

# **Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Among LGBTQ Older Adults**

# **RAP- Richmond Area Partnership**

The Richmond Area Partnership seeks to enhance services to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Survivors and raise awareness of violence in LGBTQ communities.

## Partner agencies include:

- Virginia Anti-Violence Project (VAVP)
- Diversity Richmond
- Health Brigade
- Minority Health Consortium
- Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
- Safe Harbor

# Learning Objectives

- Participants will learn basic information about LGBT older adult identities.
- Participants will learn the historical context of the LGBT older adult population and how that impacts accessing services.
- Participants will engage in individual and group work to explore and develop best practices to create services that are inclusive and culturally appropriate for LGBT older adults.

Share your name with the group, the pronoun that you use, and share what one thing that you like about your current age.

**GETTING TO KNOW YOU**

# OLDER ADULTS

82% of LGBT older adults report having been victimized at least once in their lifetime



LGBT older adults are twice as likely to live alone and many are estranged from biological family

Older persons living alone were much more likely to be poor (16.8%) than were older persons living with families (5.4%).

*“Inclusion means the inclusion of all, not just the inclusion of all who are like me.”*

John Fisher, Trinity College

**WORDS & DEFINITIONS**

# Language

## **Sexual Orientation:**

Culturally-defined set of meanings through which people describe their sexual attractions. Sexual orientation is not static and can shift over time.

# Language

## **Gender Identity:**

An individual's internal view of their gender. Their own innermost sense of themselves as a gendered being and/or as masculine, feminine, androgynous, etc. This will often influence name and pronoun preference.



# Language

## **Transgender:**

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity, expression, or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. Transgender is a broad term and is good for providers to use.

# Language

## Cisgender:

A person whose gender identity aligns with their assigned sex at birth.

# Language

## **Questioning:**

A term that can refer to an identity or a process of introspection whereby one learns about their own sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Can happen at any age and multiple times throughout one's lifetime

# Language

## Queer :

A political and sometimes controversial term that some LGBT people have reclaimed, while others still consider it derogatory. Used most frequently by younger LGBT people, activists, and academics, the term can refer to either to gender identity and/or sexual orientation and can be used by any gender.

# Language

## **Sexual Violence:**

Sexual violence against people in later life involves a broad range of contact and non-contact sexual offenses perpetrated against people age 60 and beyond.

# Language

## **Intimate Partner Violence:**

Intimate Partner Violence/Abuse in later life is a systematic pattern of behaviors where one person tries to control the thoughts, beliefs, and/or actions of their partner, someone they are dating, or with whom they have had an intimate relationship.

# Language

## **Hate/Bias Motivated Violence:**

Any act that an individual commits against another individual or their property because of the offender's bias towards or hatred of that individual's actual or perceived identity(ies).

*“It takes no compromise to give people their rights...it takes no money to respect the individual. It takes no political deal to give people freedom. It takes no survey to remove repression.”*

— Harvey Milk

**WHAT DOES OUR HISTORY  
TELL US?**



## **Question for Group Process:**

How might the formative experiences of LGBTQ-identified older adults during their younger years create barriers to seeking services in later life?

**SMALL GROUP WORK**

# Meet Chris:

How did it *feel* to participate or observe this process?

What *barriers* did you observe?

Did you have any insights related to the *unique needs of LGBTQ+ identified individuals* as you experienced this activity?

# Best Practices

*“Do the best until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”*

- Maya Angelo

# Individual Action Planning

- Assess your own values/beliefs regarding sexual orientation & gender identity
- Address your internal biases
- Educate yourself - don't tokenize/objectify individuals
- Acknowledge what you don't know
- Know your personal limits (seek support/supervision)

# Interpersonal Action Planning

- Universally ask for names and pronouns and then use them
- Use inclusive language (such as ‘partner’)
- Don’t assume anyone’s sexual orientation based on gender identity
- Be cautious of stereotypes
- If you make a mistake, do not over-apologize
- Confront discrimination & prejudice (jokes, comments)

# Organizational Action Planning

- Include actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity in your non-discrimination policies
- Recognize that having an inclusive non-discrimination is not enough
- Use inclusive language on agency forms
- Provide anti-homophobia/transphobia and heterosexism training for all staff and volunteers
- Recruit LGBTQ staff, but don't make them totally responsible for LGBTQ programs

**Questions?**

# The Virginia Anti-Violence Project (VAVP)/ El Proyecto Contra la Violencia de Virginia

[virginiaavp.org](http://virginiaavp.org)

Stacie Vecchietti, she/they

[director@virginiaavp.org](mailto:director@virginiaavp.org)  
(804) 925-9242

