

“An isolated place”

LGBT+ domestic abuse survivors' access to support

Galop 2023

the LGBT+ anti-abuse charity



About Galop

Galop is the UK's LGBT+ anti-abuse charity. We work directly with thousands of LGBT+ people who have experienced abuse and violence every year.

We specialise in supporting LGBT+ victims and survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, hate crime, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, and so-called conversion therapies. We are a service run by LGBT+ people, for LGBT+ people, and the needs of our community are at the centre of what we do.

We use what we learn through working on the frontlines with clients to work on national and local policy change, to improve outcomes for LGBT+ victims and survivors of abuse and violence. We build evidence through key pieces of research around LGBT+ people's experiences of abuse and violence. We push for legislative change, improved statutory guidance for victims, and better understanding of the needs of LGBT+ people around the country.

© Galop 2023

Credits

Carlisle, E. & Withers Green, L. 2023.

"An isolated place": LGBT+ domestic abuse survivors' access to support. Galop.

Design by studiosquid.co.uk

Contents



1	Foreword	4
2	The study	6
3	Key findings	8
4	Recommendations	10
5	Background	12
6	Isolating experiences	14
7	Isolated places	19
8	Varied support experiences & concerns	31
9	Profile of LGBT+ survivors	44
10	Methodology	46
11	References	51

Galop was originally founded in London in 1982 to support Londoners from the LGBT+ community who were victims of abuse and violence.

At the time, this made sense — London had the largest and most visible LGBT+ population so that was where the demand was. It is clear in 2023 that things are no longer as straightforward, as far as they ever really were.

1 Foreword



Galop’s services hear from LGBT+ people from all over the country in need of help and support as a result of abuse — and in ever increasing numbers from those vast and diverse swathes of the country where there are no services built for our community or run by our community.

Regional funding, built to serve the majority and not the minorities, means that those local services are unlikely to ever be commissioned — but the people who need them are still there and are being left behind.

We heard from LGBT+ victims and survivors in this study who describe themselves as “lucky” to have lived in or near a larger town or city, because it meant they were closer to a range of services and thus more likely to get support. We shouldn’t have to rely on luck to be kept safe and supported.

It is vital that the UK Government and local authorities commit to addressing this unequal access to support, and actively work to provide a national funding model for by-and-for abuse and violence victim support services for minoritised communities.

My thanks to the survivors who engaged with this research; to Dr Erin Carlisle, Lou Withers Green, and the team at YouGov for producing this impactful report; and to the entire team at Galop who work hard every day to improve the lives of LGBT+ people across the UK.

Leni Morris, Chief Executive Officer

Galop commissioned YouGov to conduct a nationally representative survey of 2,042 LGBT+ people across the UK about their experiences of being subjected to abuse, as well as their access to sources of support.

The survey asked respondents whether they had experienced a range of different types of abuse and, relatedly, to identify who subjected them to each kind of abuse they had experienced.

This report focuses on abuse perpetrated by a family member or a partner/ex-partner, and presents findings about the experiences and support needs of LGBT+ survivors of abuse within family or intimate relationships.



A note about *major queer cities*

¹ Cook 2020; Houlbrook 2020; Cook et al. 2022.

Throughout the LGBT+ rights movement, LGBT+ people have often moved from where they grew up to a small number of cities (and a smaller number of towns) in order to seek safety and community.¹

² Donovan et al. 2021.

These cities — London, Manchester, Brighton, Birmingham, Edinburgh, and Glasgow — were where the first LGBT+ services were set up to support the community in those areas. Those cities — the ones with the largest, visible LGBT+ communities — started to provide funding for LGBT+ services. As a result, when we look across the UK today, we see LGBT+ organisations mostly working locally, and predominantly in those traditionally “queer” cities.²

Progress for LGBT+ people in the UK means we have found more spaces and ways to find community and connection with one another. As the 2021 census, the first to record LGBT+ identities, shows clearly — LGBT+ people live all over the country and we must think beyond those “queer cities” when we think about service provision for LGBT+ victims and survivors of abuse and violence.

A key focus of this report is whether survivors have access to support not only when, but *where* they need it. This report examines access to, and experiences of, support in places such as villages or smaller communities, towns and cities in the UK, compared with the major “queer cities”.

Grouping these cities, and keeping this category distinct from others, enables us to compare LGBT+ abuse survivors’ access to support in places with — or without — specialist LGBT+ services.

3 Key findings

The evidence in this study shows how the aftermath of experiencing abuse can leave survivors in “an isolated place”.

Most LGBT+ survivors dealt with their experiences alone, and many did not know support was available for them.

- Around 6 in 10 (61%) LGBT+ survivors did not seek support from services following a particular instance of abuse by a family member or a partner/ex-partner.
- Close to 4 in 10 (38%) LGBT+ survivors went without support from friends, family or other informal supports following an instance of abuse by a family member or a partner/ex-partner.
- Of those LGBT+ survivors who did not seek professional support following an incidence of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner, 41% did not seek help because they were unaware any support was available.
- Compared with those in the major queer *cities* (37%), LGBT+ survivors living in a village (54%*) or any other city (50%*) at the time of the abuse were more likely* to report they did not know any supports were available.
- These results suggest, overall, that trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors needed help from services after an incident of abuse by a family member or intimate partner, but more than half (53%) thought there was no support available for them.

* See methodology.

3 Key findings



LGBT+ survivors face difficulties in getting support when and where they need it

3 Donovan et al. 2021.

- The vast majority (81%) of LGBT+ survivors of abuse by a family member or intimate partner experienced this abuse in places *outside* of the major queer cities — that is, in places in the UK where there are few or no specialist LGBT+ services.³
- Of the LGBT+ survivors who sought support after an experience of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner (n=199), 39% were placed on a waitlist.
- Of the LGBT+ survivors who sought support after an experience of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner (n=199), around 1 in 7 (15%) did not receive any professional support despite trying to access it.
- Most (73%) of the LGBT+ support-seekers had to rely on non-LGBT+ support services. Compared with other service types, LGBT+ survivors were much more likely to receive advice and information (e.g. support helpline or live chat) from specialist LGBT+ services (32%). It is worth noting that LGBT+ specialist helplines are historically the only nationally commissioned services.
- Of those who sought support (n=619), fewer than 20 LGBT+ support seekers received advocacy services (3%) after a particular experience of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner. However, nearly 9 times as many LGBT+ survivors reported *wanting* advocacy after the abuse.
- Of those who sought support (n=619), only around 20 LGBT+ support-seekers received practical assistance (4%) after a particular experience of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner. However, around 6 times as many LGBT+ survivors reported *wanting* practical assistance after the abuse.
- Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+, and pan/queer survivors reported high levels of concern about being mistreated by services or that services may not understand their identities.

4 Recommendations



⁴ Donovan et al. 2021.

⁵ Domestic abuse commissioner 2022.

The findings in this report add to the growing body of evidence – such as our recent *Domestic Abuse Service Provision Mapping Study*⁴ and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner’s mapping study⁵ – about the patchwork service landscape in the UK and the difficulties survivors can face when trying to access support.

We need systems change. LGBT+ survivors should not have to feel that they are “lucky” to be able to access services because they live or work near a major queer city. LGBT+ people should have fair and easy access to support in *every* region, and receive comprehensive, specialist support *when* they need it.

4 Recommendations



We need specialist LGBT+ support services *everywhere*, not just in the major queer cities.

We need a national funding model for by-and-for violence and abuse support services.

We need dedicated, ongoing, national funding to deliver holistic and specialised practical support (e.g. emergency accommodation), advocacy, formal advice services (e.g. helplines), and emotional and therapeutic support **for LGBT+ survivors *wherever they are in the country***, without being contingent on geographical location or proximity to the major queer cities.

We need to address practical barriers to support by increasing funding, expanding service capacity, removing waitlists, and developing awareness campaigns for specialist by-and-for LGBT+ support services and LGBT+ survivors' needs.



Service gaps and barriers to support for domestic abuse

6 Donovan et al. 2021; Domestic abuse commissioner 2022.

Recent research by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner highlighted the “patchwork” provision of specialist domestic abuse services in the UK.⁶

On top of the gaps in service availability, national and international studies have shown that LGBT+ domestic abuse survivors can face a range of barriers when seeking help and accessing services.

The existing literature already tells us that:

7 Domestic abuse commissioner 2022.

● LGBT+ survivors in the UK, overall, want to access specialist LGBT+ domestic abuse support delivered “by-and-for” their own community, and evidence indicates that survivor outcomes improve for survivors accessing specialist by-and-for services.⁷

8 Domestic abuse commissioner 2022.

● There are substantial gaps in specialist LGBT+ domestic abuse services in England and Wales. The small number of specialist services available are mostly based in or around London or other major cities with known LGBT+ populations, while only Galop’s specialist LGBT+ National Domestic Abuse Helpline operates nationally.⁸

9 Magić and Keeley 2019; Donovan et al. 2021.

● Specialist LGBT+ domestic abuse services receive limited and insecure funding, and often work outside of their service delivery area to meet need.⁹

5 Background

10 Domestic abuse commissioner 2022.

- Non-LGBT+ specialist domestic abuse services often have limited understanding about LGBT+ relationships, lack the specialised skills to safely and effectively respond to LGBT+ domestic abuse, and are largely inaccessible for much of the LGBT+ community (including by directly or indirectly excluding access for LGBT+ men and trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ people).¹⁰

11 Harvey et al. 2014; Guadalupe-Diaz and Jasinski 2017; Love et al. 2017; Filice and Meyer 2018; Donovan and Barnes 2020; Galop 2022a; Reynish et al. 2022; Lee and Santiago 2022.

- LGBT+ survivors can be subject to anti-LGBT+ prejudice, discrimination or abuse by service institutions or staff (including: not recognising self-identification documents, misgendering or not acknowledging correct pronouns, or statements which attempt to change or undermine the survivors' LGBT+ identity or orientation).¹¹

12 Harvey et al. 2014; Donovan and Hester 2015; Hine et al. 2022.

- Personal or individual barriers can make it difficult for LGBT+ survivors to seek and access help (including not recognising their experiences as abuse or not understanding that domestic abuse can occur in LGBT+ relationships,¹² distrusting services or authorities services based on prior personal experience or shared knowledge in the LGBT+ community,¹³ and fears of not being believed¹⁴ or anticipated stigmatisation¹⁵).

13 Donovan and Hester 2015.

14 Rollè et al. 2018.

15 Love et al. 2017.

16 Crowther et al. 2020; Donovan and Barnes 2020; Renner et al. 2021.

- LGBT+ domestic abuse survivors who live in smaller or rural communities may face further challenges in accessing support, such fears of being outed or that services will not be confidential,¹⁶ limited service availability,¹⁷ and limited public transport options.

17 Donovan et al. 2021; Domestic abuse commissioner 2022.

These factors can make it harder for LGBT+ survivors to easily access support which is LGBT+-specific, safe and responds to their specific circumstances. The findings in this report build upon this existing evidence.

Dealing with it alone

Four key findings in this section show that LGBT+ survivors of abuse are not receiving the support they need.

Most of the LGBT+ survivors dealt with their experiences alone. Around six in 10 (61%) did not seek out support from services, while close to 4 in 10 (38%) did not seek support from their friends or family after the abuse.

* See methodology.

In fact, many LGBT+ survivors simply did not know any help was available for them (41%). Compared with those in the major queer cities (37%), LGBT+ survivors living in a village (54%*) or any other city (50%*) at the time of the abuse were more likely* to report being unaware any supports were available for them.

Together, the results suggest that LGBT+ survivors' perceptions about the (un)availability of support services can impact their decisions to seek help or, instead, their decision to deal with it alone.

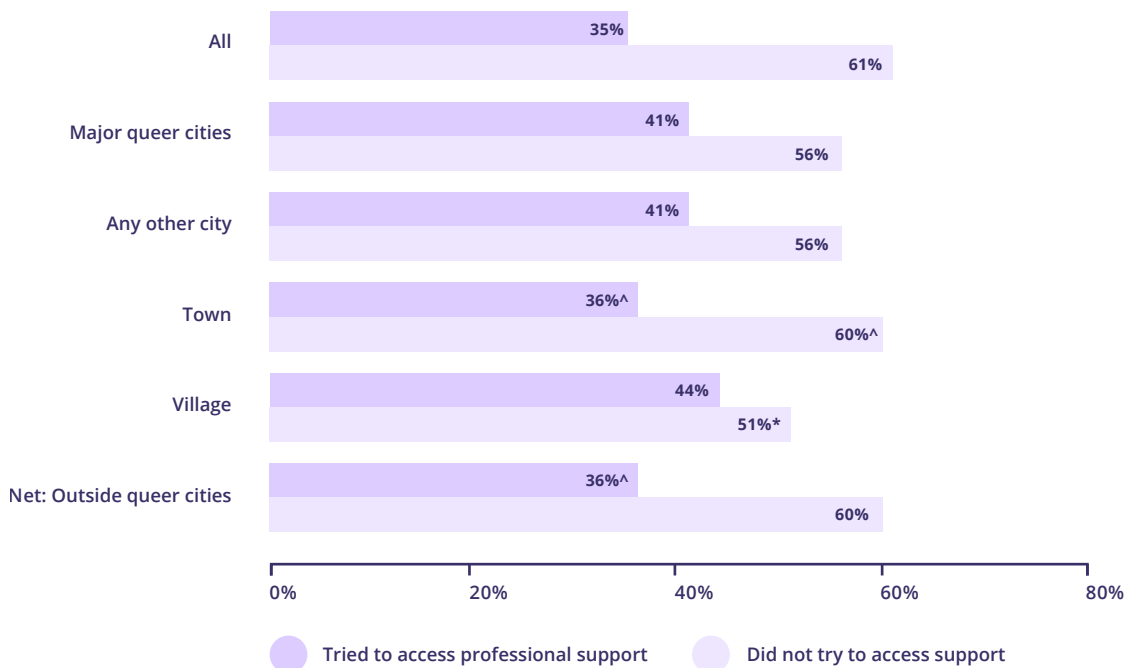
Many LGBT+ survivors do not get professional support after abuse.

18 See methodology.

In a series of questions about help-seeking, 619 LGBT+ respondents were prompted to reflect on one *particular* instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner.¹⁸

Of these 619 LGBT+ survivors, 6 in 10 (61%) did not seek professional support from services following the instance of abuse by a family member or a partner/ex-partner.

Figure 1. Decision to access professional support by location at time of abuse



*n=619. Percentages are rounded. * denotes significance to 95% confidence compared with the major queer cities. ^ denotes significance to 90% confidence compared with the major queer cities. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options to reflect that they may have experienced abuse in more than one location; regional figures are based on the N who experienced abuse in each location. Percentages do not total 100% as 'don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

6 Isolating experiences

Many LGBT+ survivors go without support from friends or family.

The 619 LGBT+ respondents who were prompted to reflect on one *particular* instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner were also asked whether they received support from informal sources — such as friends, family or other people in their networks.

Of these 619 LGBT+ survivors, nearly 4 in 10 (38%) did not get any informal support following the instance of abuse by a family member or a partner/ex-partner.

Additionally, of these 619 LGBT+ survivors, those living outside of the major queer cities were more likely* to go without informal support after the instance of abuse by a family member or a partner/ex-partner (37%* compared with 31% of those living in the major queer cities).

* See methodology.

Figure 2. Informal supports received after a particular instance of abuse, by location at time of abuse

	All	Major queer cities	Any other city	Town	Village	Net: Outside queer cities
Non-LGBT+ friends	30%	32%	33%	30%	36%	31%
Other LGBT+ people (incl. friends & support networks)	29%	31%	31%	28%	30%	29%
Family	23%	25%	21%	24%	20%	23%
Colleagues	7%	9%	9%	6%	7%	7%
A teacher or adult at school	5%	5%	4%	6%	8%	5%
Received informal support	57%	63%	60%	61%	62%	59%
Did not receive informal support	38%	31%	36%	36%	33%	37%*

*n=619. Percentages are rounded. * denotes significance to 95% confidence compared with the major queer cities. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

Many LGBT+ survivors think there is no support available, or have concerns about how they will be treated.

In the help-seeking section of the survey, those who did not seek professional support after a particular instance of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner were asked the reasons why. Of those LGBT+ survivors who did not seek professional support (n=389), 4 in 10 (41%) did not know there was any support available.

Compared with those living in the major cities (37%) at the time of the abuse, LGBT+ survivors living outside of the major queer cities (45%*) were more likely* to report being unaware supports were available to help them in the aftermath of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner. Additionally, more than half (54%*) of LGBT+ survivors living in a village at the time of the abuse did not seek help because they did not know support was available.

Figure 3. Reasons for not seeking professional support by location at time of abuse

	All	Major queer cities	Any other city	Town	Village	Net: Outside queer cities
I wasn't aware there was any support available	41%	37%	50%*	44%	54%*	45%*
I didn't need any support	34%	30%	29%	34%	36%*	35%
I thought the support available would be judgemental	14%	19%	14%	13%	9%*	13%
I didn't think they would believe me	12%	15%	16%	12%	10%	12%
I was worried they wouldn't understand my LGBT+ identity	11%	18%	12%	11%	6%*	11%
I've previously had poor experiences of support services	11%	11%	11%	12%	15%	12%
The support available wasn't what I needed	11%	13%	10%	12%	11%	11%
I thought they might out me to my family/friends/school/work	7%	7%	3%	6%	6%	7%

n=389. * denotes significance to 95-99.99% confidence compared with the major queer cities. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.

6 Isolating experiences

Personal factors can produce further isolation and barriers to support.

The LGBT+ respondents who sought support following a particular instance of abuse were asked to describe, in a free-text response, how place impacted the support they received or were able to access. Among those who responded to the question, some LGBT+ respondents focused instead on the individual-level barriers that impact whether survivors seek or receive support.

These respondents described:

- Feeling isolated, traumatised and/or ashamed by the abuse
- Feeling embarrassed or that they would not be believed
- Feeling as if they had to deal with it alone
- Not recognising their experiences as abuse

“ I was pretty much paralysed by fear and the daily trauma that I was totally unaware there was any support.

”

“ At the time I didn't know of any support available in my town, and was extremely embarrassed about the situation so I avoided talking to anyone about it so didn't learn if there actually was support available or not. Instead I tried to handle it myself.

”

“ I was living with my parents at the time. They would have found a way to blame me for it, so it was easier to keep it to myself.

”

“ I felt unable to access any support because I was worthless.

”



Scarce services and ill-timed support

Among the results outlined in this section, five particular findings highlight key gaps in service availability and the challenges that LGBT+ survivors face in accessing appropriate support services when and where they need them.

Most (73%) of the LGBT+ support-seekers had to rely on non-LGBT+ support services. Many (39%) LGBT+ survivors were placed on a waitlist and therefore did not receive timely support when they needed it.

Of those who sought support (n=619), fewer than 20 LGBT+ support-seekers received advocacy services (3%) and only around 20 received practical assistance (4%) after a particular experience of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner. Yet, nearly 9 times as many LGBT+ survivors would have wanted advocacy, and around 6 times as many LGBT+ survivors would have wanted practical assistance after the abuse.

The majority (81%) of LGBT+ survivors reported living in places other than the major queer cities when the abuse took place, leaving them without easy access to specialist LGBT+ services. Together, the results suggest that there is considerable need and demand for specialist LGBT+ support services right across the UK. These findings demonstrate the pressing need for increased funding and resources to improve access to appropriate, tailored and timely support services for LGBT+ survivors.

7 Isolated places

Abuse happens in places with few or no specialist LGBT+ services.

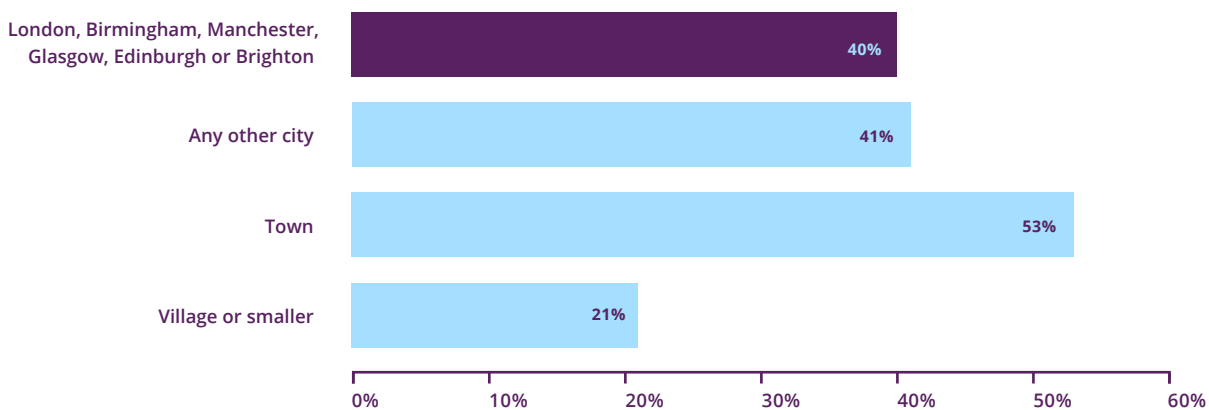
Respondents were asked to identify which kind of location they were living in when they were subjected to abuse or violence by a family member and/or a partner/ex-partner.

Of those who were subjected to one or more forms of abuse by a family member or intimate partner, the majority (81%) of LGBT+ survivors reported living in places other than the major queer cities in the UK when the abuse took place.

However, recent domestic abuse mapping studies by Galop and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner show that specialist LGBT+ services are especially concentrated around London, and that a small number of other specialist LGBT+ domestic abuse services operate in other UK cities with known queer populations.¹⁹

¹⁹ Donovan et al. 2021; Domestic abuse commissioner 2022.

Figure 4. Experiences of abuse by family member or intimate partner by reported location at time of abuse



n=1,119. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as the figures include multiple abuse and perpetrator categories. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.

7 Isolated places

LGBT+ people in the UK reside in places with few or no specialist LGBT+ services.

The survey also collected respondents' current place of residence. The results show that:

* See methodology.

59%* of LGBT+ people currently living in town & fringe areas

58%* of LGBT+ people currently living in rural areas

54% of LGBT+ people currently living in urban areas

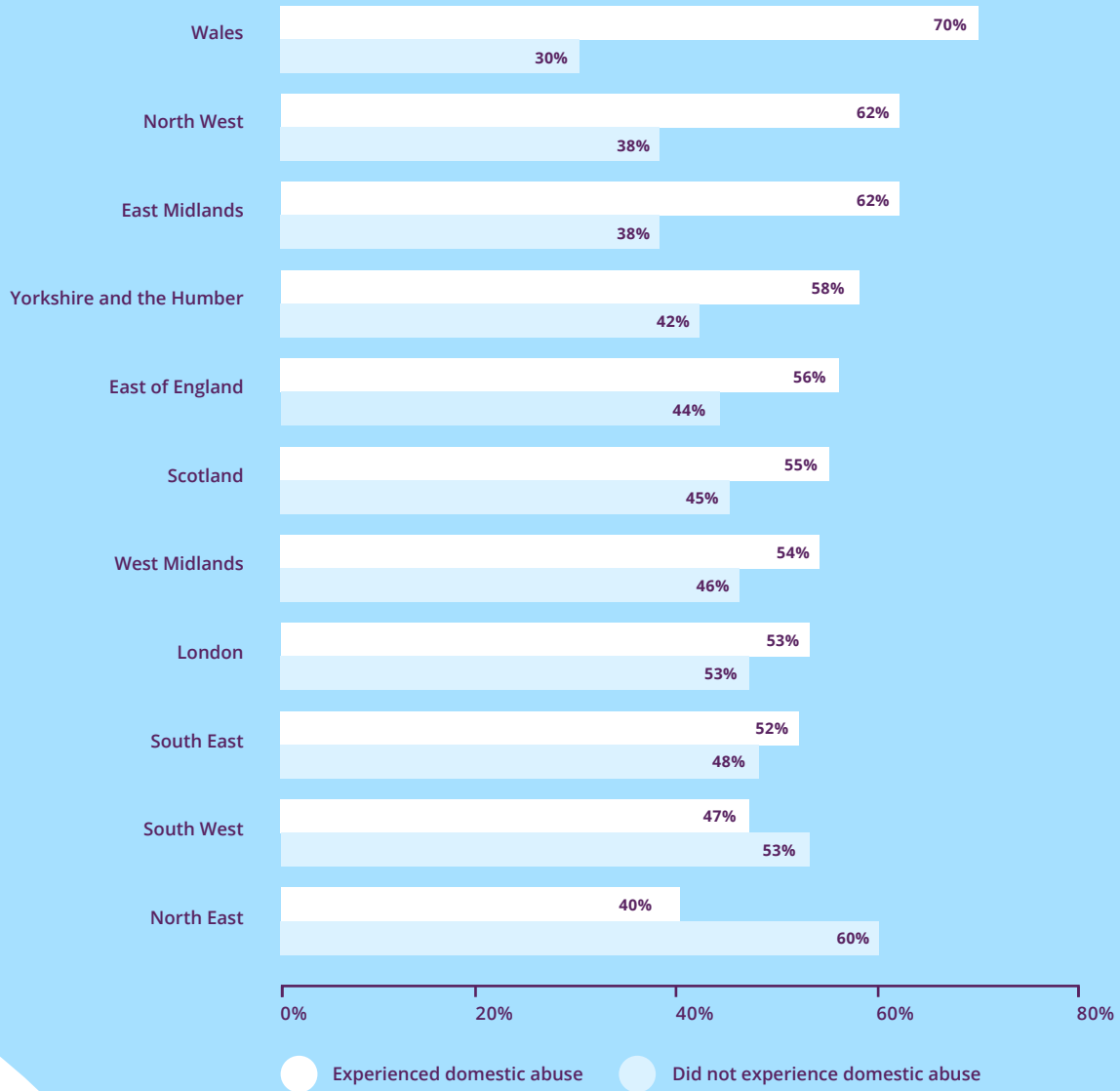
have been subjected to one or more forms of abuse or violence by a family member and/or a partner/ex-partner.

20 Donovan et al. 2021.

Additionally, the findings shine a light on the range of places that LGBT+ survivors of family or intimate partner abuse currently live in across the UK. Importantly, many of these regions have few or no specialist LGBT+ domestic abuse services available locally (particularly outside of London).²⁰

7 Isolated places

Figure 5. Lifetime experience of abuse by family member and/or intimate partner by current place of residence



n=2,042. Experienced domestic abuse n=1,119. "Domestic abuse" in this figure refers to one or more forms of abuse perpetrated by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner. Percentages are rounded. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded. The data for Northern Ireland has not been shown here because of the small base sample size (n=<50).

7 Isolated places

Many LGBT+ survivors struggle to get support when they need it.

21 See methodology.

In a series of questions about help-seeking, 619 LGBT+ respondents were prompted to reflect on one *particular* instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner.²¹ Of these 619 LGBT+ survivors, around 1 in 3 (35%) sought professional support following the instance of abuse by a family member or a partner/ex-partner.

Of the LGBT+ support-seekers (n=199), 42% were given immediate support. However, out of the LGBT+ support-seekers, nearly 4 in 10 (39%) were placed on a waitlist, while 1 in 10 (10%) were told the support they were looking for did not exist.

Figure 6. Experiences of accessing support following instance of abuse by location at time of abuse

	All	Major queer cities	Any other city	Town or village	Net: Outside queer cities
I was immediately given support	42%	38%	52%*	41%	43%
I was placed on a waiting list	39%	49%	39%	38%*	38%*
I was told that the support I was looking for didn't exist	10%	9%	6%	11%	10%

*n=199. * denotes significance to 95% confidence compared with the major queer cities. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. Not all response options have been included in this table.*

Further analysis was completed to explore any gaps in receiving support. Of the LGBT+ support-seekers (n=199), the majority (85%) did successfully receive professional support from the services they accessed. However, out of the LGBT+ support-seekers, around 1 in 7 (15%) did not receive any professional support despite trying to access it.

7 Isolated places

* See methodology.

Those LGBT+ survivors seeking support who were living in the major queer cities at the time of the abuse were less likely* than the LGBT+ support-seekers living outside the major queer cities to receive support, despite trying to access it (24% compared with 14%* respectively).



I went to my GP, and was placed on a waiting list. I was provided no support in the meantime and in the end I received no support, despite following up multiple times over a period of 6 months, I was never provided any information or support.



Figure 7. Support-seeking by location at time of abuse

	All	Major queer cities	Any other city	Town or village	Net: Outside queer cities
Successfully received professional support	85%	76%	89%	85%	86%
Did not receive support despite trying to access services	15%	24%	11%*	15%	14%*

*n=199. * denotes significance to 95-99% confidence compared with the major queer cities. Percentages are rounded.*

Many LGBT+ survivors had to rely on non-LGBT+ specialist services.

The 619 LGBT+ respondents who were prompted to reflect on one particular instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or partner/ex-partner were asked what services, if any, they tried to access following the abuse. Of these 619 LGBT+ survivors, the most common source of support sought was therapeutic services (21%).

Respondents were also asked if the support services were specialist, LGBT+ “by-and-for” services.

Most of the services the LGBT+ support-seekers accessed were not specialist LGBT+ services (73% compared with 17% which were specialist LGBT+ services).

22 Donovan et al. 2021.

LGBT+ survivors were most likely to access specialised advice and information (e.g., through a helpline, live chat or website). Because they are available online or via phone, these services are most available and accessible for LGBT+ survivors across the UK, regardless of location. Galop, through its National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline and national Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate, is currently the only specialist LGBT+ service to operate nationally.²²

Figure 8. Sources of support accessed and specialisation by location at time of abuse

	All	Major queer cities	Any other city	Net: Town or village	Yes, it was a specialist LGBT+ service
Therapeutic (counselling) services	21%	26%	24%	21%	9%
Advice and information (e.g. through a helpline, live chat or website)	13%	15%	18%	15%	32%
Medical help (e.g. speaking to a GP or other health professional)	13%	12%	12%	12%	4%

n=619. Specialist LGBT+ support base: n=199. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. Some response options have been excluded from this table because the base sample size was <50. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.

LGBT+ survivors want support services.

The 619 LGBT+ respondents who were prompted to reflect on one *particular* instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner were asked what support services, if any, they would have *wanted* to receive after the abuse.

As shown in Figure 9 overleaf, the proportions of services *wanted* were much higher than for the services the LGBT+ survivors *accessed* after the abuse.

For example, out of the 619 LGBT+ survivors:

- 41% said they *wanted* therapeutic services, compared with 21% who sought out therapeutic services after the abuse happened.
- 33% said they *wanted* advice and information, compared with 13% who sought out advice and information services after the abuse happened.
- 22% said they *wanted* advocacy — nearly 9 times as many LGBT+ survivors reported they *wanted* advocacy, compared with the fewer than 20 LGBT+ respondents who sought advocacy services after the abuse happened.

²³ The reasons for this are explored in Figure 2.

These results suggest that the LGBT+ abuse survivors, by and large, wanted professional support after being subjected to abuse — yet many went without it.²³

7 Isolated places



Figure 9. Sources of support wanted by location at time of abuse

	Attempted to access	All	Major queer cities	Any other city	Town	Village	Net: Outside queer cities
Therapeutic (counselling) services	21%	41%	48%*	41%*	43%	42%*	41%
Advice and information (e.g. through a helpline, live chat or website)	13%	33%	33%	37%	37%	41%*	35%
Medical help (e.g. speaking to a GP or other health professional)	13%	13%	14%	10%	12%	14%	11%
Advocacy (e.g. a service to support you to express your views and stand up for your rights)	-	22%	24%	22%	24%	27%	23%
Practical assistance (e.g. accommodation, financial aid etc.)	-	20%	21%	21%	22%	24%	20%

*n=619. * denotes significance to 95-99% confidence compared with the major queer cities. Some data has been excluded (using - symbol) because the base sample size was <50. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

7 Isolated places

Support services are seen as limited or non-existent in rural and small communities.

The LGBT+ respondents who had sought support following a particular instance of abuse were asked to describe, in a free-text response, how place impacted the support they received or were able to access.

The default view among most of those LGBT+ survivors who responded to the question was that support services (whether for violence and abuse, or for LGBT+ people more specifically) are simply not available in villages, towns or rural communities. Most commonly, respondents said that services are greatly limited or non-existent in smaller communities or are inadequately resourced and therefore unable to meet need. Others similarly noted that if there were in fact services available in smaller or rural communities, they were not aware of them.

“

Small towns don't have enough support for any of us. I dealt with it on my own.

”

“

More rural areas lack the support that are specialised enough for LGBT+ issues.

”

“

Where I live there is hardly any support and I would be scared of outing myself if I did get help.

”

“

It was definitely affected by where I lived, a rural county with no LGBTQ+ community so no services available sadly.

”

Out of those who sought help following a particular instance of abuse, some respondents additionally felt that there may be few or no specialist LGBT+ services available in smaller or rural towns because LGBT+ communities are less visible in these places. Some mentioned that LGBT+ people seeking help for abuse through the few services available in rural or smaller communities may fear being “outed” or worry about the confidentiality of services.

7 Isolated places

Some can be “lucky” to live in or near a large city, where services exist.

A related assumption among many other free-text responses from the LGBT+ support-seekers was that larger towns and cities had more resources and services available. In this vein, a handful of respondents described themselves as “lucky” to have lived or worked in or near a larger town or city, because it meant they were closer to a range of services and thus more likely to get support.

“ I was lucky [...] living in a village near a big city meant social services were able to intervene. ”

“ I think I had better access in London than I would have in the countryside [...] where I grew up. ”

“ If I had been living in or near a larger town or city, I may have had easier access to support. ”

7 Isolated places

Practical and structural barriers make it difficult to access support, no matter where you are.

Among the LGBT+ support-seekers who were asked to describe how place impacts access to support, waiting lists were seen as especially significant barriers to accessing timely support, while a lack of public transport options was seen as making accessing support difficult — or impossible — for those living in smaller or rural communities.

Some suggested that the demand for the few services available in smaller or rural communities resulted in lengthy waitlists. A number of respondents described how they sought and paid for private support because of lengthy waitlists, or they described seeking information and support themselves by searching online. Others, in a similar vein, argued that although more services may be available in major cities, waitlists may in fact be longer due to having larger populations.

Both sets of responses suggest that place impacts whether and how survivors can receive timely support — but that place impacts in different ways.

“

There's no support for anything where I live, it's a 2 and a half year wait to see someone about my mental health, it's discouraging, so I don't engage with anyone anymore, because what's the point? By the time action is taken, it's far too late.

”

“

It was too rural for there to be any real help, also lack of public transport made it hard to access services.

”

“

Living in a small town means that options for support are severely limited, can always be the problem of long waiting lists as well.

”

Differences in LGBT+ survivors' experiences of help-seeking

The results in this section show that survivors from each part of the LGBT+ community can have different support-seeking experiences depending on their orientation or gender identity. These varied experiences and concerns must be understood and addressed to ensure LGBT+ survivors feel comfortable and confident in accessing support.

Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+, and pan/queer survivors had the highest concerns about being mistreated by services or that services may not understand their identities. In the face of these concerns, they instead seek support from informal sources — especially other LGBT+ people.

Lesbian and bi+ survivors are most likely to seek support from services and their friends and family. However, cis LB+ women survivors' top concern about accessing services was a fear of not being believed.

Cis GB+ men and asexual/aromantic survivors were the least likely to seek support from either formal services or informal supports (such as friends or family) after an instance of abuse. Among the reasons provided, gay men survivors were more likely[^] to say they did not seek help because the services available were not what they needed.

Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors were far less likely* to seek support from family (15%* compared with all LGBT+ survivors). Additionally, around 1 in 12 (8%) trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors received support from a teacher or adult at school after experiencing the abuse.

[^] See methodology.

* See methodology.

Different sources of support

Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors find support in community, not with family.

Of the 619 LGBT+ survivors who were prompted to reflect on one particular instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner, over half (56%) of trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors did not try to access professional support from services after the abuse (see Figure 11).

Additionally, around 3 in 10 (29%) trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors went without informal support after the incident of abuse (see Figure 13).

Compared with all LGBT+ survivors (57%), trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors were most likely (65%^) to receive support through their informal networks. Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors were more likely* to be supported by other LGBT+ people (41%*) after an instance of abuse, as opposed to other non-LGBT+ people in their lives. Additionally, 1 in 12 (8%) trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors received support from a teacher or adult at school after experiencing abuse.

Compared with cis LGB+ survivors, trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors were much less likely* to seek support from family members (15%*). This may be because the family home is not necessarily a place of safety or support: as shown in another recent Galop study, trans and non-binary respondents were subjected to high levels of abuse by a family member/s (43% compared with 29% for all LGBT+ respondents).²⁴ These results reflect a recent US study which showed trans+ domestic abuse survivors' strong preference to seek support from friends, as well as their reluctance to seek support from family or from mainstream services.²⁵

²⁴ Galop 2022b.

²⁵ Guadalupe-Diaz and Jasinski 2017; Kurdyla et al. 2021.

8 Varied support experiences & concerns

Lesbian survivors find support in many places.

Of the 619 LGBT+ survivors who were prompted to reflect on one particular instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner, cis LB+ women (40%*) — and especially lesbian survivors (51%*) — were most likely* to seek out professional support after the abuse (see Figure 10).

26 Donovan and Hester 2011; 2015; Parry and O'Neal 2015; Donovan and Barnes 2020.

* See methodology.

Of the 619 LGBT+ survivors, two thirds (66%) of lesbian survivors received informal support after the abuse, and they found this support in many places (see Figure 12). Compared with the 619 LGBT+ survivors overall, lesbians were highly likely* to find support from other LGBT+ people (41%* compared with 29% respectively) and family (32%* compared with 23%). Lesbian survivors were also around twice as likely* to find support with their colleagues (15%* compared with 7% of the 619 LGBT+ survivors overall). Additionally, around one third (32%) of lesbian survivors received support from non-LGBT+ people. These results align with other studies about lesbian survivors' likelihood of seeking support from informal sources.²⁶

Even so, around half (48%) lesbian survivors did not seek support from services and around one third (32%) did not receive informal support after an incidence of abuse by a family member or intimate partner.

8 Varied support experiences & concerns

Gay survivors and cis GB+ men often choose not to seek support.

* See methodology.

Of the 619 LGBT+ survivors who were prompted to reflect on one particular instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner, cis GB+ men (71%*) — and including two thirds (67%*) of gay men — were among the least likely* to seek professional support from services following abuse by a family member or a partner/ex-partner (see Figures 10 and 11). Around 4 in 10 (39%) gay men survivors also did not receive support from informal networks, such as friends or family, after the abuse (see Figures 12 and 13).

27 Parry and O'Neal 2015; Donovan and Barnes 2020; Santoniccolo et al. 2023.

Compared with the 619 LGBT+ survivors overall, gay men survivors were less likely* to receive support from non-LGBT+ friends (25%* compared with 30% of the 619 LGBT+ survivors overall). Cis GB+ men were also less likely* to find support from other LGBT+ people (23%* compared with 29% of the 619 LGBT+ survivors overall). These results add to the existing evidence which suggests gay men may be less likely than other members of the LGBT+ community to seek help after intimate partner abuse.²⁷

Bi+ survivors tend to turn to informal sources of support.

Of the 619 LGBT+ survivors who were prompted to reflect on one particular instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner, 6 in 10 bi+ survivors (60%) did not seek support from services following the instance of abuse (see Figure 10).

In contrast, the results suggest bi+ people may seek support from their personal relationships (see Figure 12). Out of the 619 LGBT+ survivors, around 6 in 10 (59%) bi+ survivors received support from informal sources (e.g. friends or family) after the abuse. Key sources of informal support for bi+ survivors were non-LGBT+ friends (33%), other LGBT+ people (31%) and family (22%).

8 Varied support experiences & concerns

28 Donovan and Barnes 2020; Edwards et al. 2022.

* See methodology.

Compared with the LGBT+ survivors overall, bi+ survivors were slightly less likely* to seek support from colleagues (4%* compared with 7% respectively). These findings align with studies which indicate bisexual survivors are more likely to disclose experiences of abuse and seek support through friends or family members than formal services, such as sexual violence or counselling services.²⁸

Asexual/aromantic survivors mostly go without help from anyone.

Of the 619 LGBT+ survivors who were prompted to reflect on one particular instance and type of abuse perpetrated by either a family member or a partner/ex-partner, the vast majority of asexual/aromantic survivors (80%*) did not seek support from services after the abuse (see Figure 10). Additionally, around 6 in 10 (58%*) asexual/aromantic survivors did not receive support from informal sources — such as friends, family or other networks — after the instance of abuse by a family member or intimate partner (see Figure 12).

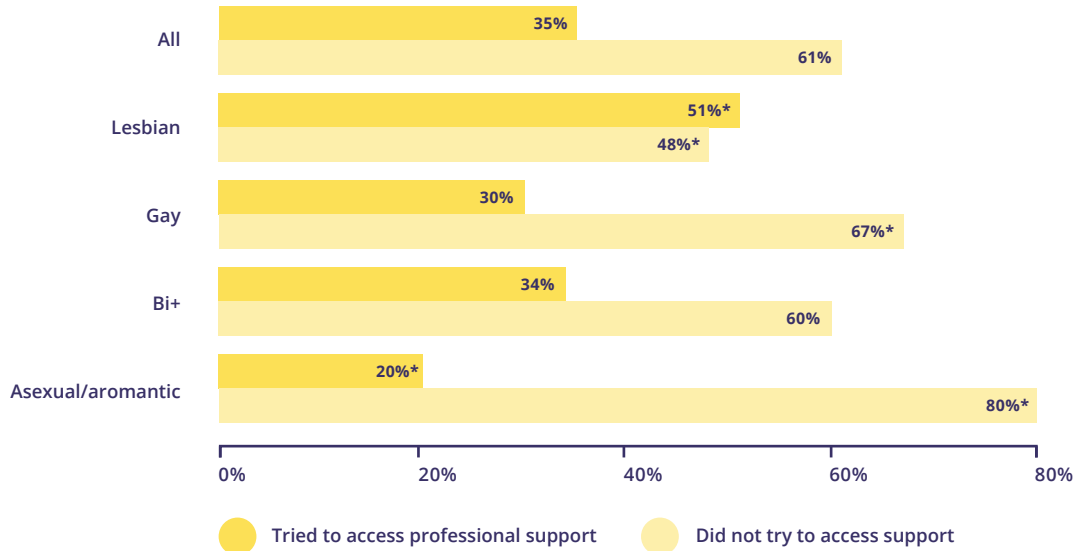
29 Flanagan and Peters 2020; Simon et al. 2022.

* See methodology.

Compared with all LGBT+ survivors who received informal support, asexual/aromantic survivors were also around half as likely* to find support with other LGBT+ people (15%*) or from family (11%*). These findings align with emerging international evidence which indicates asexual people may experience less familial and social support and often expect to receive poor or biased treatment from service providers.²⁹

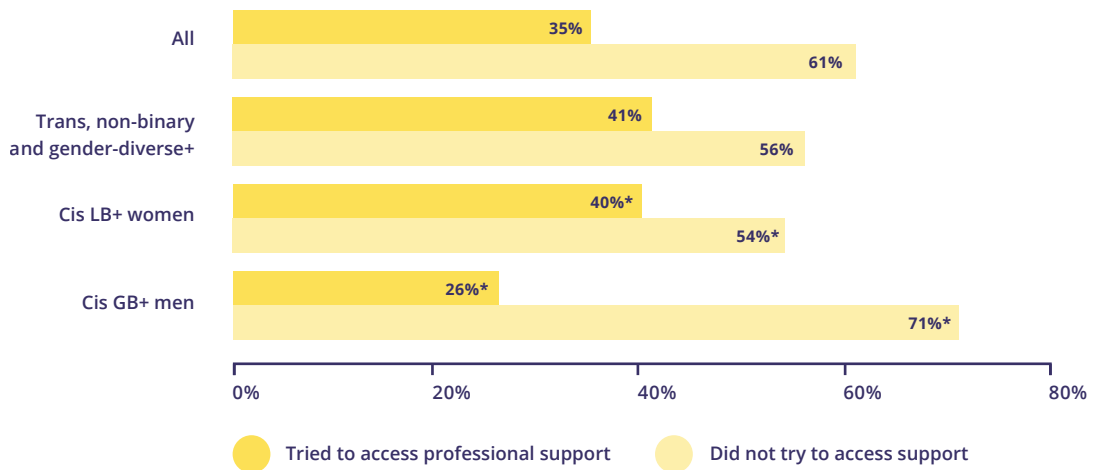
8 Varied support experiences & concerns

Figure 10. Decision to access professional support by sexual orientation



*n=619. * denotes significance to 95-99.99% confidence compared with all respondents. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as 'don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

Figure 11. Decision to access professional support by gender identity



*n=619. * denotes significance to 95-99.99% confidence compared with all respondents. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as 'don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

8 Varied support experiences & concerns

Figure 12. Informal supports received after a particular instance of abuse, by sexual orientation

	All	Lesbian	Gay	Bi+	Asexual/ aromantic
Non-LGBT+ friends	30%	32%	25%*	33%	21%
Other LGBT+ people (incl. friends and support networks)	29%	41%*	28%	31%	15%*
Family	23%	32%*	25%	22%	11%*
Colleagues	7%	15%*	7%	4%*	4%
A teacher or adult at school	5%	6%	4%	5%	1%
Net: received informal support	57%	66%	57%	59%	35%*
I did not receive informal support	38%	32%	39%	37%	58%*

*n=619. * denotes significance to 95-99.99% confidence compared with all respondents. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

Figure 13. Informal supports received after a particular instance of abuse, by gender identity

	All	Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+	Cis LB+ women	Cis GB+ men
Non-LGBT+ friends	30%	30%	31%	27%
Other LGBT+ people (incl. friends and support networks)	29%	41%*	27%	23%*
Family	23%	15%*	24%	27%
Colleagues	7%	6%	7%	7%
A teacher or adult at school	5%	8%	5%	2%
Net: received informal support	57%	65% [^]	55%	56%
I did not receive informal support	38%	29%*	41%	41%

*n=619. * denotes significance to 95-99.99% confidence compared with all respondents. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

Different concerns about treatment by services

Those LGBT+ survivors who did not seek professional support after a particular instance of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner (n=375) were asked the reasons why.

This section examines the particular concerns and barriers to support for each part of the LGBT+ community.

“

Went to a[n] LGBT+ service because in the past non-LGBT+ services looked at me like an alien ... They didn't get it.

”

8 Varied support experiences & concerns

Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors needed help, but many assumed there was no support available or feared they would be mistreated.

* See methodology.

Of the 61 trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors who did not seek support from services following the instance of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner, over half (53%*) did not seek support because they did not know any support was available (see Figure 15). However, trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors were half as likely to report they did not need any help (17%* compared with 34% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek support). Taken together, these results suggest trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors needed help from services, but many assumed there was no support available for them.

30 In line with existing literature: Kurdyla et al. 2021; Messinger et al. 2022; Kurdyla 2023.

* See methodology.

Compared with LGBT+ survivors more generally, the trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors were more likely* to avoid seeking support because of fears about how they might be treated by services.³⁰ Of the 61 trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors who did not seek professional support after the abuse, close to one quarter (23%*) did not seek help because of fears the service would be judgemental (compared with 14% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek support). Additionally, of those who did not seek help, around 1 in 5 (18%) trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors said they avoided seeking help because they worried the service would not understand their identity (compared with 11% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek help).

Compared with cis LB+ women survivors, trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+ survivors who did not seek help were three times more likely to report not seeking support because they worried the service would not understand their LGBT+ identity (18% compared with 6% of cis LB+ women survivors), and more than twice as likely to report not seeking help because they thought the service would be judgmental (23% compared with 9% of cis LB+ women survivors).

Cis LB+ women and lesbian survivors fear they will not be believed.

* See methodology.

Of the 150 cis LB+ survivors who did not seek support from services following the instance of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner, nearly half (47%*) did not seek support because they thought there was no support available (see Figure 15).

Compared with all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek help, the cis LB+ survivors were highly likely to avoid seeking help because of fears they would not be believed. Close to 1 in 5 (18%*) cis LB+ women survivors reported not seeking help from services because of fears of not being believed (compared with 12% of all LGBT+ respondents who did not seek help).

Overall, cis LB+ women survivors were generally less concerned with the services' understanding of their LGBT+ identity (6%* compared with 11% of all LGBT+ survivors). However, the results for lesbian survivors specifically show more concern about how they may be treated by services (see Figure 14). Around 1 in 5 (18%) lesbian survivors reported not seeking help because they thought the service would be judgmental; around 1 in 7 (14%) lesbian survivors were worried about the services' understanding of their LGBT+ identity; and around 1 in 8 (12%) had previously had poor experiences of support services.

8 Varied support experiences & concerns

Gay survivors and cis GB+ men were the least likely to say they needed support, yet the available services did not match their needs.

31 Kay and Jeffries 2010; Donovan and Barnes 2020.

Of the 152 cis GB+ men who did not seek support from services following the instance of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner, nearly half (49%*) reported they did not need any support (see Figure 15). Cis GB+ men survivors were, by far, the least likely* to report not needing any support from services (49%* compared with 34% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek help). Some existing international research suggests that masculine gender norms — with their emphasis on self-reliance and independence — may play a role in gay men’s decisions not to seek support for intimate partner abuse.³¹

32 Donovan et al. 2021.

Some gay men survivors cited concerns about services as reasons for not seeking help after the abuse by a family member or intimate partner (see Figure 14). Gay men had higher* levels of concern about services’ understanding of their LGBT+ identity (17%* compared with 11% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek help). Gay men survivors were also slightly more likely^ to report not seeking support because the services available were not what they needed (15%^ compared with 11% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek help). Indeed, Galop’s recent domestic abuse service mapping study indicated that there are few domestic abuse services available for GB+ men in the UK (especially outside of London).³²

Some bisexual survivors had poor treatment by services in the past.

Of the 128 bisexual survivors who did not seek support from services following the instance of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner, nearly 4 in 10 (39%) did not seek support because they were unaware any support was available (see Figure 14). Although bi survivors were the least likely* to be concerned about services' understanding of their LGBT+ identity (3%* compared with 11% of all LGBT+ respondents), personal factors also played a role in some bi survivors' decisions to seek help from services. Around 1 in 10 bi survivors did not seek help after the abuse by a family member or intimate partner because of fears they would not be believed (11%) or because of poor past experiences with support services (10%).

Pan/queer survivors were very concerned about how services may treat them.

Of the 73 pan/queer survivors who did not seek support from services following the instance of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner, half (51%*) did not seek support because they were unaware any support was available (see Figure 14). Pan/queer survivors the most likely* to think support was not available (51%* compared with 41% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek support).

Among the LGBT+ survivors who did not seek help, pan/queer survivors had the greatest concerns about how they might be treated by services. Pan/queer survivors were twice as likely* not to seek help because of fears they would not be believed (24%* compared with 12% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek help). Additionally, pan/queer survivors also had larger* concerns that services would be judgmental (23%* compared with 14% of all LGBT+ survivors who did not seek support) or that services would not understand their LGBT+ identity (18%* compared with 11%). Around 1 in 5 pan/queer survivors also did not seek help because they had been treated poorly by services in the past (18%*), which was higher* than for LGBT+ survivors overall (11%).

8 Varied support experiences & concerns

Figure 14. Decision to access professional support by sexual orientation

	All	Lesbian	Gay	Bi	Pan/queer
I wasn't aware there was any support available	41%	42%	41%	39%	51%^
I didn't need any support	34%	15%	40%	37%	27%
I thought the support available would be judgemental	14%	18%	16%	8%	23%*
I didn't think they would believe me	12%	19%	8%	11%	24%*
I was worried they wouldn't understand my LGBT+ identity	11%	14%	17%*	3%*	18%*
I've previously had poor experiences of support services	11%	12%	10%	10%	18%*
The support available wasn't what I needed	11%	8%	15%^	7%	16%
I thought they might out me to my family/friends/school/work	7%	8%	8%	7%	11%

*n=389. * denotes significance to 95-99.99% confidence compared with all respondents. ^ denotes significance to 90% confidence compared with all respondents. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded. The data for asexual/aromantic respondents are not shown because of the small base sample size for this question.*

Figure 15. Reasons for not seeking professional support by gender identity

	All	Trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+	Cis LB+ women	Cis GB+ men
I wasn't aware there was any support available	41%	53%*	47%*	31%*
I didn't need any support	34%	17%*	28%*	49%*
I thought the support available would be judgemental	14%	23%*	9%	14%
I didn't think they would believe me	12%	9%	18%*	8%*
I was worried they wouldn't understand my LGBT+ identity	11%	18%^	6%*	14%
I've previously had poor experiences of support services	11%	11%	12%	7%^
The support available wasn't what I needed	11%	9%	8%	13%
I thought they might out me to my family/friends/school/work	7%	8%	6%	7%

*n=389. * denotes significance to 95-99.99% confidence compared with all respondents. ^ denotes significance to 90% confidence compared with all respondents. Percentages are rounded. Percentages do not total 100% as respondents could select multiple options. 'Don't know' and 'prefer not to say' have been excluded.*

A profile of the LGBT+ survivors

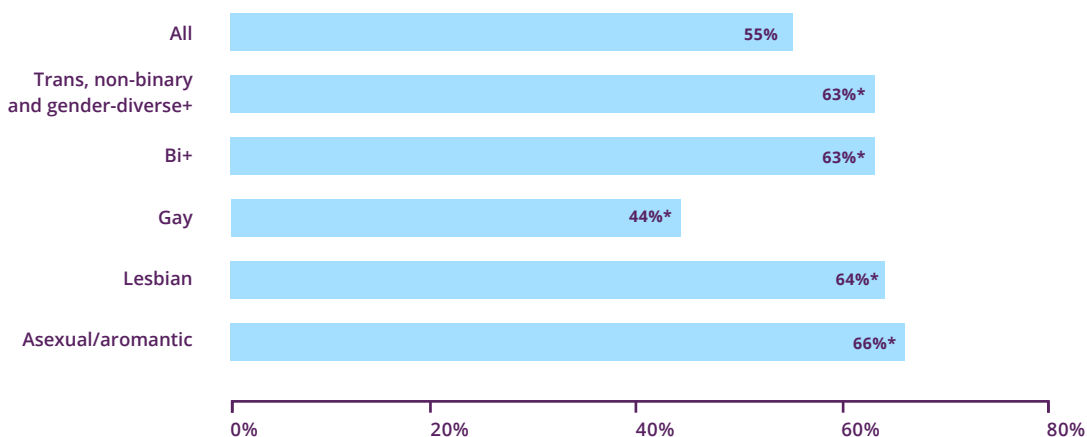
This study investigated LGBT+ experiences of abuse perpetrated by a family member or a partner/ex-partner, and the subsequent help-seeking behaviours of survivors of this abuse.

Out of the 2,042 LGBT+ adults surveyed, 55% (n=1,119) had been subjected to one or more abusive behaviours by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner.

33 See methodology.

Some parts of the LGBT+ community were more likely than others to have been subjected to one or more abusive behaviours by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner.³³

Figure 16. Experienced one or more abusive behaviours, by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner

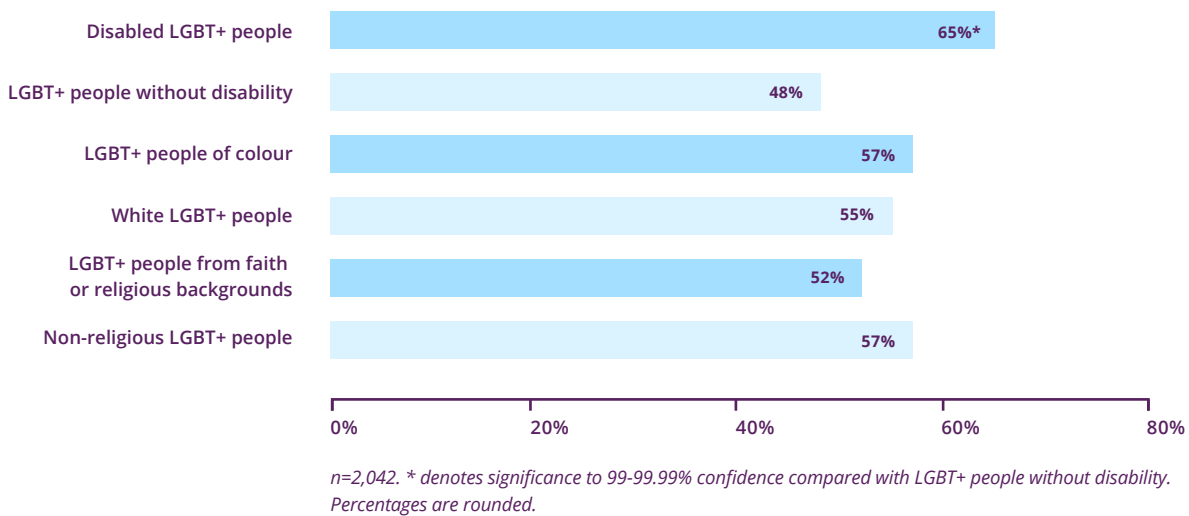


n=2,042. * denotes significance to 99-99.99% confidence compared with all others. Percentages are rounded.

9 Profile of LGBT+ survivors

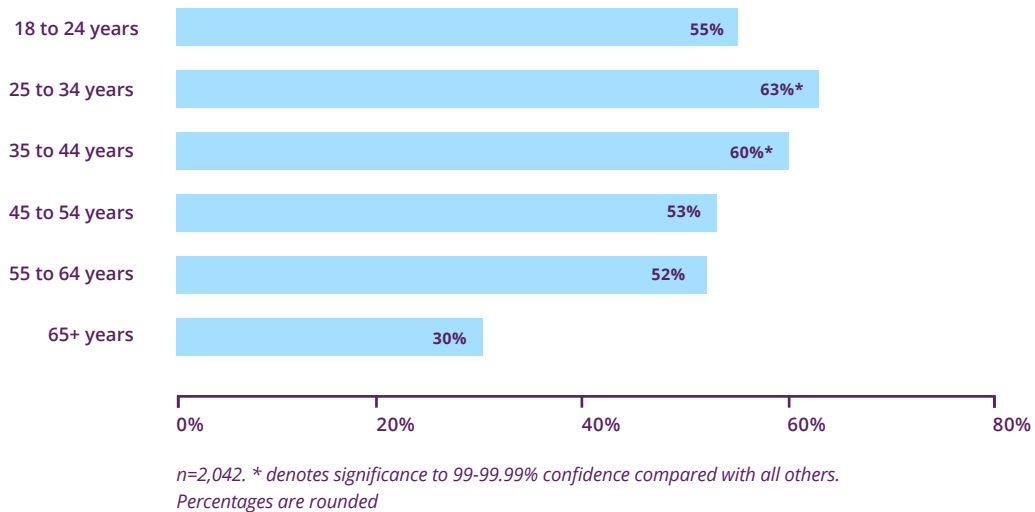
LGBT+ people with intersectional identities were generally found to be more likely to experience abuse within their family or intimate relationships.

Figure 17. Experienced one or more abusive behaviours, by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner by intersectional identity



LGBT+ people of all ages reported that they had been subjected to one or more abusive behaviours within their family or intimate relationships.

Figure 18. Experienced one or more abusive behaviours, by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner by age group





Between August and September 2022, 2,042 LGBT+ people aged 18 and over from across the UK completed an online survey about their experiences of accessing formal support for violence or abuse. The survey was administered by YouGov on behalf of Galop.

Survey and data tables

The survey was conducted using an online interview administered to members of the YouGov Plc UK panel, comprised of 2.6 million individuals who have agreed to take part in a range of YouGov surveys. Email invitations are sent to panellists selected at random from the overall YouGov panel. The e-mail invites the panellist to take part in a survey and provides a generic survey link. Once a panel member clicks on the link, they are sent to the survey that they are most required for, according to the sample definition and quotas. (The sample definition could be “GB adult population” or a subset such as “GB adult females”.) Invitations to surveys do not expire and respondents can be sent to any available survey.

YouGov provided comprehensive data tables to Galop, who analysed the quantitative data using descriptive statistics. Galop conducted conceptual qualitative content analysis on the free-text survey responses. The analysis involved both deductive and inductive coding of statements at the sentence and thematic level. Coding began with a preliminary coding framework which was then refined through successive rounds of coding and analysis.



The respondents who indicated they were lesbian/gay, bisexual, or another (non-heterosexual) orientation were weighted to be representative of the UK LGB+ population by age, gender (binary), region, ethnicity, and education level. The weighting targets for these factors were based on information from the Annual Population Survey, sourced from the Office for National Statistics. It should be noted that the sexual orientation and gender identity categories from the Annual Population Survey are less detailed than those included in this survey and analysis. For weighting purposes, a single-coded sexual orientation and binary gender question were used to match the Annual Population Survey data. For the trans, non-binary, or gender-diverse+ respondents, it was not possible to apply weighting due to a lack of official data on this population (prior to the 2021 Census results, released in January 2023). Respondents who were classed as trans, non-binary, or gender-diverse who did not also fall into one of the LGB+ categories were not weighted in the data.

In this report, the * symbol denotes when a difference between two categories or groups is statistically significant to a high confidence level ($p < 0.05$ to $p < 0.001$, or 95-99.99% confidence). A statistically significant result means that the differences observed between the groups being studied are likely to be true in the broader population, and that the differences are unlikely to be due to chance. The ^ symbol denotes when a difference between two categories is statistically significant to a moderate level ($p < .10$, or 90% confidence), which means we can be moderately confident that the difference is likely to be true in the broader population.

Sample information

All sample figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. The total sample for the commissioned study was 2,042 LGBT+ adults.



The weighted sample

- 75% of the sample were cisgender (with 41% cis men and 34% cis women), 12% of respondents were non-binary and gender-diverse+, 6% of respondents were binary trans, and 5% used a different term to describe their gender or were unsure/questioning.
- Respondents were asked to report their sexual orientation, and to record multiple answers if their romantic orientation differed from their sexual orientation. 47% of the sample were gay or lesbian, 43% were bi/pan/queer, 7% were asexual/aromantic, 3% were straight and 2% used other terms to describe their orientation.
- 85% of LGBT+ respondents were from England, 8% were from Scotland, 5% were from Wales, and 1% were from Northern Ireland.
- 29% of the sample were aged 18 to 24, 21% were aged 25 to 34, 26% were aged 35 to 44, 7% were aged 45-54, 6% were aged 55 to 64, and 11% were over the age of 65.
- 91% of the sample were white and 9% of the sample were people of colour.
- 40% of the sample were disabled or had a lasting health condition.

Location categories for analysis

Survey respondents were asked to identify the kind of place they were living in when they faced the abuse, for each type of abuse they were subjected to. The options were: "London, Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh or Brighton", "any other city", "a town" or "a village or smaller". These locations form the basis of the reporting on the experiences of support-seeking within and outside of major cities. London, Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh or Brighton were classified as major queer cities in this study because: they are noteworthy main cities in the UK; they have large, known populations of LGBT+ people; and specialist LGBT+ services are available in these places. Grouping these cities, and keeping this category distinct from others, enabled a comparison of LGBT+ domestic abuse survivors' access to support across contexts with varied availability of specialist LGBT+ services.



In some tables in this report, location categories have been aggregated to create “net” categories (e.g. “net: town or village” or “net: outside of queer cities”). Creating these categories enabled further analysis to be completed on the help-seeking data because they created a larger base sample.

Gender categories for analysis

In this report, the results for binary trans, non-binary, gender queer and agender people have been collated into a single category in this report, using the term “trans, non-binary and gender-diverse+”, due to the small sub-samples in the help-seeking and service experience data.

Analysis of help-seeking questions and definition of “domestic abuse”

Where the term is used, “domestic abuse” in this report refers to one or more forms of abuse perpetrated by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner. The analysis in this report includes all forms of abuse and violence perpetrated by a family member and/or partner/ex-partner, excluding “other” and “street harassment”.

This report contains two sets of information about experiences of domestic abuse. The analysis in this study predominantly focuses on number 2:

- 1) An overall picture of LGBT+ people who have experienced one or more forms of abuse by a family member or partner/ex-partner (n=1,119), and from this group,
- 2) Further analysis of help-seeking behaviour after a particular instance of abuse by either a family member or intimate partner (n=619).

In the survey, respondents who reported experiencing any type of abuse or violence were asked to identify from a list the perpetrator/s of each type of abuse or violence they have experienced. Out of the types of abuse the LGBT+ respondents said they had experienced, the survey then selected one of the reported abuse types as the focus for a series of questions about help-seeking.

10 Methodology



These respondents were prompted to reflect on one particular instance of abuse which they told us earlier in the survey that they had experienced.

The analysis of the help-seeking data in this report relates to the help-seeking behaviours of 619 LGBT+ respondents who:

a) were prompted, in the help-seeking section, to reflect on one particular instance of abuse they reported experiencing, and

b) identified that a family member or partner/ex-partner perpetrated a relevant type of abuse.

The survey also included a least-fill method in order to prioritise behaviours experienced in more rural areas, and to capture insights about help-seeking behaviours for a range of types of abuse.

Out of the types of abuse the LGBT+ respondents reported they had experienced, the survey then selected one of the reported abuse types as the focus for a series of questions about help-seeking. If a respondent experienced more than one type of abuse, the allocation prioritised experiences in more rural locations or the rarer form of abuse (if more than one experience in the same urban area).



- Cook, M. 2020.
 "Local Matters: Queer Scenes in 1960s Manchester, Plymouth, and Brighton." *Journal of British Studies* 59 (1) (January):32–56.
 doi:10.1017/jbr.2019.244.
- Cook, M., A. Oram, and J. Bengry. 2022.
Locating Queer Histories: Places and Traces across the UK. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Crowther, R., S. Cuthbertson, and V. Valentine. 2020.
Further out: The Scottish LGBT Rural Equality Report. Equality Network. [Link](#)
- Domestic abuse commissioner. 2022.
A Patchwork of Provision: How to Meet the Needs of Victims and Survivors across England and Wales. Technical Report. London: The Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales. [Link](#)
- Donovan, C., and R. Barnes. 2020.
 "Help-Seeking among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender Victims/Survivors of Domestic Violence and Abuse: The Impacts of Cisgendered Heteronormativity and Invisibility." *Journal of Sociology* 56 (4):554–70.
 doi:10.1177/1440783319882088.
- Donovan, C., and M. Hester. 2011.
 "Seeking Help from the Enemy: Help-Seeking Strategies of Those in Same-Sex Relationships Who Have Experienced Domestic Abuse." *Child and Family Law Quarterly* 23:26.
- . 2015.
Domestic Violence and Sexuality: What's Love Got to Do with It?. Policy Press.
- Donovan, C., J. Magić, and S. West. 2021.
LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Service Provision Mapping Study. Galop. [Link](#)
- Edwards, K.M., V.A. Mauer, M. Huff, A. Farquhar-Leicester, T.E. Sutton, and S.E. Ullman. 2022.
 "Disclosure of Sexual Assault Among Sexual and Gender Minorities: A Systematic Literature Review." *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*: Advance online publication.
 doi:10.1177/15248380211073842.
- Filice, E., and S.B. Meyer. 2018.
 "Patterns, Predictors, and Outcomes of Mental Health Service Utilization among Lesbians, Gay Men, and Bisexuals: A Scoping Review." *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health* 22 (2):162–95.
 doi:10.1080/19359705.2017.1418468.
- Flanagan, S.K., and H.J. Peters. 2020.
 "Asexual-Identified Adults: Interactions with Health-Care Practitioners." *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* 49 (5):1631–43.
 doi:10.1007/s10508-020-01670-6.
- Galop. 2022a.
Navigating the Criminal Justice System & Support Services as an LGBT+ Survivor of Sexual Violence. London: Galop. [Link](#)
- Galop. 2022b.
LGBT+ Experiences of Abuse from Family Members. Galop. [Link](#)
- Guadalupe-Diaz, X.L., and J. Jasinski. 2017.
 'I Wasn't a Priority, I Wasn't a Victim': Challenges in Help Seeking for Transgender Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence." *Violence Against Women* 23 (6):772–92.
 doi:10.1177/1077801216650288.

- Harvey, S., M. Mitchell, J. Keeble, C. McNaughton Nicholls, and N. Rahim. 2014. *Barriers Faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People in Accessing Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment, and Sexual Violence Services*. NatCen Social Research: Welsh Government. [Link](#)
- Hine, B., S. Wallace, and E.A. Bates. 2022. "Understanding the Profile and Needs of Abused Men: Exploring Call Data From a Male Domestic Violence Charity in the United Kingdom." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 37 (17–18):NP16992–7022. doi:10.1177/08862605211028014.
- Houlbrook, M. 2020. *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957*. University of Chicago Press.
- Kay, M., and S. Jeffries. 2010. "Homophobia, Heteronormativity and Hegemonic Masculinity: Male Same-Sex Intimate Violence from the Perspective of Brisbane Service Providers." *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 17 (3): 412–23. doi:10.1080/13218710903566953.
- Kurdyla, V. 2023. "Disclosure Experiences for Transgender and Nonbinary Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence." *Journal of Homosexuality* 70 (3):473–96. doi:10.1080/00918369.2021.1990687.
- Kurdyla, V., A.M. Messinger, and M. Ramirez. 2021. "Transgender Intimate Partner Violence and Help-Seeking Patterns." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 36 (19–20):NP11046–69. doi:10.1177/0886260519880171.
- Lee, Y.-J., and L. Santiago. 2022. "Race, Class, and Gender Identity: Implications for Transgender People's Police Help Seeking." *Police Practice and Research*. Advance online publication:1–15. doi:10.1080/15614263.2022.2085102.
- Love, G., G.D. Michele, C. Giakoumidaki, E.H. Sánchez, M. Lukera, and V. Cartei. 2017. "Improving Access to Sexual Violence Support for Marginalised Individuals: Findings from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans* and the Black and Minority Ethnic Communities." *Critical and Radical Social Work* 5 (2):163–79. doi:10.1332/204986017X14933954425266.
- Magić, J., and P. Keeley. 2019. *Recognise & Respond: Strengthening Advocacy for LGBT+ Survivors of Domestic Abuse*. Galop. [Link](#)
- Messinger, A.M., V. Kurdyla, and X.L. Guadalupe-Diaz. 2022. "Intimate Partner Violence Help-Seeking in the U.S. Transgender Survey." *Journal of Homosexuality* 69 (6):1042–65. doi:10.1080/00918369.2021.1901506.
- Parry, M.M., and E.N. O'Neal. 2015. "Help-Seeking Behaviour among Same-Sex Intimate Partner Violence Victims: An Intersectional Argument." *Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society* 16 (1):51-67.
- Renner, J., W. Blaszczyk, L. Täuber, A. Dekker, P. Briken, and T.O. Nieder. 2021. "Barriers to Accessing Health Care in Rural Regions by Transgender, Non-Binary, and Gender Diverse People: A Case-Based Scoping Review." *Frontiers in Endocrinology* 12: 717821. doi:10.3389/fendo.2021.717821.



Reynish, T., H. Hoang, H. Bridgman, and B. Nic Giolla Easpaig. 2022.
"Barriers and Enablers to Mental Health Help Seeking of Sexual, Gender, and Erotic Minorities: A Systematic Literature Review." *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health* (May 31):1–22.
doi:10.1080/19359705.2022.2036666.

Rollè, L., G. Giardina, A.M. Caldarera, E. Gerino, and P. Brustia. 2018.
"When Intimate Partner Violence Meets Same Sex Couples: A Review of Same Sex Intimate Partner Violence." *Frontiers in Psychology* 9. [Link](#)

Santonico, F., T. Trombetta, and L. Rollè. 2023.
"The Help-Seeking Process in Same-Sex Intimate Partner Violence: A Systematic Review." *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* 20 (1): 391–411.
doi:10.1007/s13178-021-00629-z.

Simon, K.A., H.M. Hawthorne, A.N. Clark, B.M. Renley, R.H. Farr, L.A. Eaton, and R.J. Watson. 2022.
"Contextualizing the Well-Being of Asexual Youth: Evidence of Differences in Family, Health, and School Outcomes." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 51 (1): 128–40.
doi:10.1007/s10964-021-01500-5.

Get help

If you are LGBT+ and experiencing violence or abuse, such as hate crime, domestic abuse, sexual violence or so-called 'conversion therapy', you can contact Galop directly for help and support.

0800 999 5428
help@galop.org.uk
galop.org.uk

Galop

info@galop.org.uk
galop.org.uk

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Anti-Violence and Policing Group, operating as Galop, is a charity registered in England and Wales under number 1077384, whose registered office is 8-9 Talbot Court, London, EC3V 0BP. Galop is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales under number 2969307.

