

ADDITIONAL FORMS OF ABUSE UNIQUE TO GAY RELATIONSHIPS

These are abuses that arise as a direct result of the heterosexist and homophobic nature of society. Partners who abuse often use homophobia and heterosexism as a weapon of control over their partner in a variety of ways;

- ◆ By 'outing' or threatening to out their partner, to friends, family, employer, police, church or others in the wider community.
- ◆ By telling a partner that no one will help him because the police and the justice system are homophobic.
- ◆ By telling a partner that he will not be believed because homosexuals do not rape or abuse their lovers.
- ◆ By telling a partner that he deserves it because he is homosexual. This type of abuse is indicative of internalised homophobia or self-hatred by an abuser.
- ◆ By telling a partner that he is not a 'real' homosexual because he used to relate to women, has female friends, is a 'breeder', or prefers certain sexual practices or behaviours.
- ◆ Because of the pervasiveness of heterosexism, an abuser may attempt to convince a partner that the abusive behaviour is normal & that the abused partner does not understand gay relationships.
- ◆ Abusers can also rely on heterosexist or sexist stereotypes to hide or increase power & control over their partner by portraying the violence as mutual or consensual combat.

Bill of Rights

- I have the right to be safe
- I have the right to a violent free environment and lifestyle
- I have the right to equality
- I have the right to respect
- I have a right to be appreciated
- I have a right to my dignity
- I have a right to make choices
- I have a right to receive empathy and warmth
- I have a right to be accepted as I am
- I have a right to say no

NQDVRS

Funded by the Department of Communities

- **Information and referral**
- **Aardvarc program for children**
- **Community education & training**
- **Resources**
- **Court Support**
- **Men's Behavioral Change Program**

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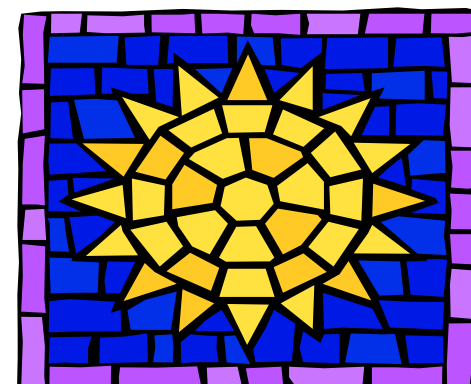
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Against Violence # 23

INFORMATION FOR MEN IN A GAY RELATIONSHIP

North Queensland Domestic
Violence Resource Service



“My bruises healed about a week after I left my ex-lover, but two years later I was still dealing with the traces of his constant criticism and the erosion of my self esteem.”

Men who beat the men who love them
Island & Letellier 1991.

WHAT IS SAME SEX DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic violence in all intimate relationships is essentially about power and control, irrespective of the label used to describe the relationship. It occurs when one partner tries to control, dominate and have power over the other by using psychological and/or physical violence. There are many forms that domestic violence may take.

Physical; hitting, punching slapping, pushing ...

Sexual; rape, indecent behaviour without consent ...

Verbal; put downs, name calling, mind games ...

Financial; withholding access to money, not allowing you to earn your own money

Social; isolation from friends and family ...

Many people who are victims of domestic violence say that it is often not the physical abuse which hurts most but the fear and emotional pain inflicted on them by their partners. Violence/abuse may not be acted out directly on a person but also on their pets, family and property. 'Indirect abuse' is still abuse and those that use it are committing an act of domestic violence.

WHY NOT JUST LEAVE?

Some people may not understand why victims stay with the men who batter them. Here is a short list of reasons people have given for staying:

- The victims may still love their partners.
- Victims do not want to leave the men they love; they only want the violence to stop.
- Victims hope and believe, often for a long time, that the violence will stop.
- The violence is periodic, and the loving periods between violent episodes entice the victims to stay.
- Victims may believe they provoke, cause or deserve the violence and are sometimes told so by others.
- They may have left before but were encouraged by friends, family, therapists, the clergy, or the police to "go home" where they belong.
- Victims may have tried to leave and been abused for it.
- Victims no longer believe they can escape.
- If they manage to escape, where do they go?
- Victims are threatened with more violence, or even death, if they try to leave, and, with good reason, they believe these threats.

Don't be a victim of domestic violence any longer! Become a survivor and heal your life.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTECTION ORDERS

In 1999, the Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Act 1989 was amended to include same sex couples under the definition of 'spousal' or 'intimate personal' relationship. This means that gay men can now have greater legal protection from a violent partner/ex-partner.

A Protection Order is a Civil Court order that provides a victim of violence with legal protection from another person. As well as being ordered not to be violent towards the victim, the person who the order is made against (the Respondent) can be ordered not to contact or communicate with the victim or go to their home or workplace. However, you can have a Protection Order and still live together.

Because the order is not criminal it will not appear on a person's criminal record unless they 'breach' (disobey) it.

Domestic Violence court is a closed court, so no members of the public are present when your application is presented to the court. For more information on Protection Orders, contact NQDVRS, the police or the Magistrates court.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE...VIOLENCE IS UNACCEPTABLE.