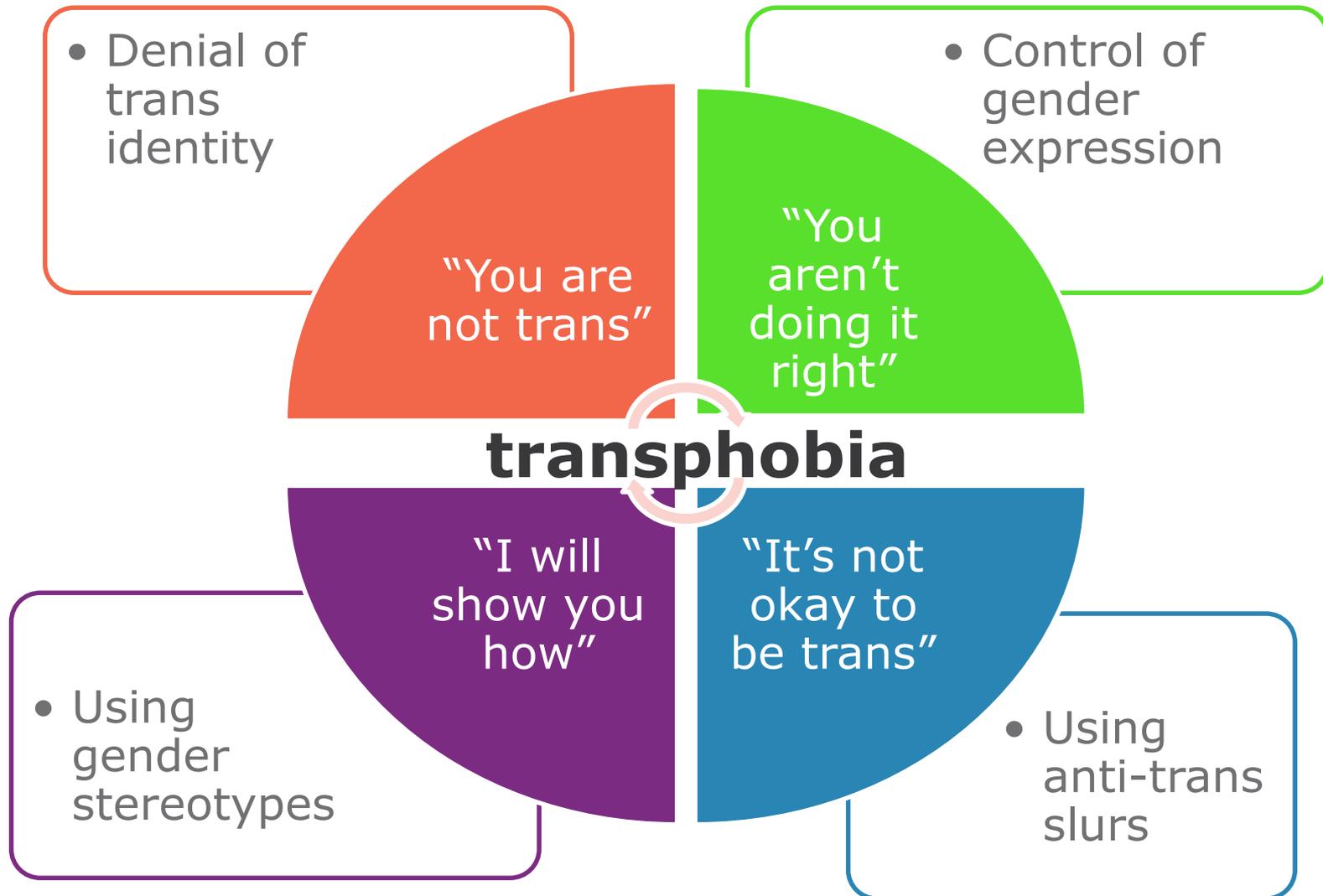
# IDENTITY/CULTURAL ABUSE

using personal characteristics to demean, manipulate and control the partner.

Some of these tactics overlap with other forms of abuse, particularly emotional abuse.

This category is comprised of oppressions including racism, sexism, classism, ageism, able-ism, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

# TYPES OF ANTI-TRANS IDENTITY ABUSE



# CASE EXAMPLE

Straight Cisgender woman becomes abusive when her “husband” transitions to be a woman

# TRANS-SPECIFIC SEXUAL ABUSE

Demanding sex as a way to affirm gender identity

Intentionally calling body parts by the wrong names

Using gender roles to control how the survivor has sex

Coercing survivor into having sex in a way that doesn't align with their gender

Forcing sex in exchange for housing

Eroticizing the survivor's body without permission

# TRANS-SPECIFIC FINANCIAL ABUSE

Outing the survivor  
at work

Not allowing  
survivor to pay for  
transition expenses

Not allowing the  
survivor to buy  
gender-related  
products

Supporting the  
survivor financially  
in order to control

Using gender roles  
as a way to  
demand the  
survivor pays more

# CASE EXAMPLE

Cisgender man offers to take care of a transgender woman financially and then uses this as justification for control and abuse

# TRANS-SPECIFIC PHYSICAL ABUSE

Targeting  
genitals or chest  
for physical  
violence

Not letting the  
survivor heal  
from gender-  
related surgeries

Denying the  
survivor access  
to hormones

Blocking  
transition-  
related care and  
recovery

Threats of to  
commit suicide  
or homicide

# TACTICS WHEN A TRANS PERSON IS ABUSIVE

Demanding sex as a way to affirm gender identity

Demanding survivor pay for transition expenses

Accusing survivor of transphobia to control behaviors

Claiming survivor's identity undermines theirs

Denying partner is affected by transition

Threats of to commit suicide

# CASE EXAMPLE

Transgender individual is abusive of their partner who identifies as non-binary

# BARRIERS FOR TRANS SURVIVORS



# BEST PRACTICES

- Continue to learn about transgender communities and their needs.
- Use gender neutral language to refer to clients (they, them) until you learn otherwise. Then ask for the survivor's name and pronoun.
- When you see signs of abuse, discuss it with the trans individual
- Tell them it is not their fault.
- Be able to refer to an LGBTQ-specific organization.
- Be realistic about homophobia & gender bias a person might encounter. Respect their choice if they opt not to enter a system they perceive to be biased.
- Have images that reflect the diversity of people you serve in your office and promotional materials.
- Be aware of your own areas of discomfort and biases
- Get more training and educate others, **especially providers.**

# LGBTQ-SPECIFIC IPV RESOURCES

- Fenway's Violence Recovery Program: 617-927-6250, [fenwayhealth.org/care/behavioral-health/violence-recovery](https://fenwayhealth.org/care/behavioral-health/violence-recovery)
- FORGE- Trans-specific anti-violence resources: [forge-forward.org](https://forge-forward.org)
- The Network/La Red- 24 hour Hotline: 617-742-4911, [www.tnlr.org](https://www.tnlr.org)
- National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs: [www.avp.org](https://www.avp.org)
- The Northwest Network: [nwnetwork.org](https://nwnetwork.org)
- National LGBTQ Institute on IPV: [LGBTQIPV.org](https://LGBTQIPV.org)
- VAWA special collections - Serving trans and non-binary survivors of domestic violence:  
[vawnet.org/sc/serving-trans-and-non-binary-survivors-domestic-and-sexual-violence](https://vawnet.org/sc/serving-trans-and-non-binary-survivors-domestic-and-sexual-violence)

# QUESTIONS

