Trauma in Queer Communities

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Queer Asterisk
### Common Types of Trauma

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<th>Systemic Trauma</th>
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<td>Microaggressions</td>
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<td>Harassment</td>
<td>Discrimination- Transphobia and Homophobia</td>
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<td>Traumatic Loss</td>
<td>Societal Stigma, Bias, and Rejection</td>
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<td>Sexual Assault</td>
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<td>Physical Abuse</td>
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<td>Intimate Partner Violence</td>
<td>Hate Crimes and Acts of Violence (Matthew Shepard, Orlando Shootings)</td>
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“LGBTQ people face higher rates of poverty, stigma, and marginalization, which put us at greater risk for sexual assault. We also face higher rates of hate-motivated violence, which can often take the form of sexual assault. Moreover, the ways in which society both hypersexualizes LGBTQ people and stigmatizes our relationships can lead to intimate partner violence that stems from internalized homophobia and shame.”

(HRC.org)
The CDC’s National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey found

44 percent of lesbians and 61 percent of bisexual women experience rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner, compared to 35 percent of heterosexual women

26 percent of gay men and 37 percent of bisexual men experience rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner, compared to 29 percent of heterosexual men

46 percent of bisexual women have been raped, compared to 17 percent of heterosexual women and 13 percent of lesbians

22 percent of bisexual women have been raped by an intimate partner, compared to 9 percent of heterosexual women

40 percent of gay men and 47 percent of bisexual men have experienced sexual violence other than rape, compared to 21 percent of heterosexual men
Within the LGBTQ community, transgender people and bisexual women face the most alarming rates of sexual violence. Among both of these populations, sexual violence begins early, often during childhood.

- The **2015 U.S. Transgender Survey** found that 47% of transgender people are sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime.
- Among people of color, American Indian (65%), multiracial (59%), Middle Eastern (58%), and Black (53%) respondents of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey were most likely to have been sexually assaulted in their lifetime.
- Nearly half (48 percent) of bisexual women who are rape survivors experienced their first rape between ages 11 and 17.
Trauma’s Impact on Queer Wellbeing

- LGBT youth are 2 to 3 times more likely to attempt suicide.
- LGBT youth are more likely to be homeless.
- Lesbians are less likely to get preventive services for cancer.
- Gay men are at higher risk of HIV and other STDs, especially among communities of color.
- Lesbians and bisexual females are more likely to be overweight or obese.
- Transgender individuals have a high prevalence of HIV/STDs, victimization, mental health issues, and suicide and are less likely to have health insurance than heterosexual or LGB individuals.
- Elderly LGBT individuals face additional barriers to health because of isolation and a lack of social services and culturally competent providers.
- LGBT populations have the highest rates of tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use.
Discrimination against queer individuals has been associated with high rates of psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, and suicide.

The effects of violence and victimization towards queer individuals are severe and long lasting.
LGBT people often struggle with depression, anxiety, trauma and self-acceptance as a result of facing ongoing discrimination over their lifetimes.
Supporting Queer Survivors
Personal, family, and social acceptance of sexual orientation and gender identity affects the mental health and personal safety of LGBT individuals.
When Supporting Queer Trauma Survivors...

- Represent a diverse array of victimization experiences
- Recognize impact of systemic discrimination
- Connect to community and social supports
- Offer gender neutral treatment resources
- De-gender language in treatment and support resources
- Avoid assumptions about gender identity and sexuality
- Receive queer inclusive training for all staff and treatment providers involved
- Have queer and trans providers on staff