



Building Organizational Capacity to Serve LGBTQ+ Victims/Survivors

1. Begin with a needs assessment

- a. What resources do you have already and where are their gaps in meeting the needs of survivors? Is the community underreporting?
- b. Who are your partners in this work? Are LGBTQ+ folks at the table?
 - i. If you can't hire someone who is LGBTQ, identify and build relationships with LGBTQ+ partners who you can consult. But ideally you should have a diverse staff across race, sexuality, and gender.
 - ii. Make sure your partners and referral sources are ready to be involved in this work.

2. Perform an informal organizational audit to assess where your

agency/department is in terms of LGBTQ+ inclusion. This may include:

- a. Updating intake forms for clients to optionally disclose gender, pronouns, and/or sexual orientation.
- b. Incorporating LGBTQ+ and gender-neutral language into safety-planning guides, survivor resources, and other materials.
- c. Integrating LGBTQ+ specific language and victim/survivor concerns into organization's policies and protocol. Ensure your anti-discrimination policies include sexual orientation and gender identity.
- d. Finding affirming imagery to put in the physical space and on digital spaces, i.e. your website and social media. This can be as simple as a pride flag.
- e. Create a gender-neutral restroom in your facility if possible.

3. Training & Technical assistance for all staff

- a. Seek out training opportunities to learn more about the unique needs

of LGBTQ+ survivors and how to serve the community in a more culturally-informed way. Remember that language is quickly evolving and we must continue to learn and grow as anti-violence professionals. Make sure your team is committed to DO the work.

4. Targeted outreach to LGBTQ+ community

- a. Be visible at campus or community events catered to LGBTQ+ populations to build relationships and increase awareness of support services.

5. Increase LGBTQ+ survivor input

- a. Seek out survivors and/ or LGBTQ community members who may be interested in this work and hear from their perspective! Create a mechanism for folks in these communities to share feedback about the perception of the agency as well as satisfaction with services received.

6. LGBTQ- specific programming

- a. When you have the capacity to do so, offer LGBTQ+ specific programming related to anti-violence, such as events or workshops during DVAM or SAAM, and partner with LGBTQ groups to host these events. Additionally, creating spaces specifically for LGBTQ survivors, such as a support group, can be very beneficial for survivors on their healing journey. The opportunity to connect with other survivors who have faced unique challenges because of their gender or sexual orientation can be affirming and powerful.

The work doesn't end here! If you have questions or would like technical assistance building your organization's capacity, you are welcome to reach out to Kate via email.

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