



**WE ALL HAVE
THE RIGHT TO
A LIFE
WITHOUT
VIOLENCE**

likestillingscenteret

KUN

ARE YOU QUEER AND A VICTIM OF VIOLENCE?

Many people are victims of violence from a partner or a close family member.

When someone who is meant to care about you is violent to you, this can be a painful and complicated situation. It is perfectly normal to still love and care about people who are violent to you. Perhaps you have known them for a long time, or they are part of your family, group of friends and network. If the person who is violent to you is someone you are or have been in love with and have close ties with, it can be difficult to notice

the signals telling you that something is wrong, or to predict when the person could become violent. Research also shows that there is little information available on queer relationships and violence. When a person is violent to you, it is always their fault, but you may feel that the person who is violent to you blames you and makes you feel like you provoked them and that you are difficult to live with.

DOES YOUR PARTNER, FORMER PARTNER, FAMILY MEMBER OR SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU

- Hit, pinch, bite, push, grab you, throw things or touch you in any other way that you don't like or that frightens you?
- Abuse you verbally, humiliate and threaten you?
- Use your gender or sexuality to threaten, scare or hurt you?
- Threaten to hurt you, hurt others you care about, or your pets?
- Destroy your things?
- Make unwanted sexual advances or force you into unwanted sexual contact?
- Refuse to wear protection during sex?
- Stop you from working or studying and doing what you want in your time off?
- Control how much money you spend and demand that you tell them what you've spent your money on?
- Deny you access to medical treatment or hormones?
- Control what you watch on the TV?
- Check your computer and mobile phone?
- Spread photographs of you without your consent?
- Use the wrong personal pronoun for you on purpose?
- Use your immigration status or ethnicity against you?
- Use your disabilities against you, refuse to help you or use your need for help as a reason why you have to accept that they are violent to you?
- Control who you spend time with socially or tell you not to have contact with friends, family, people at work or a LGBT network?
- Force you or pressure you into marriage without your consent?
- Make you doubt your own gender identity or sexual orientation?
- Put you under emotional pressure or threaten to hurt themselves if you leave them or ask for help somewhere else?
- Blame their controlling behaviour on alcohol or drugs?

IF YOU ANSWER YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, YOU MAY BE A VICTIM OF VIOLENCE IN A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

REFUGES

Every municipality in Norway has a refuge service that is free of charge and open 24 hours a day, all year round. These refuges provide a temporary and protected place to stay for victims of violence. You don't have to spend the night at the refuge to get help. You can also go there for conversations and guidance, both at the actual refuge or over the telephone. If you decide to go to the refuge for help, you can bring someone with you for support if you want.

Refuges do not demand any proof that you are a victim of violence before they give you support and guidance. You do not need to want to report the person who has been violent to you before you contact the refuge. If you prefer, you can talk with the people at the refuge anonymously.

National Domestic Violence Helpline	116 006
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The helpline for victims of sexual abuse	800 57 000
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Helpline for mental health	116 123
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The Red Cross helpline on forced marriage and female genital mutilation	815 55 201
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Go to [dinutvei.no](https://www.dinutvei.no) for a list of helplines, help services, laws and your rights.

NETWORKS AND HELPLINES FOR QUEER PERSONS:

FRI

The Norwegian Organization for Sexual and Gender Diversity.
Conversation service for adult queer persons:

regnbuetelefonen.no

SKEIV UNGDOM

Helpline and chat service for young people under the age of 30

ungdomstelefonen.no

SKEIV VERDEN

National association for LGBTIQ+ people with minority
backgrounds:

skeivverden.no

SALAM

Organisation for queer Muslims.


salamnorge.no

YOUCHAT

Anonymous chat facility for young queer persons run by Gay and
Lesbian Health Norway:

helseutvalget.no





"Persons who have no or little experience of living in queer relationships are extra vulnerable."

DIFFERENT KINDS OF VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION

Queer people are just as exposed to violence as others, but do not seek help as often. In a violent relationship, the victim's gender identity or sexuality can be used by their partner to control, undermine, or isolate them.

People who have no or little experience of living in queer relationships are extra vulnerable. In some cases, these persons may be led to believe that violence is a normal and natural part of such a relationship. Young queer people who use online dating/dating apps may

also be extra vulnerable. Age differences in these relationships can sometimes be quite large, and it can at times be difficult to distinguish between positive reinforcement and exploitation.

Some people are victims of several different types of violence. It is important to view these as a whole in order to understand the totality of the physical and mental consequences. For the victim of violence, it may seem meaningless to distinguish between the different types of violence and the reasons behind them.

MINORITY STRESS

Many people who belong to or are thought to belong to a minority group experience ignorance, stereotyping and prejudice from others. Always feeling that you have to assess the risk in a situation, in a person you meet or place you visit can be stressful and tiring. You can also experience minority stress if different sides of your identity are ignored. This could involve, for example, people you care about ignoring your sexual orientation.

If you have another minority identity in addition to being queer, for example a disability, Sami ethnicity or an immigrant background, you may experience increased minority stress. It is also not unusual for persons with several different minority identities to experience several different kinds of violence – both sexual, physical and verbal violence.

HATE CRIMES

Hate crimes are crimes that are based on racist, xenophobic and homophobic motivations, or that in some way or another are based on prejudices against one person or a group of persons because of their actual or assumed group identification.

Hate crimes are punishable offences, and can be particularly difficult for persons who are victims of both violence in close relationships and hate-motivated violence and hate speech.

NEGATIVE SOCIAL CONTROL AND HONOUR-RELATED VIOLENCE

Negative social control involves different kinds of pressure, threats and force with the intention of making individuals follow the norms or values of their family or a social group. Such groups could be a religious community, a group based on common ethnicity or a person's extended family. In some communities, being lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex or transgender is taboo. When a person comes out, this can be seen as a loss of honour for the family or group, and can be used as a reason for honour-related violence or forced marriage.

Some communities also see disabilities as a punishment from God or as proof that the person's parents have sinned. Young disabled persons may therefore experience negative social control, and even more so if they are queer.



FOR PERSONS WHO PROVIDE HELP

If you are working for a helpline or service, or if you need to talk to someone who works for a helpline or service, it is a good idea to be familiar with the information below. Research has shown that violence in close relationships normally involves asymmetrical positions of power in relation to the primary person who is violent, whether the persons in the relationship are queer or straight. At the same time, there are a number of specific factors that are common for violence in close relationships among queer persons:

- Threatening to tell the victim's family, friends or colleagues about their sexual orientation and gender identity
- Increased isolation because of the lack of support from the family or social safety network
- Victims can be made to feel insecure about their own gender identity or sexual orientation
- The victims may be limited or controlled when it comes to having access to groups or meeting places that would help them come out and become familiar with their own gender identity and sexual orientation
- The victims may be made to feel that they deserve to be a victim of violence because of their internalised negative self-perception

- The victims may believe that there is no help available because they have experienced homophobia/transphobia from support services and helplines etc.
- Violent partners can manipulate and convince their victims that nobody will believe that they are a victim of violence, by using heteronormative myths of aggression and violence. Examples of these kinds of myths are that women cannot be violent, or that men cannot be victims of violence in close relationships.
- A violent partner can manipulate the victim into believing that violence is a normal part of a same-sex relationship, or pressurise the victim into trivialising the violence in order to protect the reputation of the LGBTI community
- A violent partner may give the impression that the violence is mutual or that the victim consents to being a victim of violence
- A violent partner could threaten to call the police and claim that they themselves are a victim of violence in the relationship
- Keeping a partner's medication from them or preventing them from getting necessary treatment to express their gender identity



BARRIERS

There are several factors that can stop persons who do not follow the norms for gender and sexuality from asking for help when they suffer violence in close relationships. Minority stress may be a contributing factor. Victims of violence may have negative experiences from when they have been in contact with public services before. The feeling of not being believed because of their bodies, appearance or gender expression can result in a lack of trust in the help services. Victims of violence who, for example, are larger and look stronger than their partners, may feel that it is difficult to be believed.

For persons who are in several minority groups, these barriers may be more complex and greater in number.



CREATING SAFE SPACES

If you work with violence in close relationships, it is important to actively signal that this is a safe space where you can talk about gender and sexuality, to create safe boundaries and to recognise and express that violence can also happen in queer relationships.

GOOD ADVICE FOR CREATING SAFE SPACES:

- Learn to use words and terminology for gender and sexuality by reading, for example, the glossary of LGBT terms published by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir).
- Use inclusive words in texts and presentations.
- Please also remember that queer persons may also belong to other minority groups. Not all queer persons are ethnic Norwegians or are non-disabled!
- Say “partner” or “loved one” rather than “your husband” or “your wife”. Gender-neutral and inclusive words can make it easier for the person you are talking with to open up. You can ask them what pronoun they would prefer you to use.
- Make sure that gender and sexuality diversity are explicitly mentioned in websites and brochures/posters you use.
- Learn more! Make sure you and your colleagues take all training courses offered, so your knowledge about how to reach out to the entire population is up-to-date.
- In your premises: make it clear that you provide services for all persons: Use the rainbow flag, lay out brochures and hang up posters showing relevant issues, make active use of notice boards. The back page contains different versions of the Pride flag. Feel free to hang one or more on your walls!

GLOSSARY

BISEXUAL

Being bisexual means being attracted to and/or falling in love with people regardless of their gender.

CIS PERSON

Being a cis person means that you identify with the biological sex you were born with. For example, a person who has a penis who was identified as male at birth and identifies as male.

HEN (PRONOUN)

“Hen” is a gender-neutral pronoun used in Norwegian for a person who does not identify as female or male. There is no equivalent in English. “Hen” can also be used to address people if you do not know which pronoun they use or when their gender does not matter. It is recommended to ask a person what pronouns they prefer to use.

GAY

A gay person can fall in love with and/or be sexually attracted to someone of the same gender.

NON-BINARY

A person who does not feel they belong to either category of “man” or “woman”. Some identify as something in between a man or woman, others just identify as persons. This has nothing to do with how a person's body looks, but is a question of gender identity.

INTERSEX

Intersex means having a body that has both so-called male and female sex characteristics. Intersex bodies are all very different, and the variations may involve many different aspects, from genitalia to chromosome levels.

GENDER IDENTITY

A person's internal experience of what gender they are. Our perceived gender is not determined by the body we are born with.

LESBIAN

Gay women, women who are attracted to and/or fall in love with other women, are often referred to as lesbian.

NORMS

Unwritten rules, thoughts and ideas in society. Norms create expectations of how we should behave, look and act. They create ideals that tell us what is positive, desirable and preferable, and what is not. Persons who go against these norms will end up noticing that the norms exist. Going against the norms results in sanctions, everything from people looking at you nastily and asking questions, to hate crime and social isolation. The norm of couples, the norm of having only two genders, and the heterosexual norm – these are all norms commonly broken by queer persons and that can result in sanctions.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Sexual orientation relates to the words we use to describe our own sexuality. Who you are attracted to sexually and romantically. Only you can decide how to identify yourself, nobody else.

SEXUAL PRACTICE

Sexual practice involves what type of sexual intercourse you have. There is not necessarily any link between identity, attraction and who you have sexual intercourse with. A person who identifies as a straight man could, for example, practice sex with other men without this having any link with their sexual orientation.

QUEER

A collective term for sexual orientations, gender expression and gender identities that do not follow society's expectations that you should be straight and cisgender.

TRANS PERSON

A trans person identifies as fully or partly something else than the gender they were born with. Trans people may also use the terms trans, trans person, transman, transwoman, transgender, non-binary, born in the wrong body etc. to describe themselves.



Rainbow flag



Transgender flag



Sami pride flag

7 THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. Queer people can also experience violence in close relationships
2. Violent relationships always feature an imbalance in power
3. Violence can occur in many types of relationships
4. Violence in close relationships is not a question of size or strength, or who looks most masculine or feminine
5. In violent relationships, women can be just as violent as men
6. Sexual violence can also occur in same-sex relationships
7. It is just as difficult for queer persons to leave a violent relationship as it is for straight persons