

What is domestic violence?

Broken Rainbow LGBT Domestic Violence Service (UK) defines domestic violence and abuse as:

"Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality."

Domestic Violence and abuse can manifest in any of the following ways:

Physical - any behaviour that leads to physical injury such as spitting, punching, kicking, slapping, pushing.

Sexual - any unwanted sexual behaviour/assault

Psychological – using threats causing mental or emotional anguish, humiliation. Verbal or nonverbal conduct such as the 'silent treatment'. Threats to 'out' you, or disparaging remarks around gender identity for transgender people.

Financial - withholding money, coercion to borrow money, such as loans in your name and running up debts.

Domestic Violence is about abuse of power and control within a relationship

"We'd only been going out a few weeks when it started. First it'd just be phone calls when I was out with my friends. Then it escalated to hiding my travelcard or car keys. Finally she'd turn up at the bars I was in and call me names and put me down in public. I had to speak to someone about it but it was so hard because I'm not out. I called the helpline and I wasn't judged but just given support by people who really understood my dilemmas."

Broken Rainbow Helpline

0300 999 LGBT (5428)

We are the UK's only National LGBT Domestic Violence Helpline providing confidential support to all members of the LGBT community, their family and friends, and agencies supporting them.

Our helpline service is run by trained LGBT people who have an understanding of your sexual identity issues along with the impact domestic violence can have on your life.

How we can help

We can:

- help you build a safety plan
- discuss your housing options
- give general information about your legal rights
- tell you about local support services
- discuss making a police report
- provide confidential listening support
- or we can just listen

Domestic Violence is not something we feel comfortable talking about to others

"He wouldn't speak to me for days if I'd done something he didn't approve of or like. Once it was as simple as buying the wrong brand of bread. I called your helpline. They understood what I was going through, the problems I was facing. Just talking it through helped me see what I could do. I realised I had rights and choices – that was a real help."

Safety Plan

In immediate danger? Call the Police on 999.

A safety plan includes some of the following ways to keep yourself safer.

- tell someone you trust what is happening.
- arrange a safe place to go to should you need to leave quickly.
- think about how you can leave safely.
- prepare an emergency bag with medication, essential items, passport, etc...
- hide the bag where you can get to it in a hurry, or leave the bag with family or a friend.
- think about making copies of keys and hide them where you can get to them easily.
- keep abusive letters, e-mails and texts as evidence.
- if your partner injures you, go to a doctor or hospital for treatment so there is a record of the abuse.

Domestic Violence is not just physical and usually escalates once it starts

If you have already left the relationship and are still being harassed:

- tell someone and get advice on safety measures.
- work out safe routes, or travel with someone to/from work.
- Make your home safe by changing locks.