

If you are being abused you need to know:

You are not to blame for the violence!

You do not deserve to be abused.

You have a right to live without fear.

You cannot control the abuser's behavior.

Abuse always gets worse over time.

What can you do?

Tell someone what is happening to you.

Call for counseling and support.

Make a **safety plan** in case you have to leave quickly, things like:

- Set aside an extra set of keys, I.D., glasses, bank cards, cash, address book, medication, and important papers. Keep this outside your home.
- Find a safe place to go, which will not be easily guessed by the abuser.

What can I do if I think I'm being abusive?

Ask yourself:

Am I threatening my partner?

Am I trying to punish or blame my partner for my actions?

Am I constantly lashing out at them?

Do I feel like hurting my partner or myself?

Answering "yes" to any of these means it's time to think about your actions, take responsibility and stop hurting your partner. Leave the situation or relationship if necessary to keep your partner and/or yourself safe. Call on friends, family, and/or a counsellor to help you change your behaviours.

Responding as a community

Stopping same-sex partner abuse requires a community response. Here are some ideas...

Talk openly about abuse in same-sex relationships.

Support friends to stay connected to one another and help to break isolation.

Help to find information and resources if friends are abused or abusive.

Abuse happens in all our communities.

Don't support harmful stereotypes that say some communities are more likely to have violent relationships. For example, people of colour; Aboriginal people; 'the bar crowd'; s/m community; butch/femme couples; trans & bisexual communities.

Resources in Saskatoon

Shelters:

Salvation Army Men's Shelter 242-6280

Crisis:

Mobile Crisis Line 933-6200 (24 hr)

Saskatoon Police 9-1-1 (24 hr)

Information & Support:

Avenue Community Centre 665-1224

Sexual Assault Line 244-2224 (24 hr)

Victims Services 975-8400

For more information, please contact us at
***The Avenue Community Centre
for Gender and Sexual Diversity***

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**You deserve a bonus at work.
You deserve praise and encouragement.
You deserve that sweater in the window
You deserve to live your dreams...
You deserve to not be afraid.
You deserve to be treated with respect.**



**Let us give same-sex partner
abuse the attention it deserves.**



Types of Abuse:

Coercion, Threats & Intimidation

Threatening to destroy possessions, stalking or slandering you.

Threatening to “out” you to family, friends or work place.

Threatening to mutilate themselves or commit suicide if you leave or do not do what they want.

Threatening to hurt you, your family, friends, former lovers or pets.

Economic Abuse

Forcing you to work, keeping you from going to work/school, refusing to work themselves.

Controlling money, spending all income (yours/theirs) on drinking, drugs, clothes, restaurants, fines, bail, etc.

Ruining your credit rating, selling your property.

Mental Abuse

Controlling your sense of reality, name calling, never allowing you to have a say.

You have to adjust your life to their moods.

Forcing you to change your lifestyle, eating habits, friends, looks, clothing, beliefs etc. in order to stop fights.

Blaming you for their behavior.

Constantly accusing you of cheating.

Physical Abuse

Biting, slapping, kicking, choking, grabbing, punching, shoving, tripping, scratching.

Twisting arms, pulling hair, using weapons, withholding food, throwing objects.

Sexual Abuse

Forcing sex on demand, forcing unwanted sex acts, using pornography or past history as a way to force sex acts.

Threatening to leave, having other lovers.

Withholding sex.

Spiritual Abuse

Ridiculing, criticizing, putting down, or forbidding your language, beliefs, culture, racial identity, spiritual mentors, practices or items.

Destroying or otherwise defiling spiritual objects, tools, medications or other items.

Myths About Gay Male Partner Abuse:

“Men do not need help.” A common belief within mainstream culture is that men cannot be victims, that men do not suffer, and that “big boys don’t cry.” Traditionally, masculinity has glorified independence, self-reliance, strength, power, dominance, and emotional restraint. A gay man may attempt to assert this notion of what it means to be manly, while at the same time feeling inadequate and less than manly because of his sexual orientation. He may resist seeking therapy to address his victimization in an intimate relationship because it may seem equivalent to surrendering control to another.

Gay couples assume “male and female” roles. Some people assume that a battered gay man must be in the “female” role, that he must be the effeminate or weaker spouse. *This perspective obscures the fact that abuse can occur in any relationship, without regard for one’s gender or sexual orientation.* As well, the abusive partner is not necessarily the *bigger* or more masculine of the two. The use of physical force does not necessarily have anything to do with size or strength. Moreover, many forms of abuse do not involve the use of physical force at all.

“Boys will be boys.” Society sanctions violence between men in many contexts. It may be assumed that a fistfight between two men is

a fair fight. (“You’re a man. Hit him back!”) This is also a common reaction to disclosure of abuse between gay partners. The notion, held by some, that men are violent by nature contributes to the perpetuation of male violence.

“Gay men are sexually aroused by violence.” “Isn’t it just sadomasochism?” This is a common perception that is *based on misconceptions about the nature of homosexuality.* In reality, sadomasochism which may be practiced by females as well as males, and heterosexuals as well as homosexuals *involves consent.* Abuse is not consensual.

“Leaving is easier for people who are not married.” Gay relationships (whether married or otherwise) are no easier to leave than any other conjugal relationship, as they are often established in love and supported by emotional commitment. Moreover, if the victim of an abusive relationship is alienated from his family and other social circles, the relationship may hold even greater importance in his life.

Although studies on the prevalence of abuse in gay male relationships are few, there are strong indications that it is at least as common as abuse in heterosexual relationships. Its effects are similar to those caused by abuse in opposite-sex relationships and they can be amplified by the realities of the cultural contexts of both the gay community and the wider society of which they are a part. Mainstream culture is full of myths about the nature of homosexuality and gay relationships. Those myths, together with the personal histories and social realities of gay men, serve to create barriers to their ability to disclose abuse or to seek help to deal with it.