

niwrc

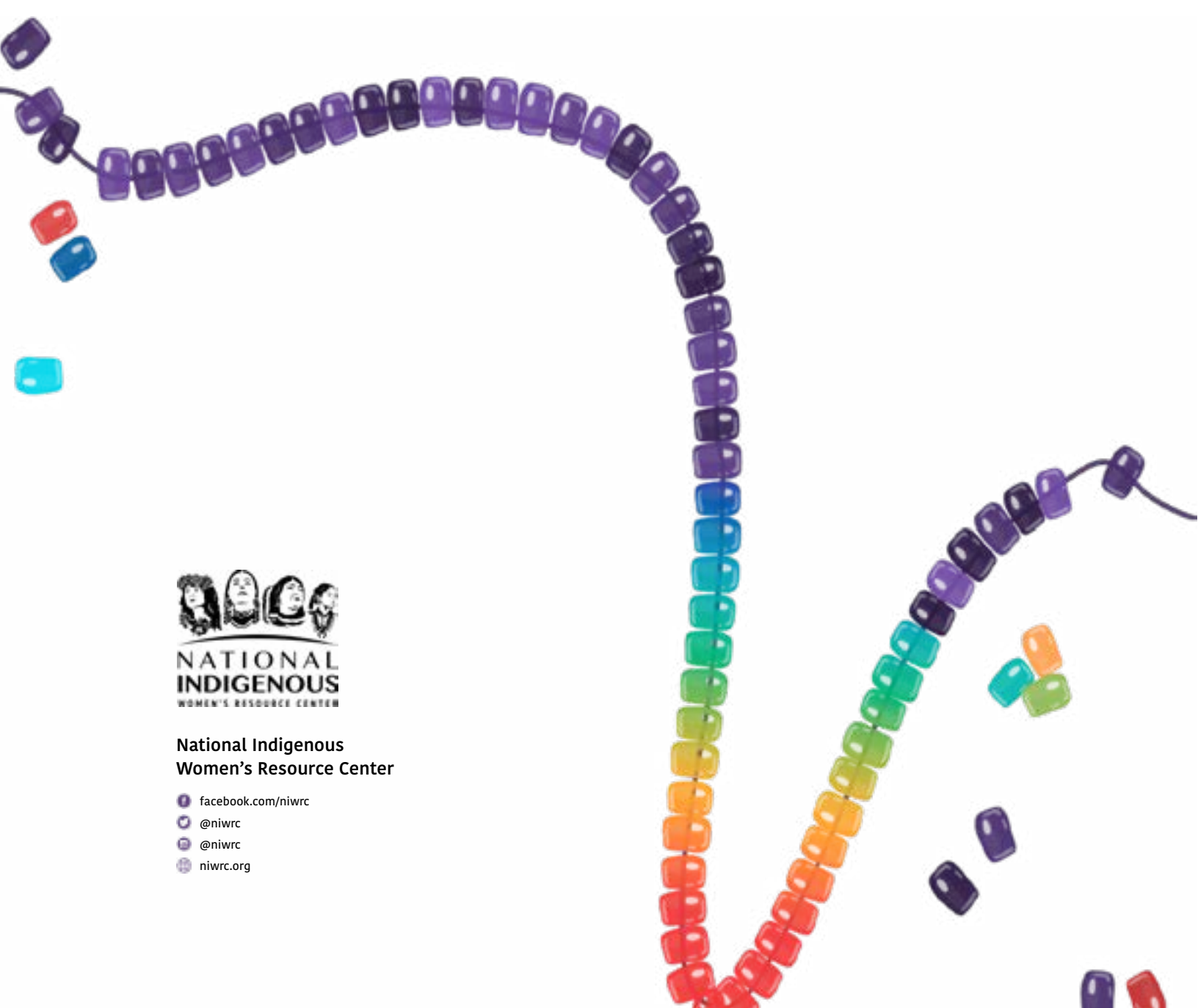
Advocacy for **LGBTQ2S+**

RESOURCES, DATA, and BARRIERS



National Indigenous
Women's Resource Center

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INTRODUCTION

NIWRC's MISSION

To provide national leadership in ending violence against American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian women by supporting culturally grounded, grassroots advocacy.

Across Indigenous communities and nations, the rates of intimate partner violence (IPV) are staggering.

Historically, the problem of intimate partner violence has been predominately seen as cisgender-heterosexual (cis-het) men abusing cis-het women. Unfortunately, there is limited data and research on IPV existing outside the cishet population. Therefore, IPV data on the Indigenous LGBTQ2S+ community is limited. The need to spotlight IPV among the Indigenous LGBTQ2S+ community was discovered as a result of the National Intimate Partner Sexual Violence Survey¹ finding that the LGBTQ community experience high rates of violence that is equal to or worse than the cis-het population (Walters, Chen, & Breiding, 2013). No longer can we afford to overlook violence against Indigenous LGBTQ survivors.

Acknowledging and understanding IPV in the LGBTQ2S+ community is imperative because our approach to ending violence against our LGBTQ2S+ relatives will require an inclusive, social justice, an anti-oppression lens that is also intertwined with decolonial, re-Indigenizing foundations. In addition, we must understand that this violence co-occurs alongside a myriad of unique challenges and barriers, multiple layers of victimization and trauma, and systemic oppression and discrimination against the LGBTQ2S+ community.

This resource brochure is designed to provide recent research, culturally grounded resources, and possible barriers one may face in the LGBTQ2S+ advocacy workforce.

¹ Ctr. Disease Control & Prevention, NISVS: An Overview Of 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation (Jan. 2013), https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cdc_nisvs_victimization_final-a.pdf.

CURRENT LANDSCAPE

The landscape of IPV in the LGBTQ2S+ community doesn't exist in a vacuum. The LGBTQ2S+ community faces challenges like homelessness, housing insecurity, discrimination, police violence, bias, lack of services, and even rejection of services. Overlapping forms of oppression are a dangerous reality of LGBTQ2S+ survivors, and these realities are strongly reinforced by Western colonial structures and beliefs.

Violence against Indigenous LGBTQ and Two-Spirit people is connected to social and historical contexts of settler colonial structures. This includes Western colonial systems of patriarchy, oppression, and racism that has worked hard to destroy not only Indigenous matriarchal systems but also an Indigenous practice of celebrating diverse understandings of gender and sexuality. The Western colonial historical narrative defended heteronormative, White supremacist, and cis-gendered ideals, while Indigenous queer histories, ideologies and people were eradicated, dispelled, and killed. It is now time to reclaim Indigenous systems of matriarchy, and reclaim traditional knowledge and practices that supported, respected, and celebrated our Two Spirit/ LGBTQ+ relatives.

Historically, Indigenous peoples and communities had recognized and respected our Two-Spirit and Indigenous queer community as appointed leaders, valued healers and spiritual leaders, revered problem solvers, nation protectors, and esteemed teachers. Since contact, the experiences of our Two Spirit and LGBTQ+ relatives have been deeply affected by settler colonization on many levels. The root cause of violence against Indigenous women, also stem the multi-layered violence and injustices against the LGBTQ2S+ community. A colonized mentality of anti-LGBTQ2S+ beliefs also simultaneously rejects Indigenous traditional ideas of kinship, love, and support for all our relatives.

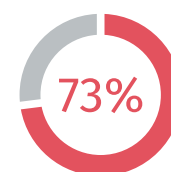
Our Indigenous LGBTQ2S+ survivors need support and resources from their families, Tribal Nations, communities, and tribal systems. This critical needed response includes the strengthening of advocacy response and support, ending discrimination and hate crimes, decolonizing binary heteronormative systems, and a cultural strengthening of nations to be better relatives. We must understand the intersectional complexities of race, class, ableism, sexuality, gender, and Indigeneity within the context of Western settler colonization to shift our collected advocacy consciousness of social justice. Ending violence against the Two-Spirit/ LGBTQ+ community is decolonial work. **It is transformative, intergenerational, and courageous work that will improve community well-being, but it will also strengthen Tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and Indigenous futures.**

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE & LGBTQ2S+ COMMUNITIES: STATISTICS, FACTS, BARRIERS

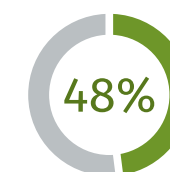
It is essential for advocates and communities to recognize and understand that IPV is not exclusive to cisgender-heterosexual relationships. Within the LGBTQ2S+ Community, IPV occurs at rates equal to or higher than the cisgender-heterosexual (cis het) population. Our LGBTQ2S+ relatives may experience unique forms of abuse and distinctive barriers and challenges. These barriers LGBTQ2S+ survivors face include discrimination, bias, and prejudice against their gender and/or sexual orientation.

Accessing supporting services for the LGBTQ2S+ community comes with distinct challenges. It important that we are aware of these highly possible barriers to safety and support. Therefore organizations must be prepared to assist and navigate the challenges. Culturally relevant survivor supports and advocacy that is inclusive of our LGBTQ2S relatives is paramount to enhancing safety. This approach will center the realities our LGBTQ2S+ relatives encounter. Lastly, we must be conscious of the many intersections of the Indigenous queer survivors and their multilayered marginalized identities.

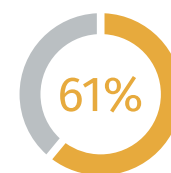
what we know



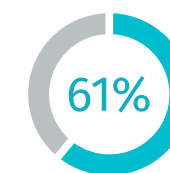
73% of American Indian/ Alaskan Native (AI/AK) transgender respondents experienced intimate partner violence, including coercive control tactics, compared to 54% of the overall USTS respondents.



48% of respondents experienced abuse tactics through coercion and threats related to their transgender status like threatening to be "outed", deadnaming, and misgendering.



61% of AI/AK respondents experienced physical violence by an intimate partner compared to 42% of USTS overall respondents.



61% with disabilities and 57% transwomen we more likely to experience coercive control related to their trans status than overall AI/AK respondents.

2015 U.S Transgender Survey (USTS)²
Report on the Experiences of American Indian & Alaskan Native Respondents

³ Ctr. Disease Control & Prevention, NISVS: An Overview Of 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation (Jan. 2013), https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cdc_nisvs_victimization_final-a.pdf

what we know



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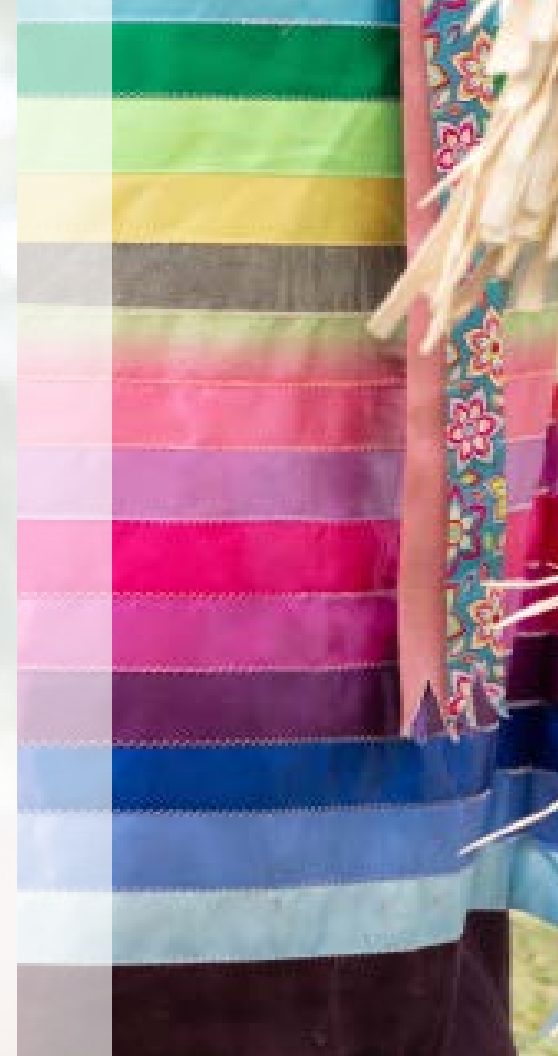
Bisexual women experience an astonishing higher presence of coercive control and expressive aggression behaviors by an intimate partner than heterosexual women.

44% of lesbian women and 61% of bisexual women (compared to 35% of heterosexual women) experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

26% of gay men and 37% of bisexual men (compared to 29% of heterosexual men) experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

30% of lesbian women and 50% of bisexual women (compared to 23.6% of heterosexual women) experienced physical violence (e.g., hit with fist or something hard, slammed against something, or beaten) by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

2010 CDC National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey³



BARRIERS to safety

Societal misunderstandings that IPV does not occur in the LBGTQ2S+ community minimize the violence existing in the LBGTQ2S+ population and therefore, more difficult for advocates to recognize and identify.

OUTING

“Outing” can be identified as an abusive control tactic and a barrier to seeking safety.

ORDERS OF PROTECTION

In 2012, less than 5% of LBGTQ domestic violence survivors “sought orders of protection” (NCDVAV). In the same study, of survivors who reported IPV to police, 19% reported police attitudes were hostile, and 25% reported indifferent attitudes from the police.

STIGMA

LBGTQ2S+ survivors may experience homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, and queerphobia from service providers and their cultural communities. This stigma and discrimination decrease the likelihood of reporting and/or seeking service.

COVID-19

COVID-19 has impacted financial stability, and therefore survivors living with their abuser were likely to endure violence to avoid homelessness and financial insecurity.

SHELTER ACCESS

Transgender survivors experience additional discrimination when trying to access shelters and are often turned away or forced to stay in a gendered shelter they may not feel safe in, and therefore LBGTQ2S+ survivors may have to make difficult choices about their safety.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

Over 40% of transgender men experienced verbal harassment, physical assault, or denial of medical treatment in doctors’ offices or hospital settings⁴.

APPROACHES & RESPONSE

- Listen & support while centering the experiences of LGBTQ2S+ survivors while engaging survivor leadership to create change.
- Supporting and advocating for culturally specific programs that decolonize Indigenous spaces that promote Two-Spirit/LGBTQ cultural strengths, teachings, histories, and knowledge.
- Integrating trauma-informed approaches that recognize the need for systemic changes across all multidisciplinary organizations to reduce re-traumatization.
- Incorporating social justice approaches to end discriminatory practices, beliefs, and attitudes against the LGBTQ2S+ community that exacerbate IPV like:
 - *Housing discrimination*
 - *Employment discrimination*
 - *Police brutality*
 - *Hate crimes*
 - *Healthcare discrimination*
- Educate and train advocates on the dynamics and tactics of abuse within the LGBTQ community so response includes recognizing IPV and the intersectional framework in which LGBTQ relationship violence exist.
- Advocate for resources, accessible services, and inclusive practices that will support the LGBTQ2S+ community in safety, emotional & spiritual well-being, and prioritize systemic injustices.
- Educate and train on Western colonial ideas of heteronormativity, sexuality, and gender.
- Educate and train on structural violence and injustices against Indigenous Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ people and communities.

TERMS & DEFINITIONS

- **Biphobia** – An aversion toward bisexuality or bisexual people, including prejudice
- **Bisexual** – A word used to describe a person that is attracted to more than one gender. It is important to note that bisexuality is not binary, it is a fluid experience.
- **Cisgender (Cis)** – A person may likely be cis if their gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Heterosexual/straight** – A word used to describe a person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender
- **Cisgender-heterosexual (cishet)** – A a gender and sexual identity of a cisgender, straight person
- **Deadnaming** – Occurs when a person, intentionally or unintentionally, refers to a transgender person by the name they used before they transitioned.
- **Gay** – A word used to describe people whose emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction is to people of the same gender. Note that the using word “homosexuals” to identify the gay community is offensive, outdated, and derogatory to lesbian and gay community
- **Homophobia** – An aversion against gay people, including prejudice
- **IPV**– Intimate Partner Violence, a pattern of behavior where one intimate partner coerces, dominates, or isolates another intimate partner to maintain power and control over the relationship and intimate partner, including physical abuse, financial abuse, verbal abuse, threats and intimidation, and cultural and spiritual abuse
- **Lesbian** – A word used to describe women who are emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to other women. Some lesbians may also identify as gay
- **Misgendering** – When someone wrongly attributes a gender to a person which whom they do not align with. This can happen intentionally or unintentionally.
- **Outed/Outing** – Exposing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity without their permission. Outing someone can have detrimental consequences on employment, housing, economic stability, personal safety, cultural or religious situations, and even on a person's relationship with family and community
- **Polyvictimization** – The experience of multiple types or layers of victimization.
- **Queer** – A word to describe a person whose sexual orientation is not straight.
- **Queerphobia** – A fear or aversion toward queer people. This is also an umbrella term concerning things fear and dislike of things not heteronormative or cisgender.
- **Questioning** – A term used to describe people who are processing and exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity
- **Sexual Orientation** – Refers to the way a person describes their emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction
- **Transgender** – A person may be trans if their gender identity does match the sex they were assigned at birth
- **Transphobia** – An aversion toward transgender people.
- **Two-Spirit (2S)** – A word that is specific to a person belonging to the Indigenous community that expresses their gender identity, or spiritual/cultural identity. This term can have specific roles, knowledge, responsibilities, and obligations depending on the Indigenous nation they come from.

sources

^{1,3} Ctr. Disease Control & Prevention, NISVS: An Overview Of 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation (Jan. 2013), https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/cdc_nisvs_victimization_final-a.pdf.

² Sandy E. James Et Al., Nat'l Ctr. Transgender Equal., The Report Of The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey 15 (Dec. 2016), <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>.

⁴ Miller, E.C., Goodman, L.A., Thomas, K.A., & Warshaw, C. (2016). Trauma-Informed Approached for LGBTQ* Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence Data: A Review of Literature and a Set of Practice Observations June 2016.

Terms & Defintions Sources

<https://www.wernative.org/articles/definitions-gender-identity>

<https://www.csvanw.org/lgbtq/>

https://www.glaad.org/reference#guide?response_type=embed

https://www.ihs.gov/sites/telebehavioral/themes/responsive2017/display_objects/documents/slides/lgbt/lgbtnativeout.pdf



EVERYONE
deserves
to feel
safe.



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