



It was the **worst night of my life.** I have never felt so worthless or alone or used.



During the months following my sexual assault, **I never felt like I could go and talk to a bishop or get a blessing.**



For years I felt unclean, that it was all my fault, and that it was the reason I was gay. But I know now that it was not. There are so many other reasons why I'm gay. [The abuser] must have noticed I was different and thought I would do what he told me to do. **Therapy has helped me deal with what happened and helped me become happier and make my life brighter.**

Remember

- › Sexual assault is never the survivor's fault.
- › If someone opens up to you about their experience with assault, listen.
- › Offer support that is safe for both of you.
- › People react to assault differently; there is not a wrong or right way.
- › If you are a survivor, seek out resources to help in the healing process.
- › Never pressure someone into reporting an assault; that is the survivor's decision to make.

Resources

- › **BYU Counseling Center**
Current BYU students can access the center, which has trained counselors and is bound by law to be confidential – caps.byu.edu
- › **National Sexual Assault Hotline**
They can refer you to a local rape crisis center
1800-656-HOPE (4673) 24/7 or Online Counseling at <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>
- › **Love is Respect Hotline**
1866-331-99474 (24/7) or Text "loveis" 22522
- › **The Anti-Violence Project**
serves LGBTQ people – 212-714-1124 Bilingual 24/7
- › **GLBT National Help Center**
1800-246-PRIDE (1-800-246-7743) or Online Chat at <http://www.volunteerlogin.org/chat/>
- › **Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project**
1800-832-1901

- USGA at BYU | Faces of USGA
- [youtube.com/byuitgetsbetter](https://www.youtube.com/byuitgetsbetter)
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USGA

**Understanding Sexual
Assault within the LGBTQ
Community**

Sexual Assault in the LGBTQ Community

Sexual assault can happen to anyone regardless of one's identity, but lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people are at particular risk for sexual violence. In fact, studies have found that LGBTQ people experience physical violence and sexual assault at similar or elevated rates compared to their heterosexual counterparts.

Unique Challenges

Reporting sexual violence is a fundamentally different experience for the LGBTQ community. LGBTQ individuals frequently experience:

- › The fear of being **outed**, or of others discovering their sexual/gender orientation.
- › The fear that others will blame their sexual/gender orientation for the assault (see the myth section).
- › Unintentional mistreatment by sexual assault responders due to a **lack of understanding and training**.
- › Fear of being **denied help** because of their sexual/gender orientation or even being **retaliated against**.

What Can I Do?

You don't have to be directly impacted by sexual violence against the LGBTQ community to help.

- › Speak up. Show support for LGBTQ survivors by confronting myths that hypersexualize or marginalize LGBTQ people.
- › Be aware of resources specific to aiding LGBTQ survivors.
- › Educate yourself and become culturally competent on LGBTQ issues. This will help you effectively provide aid when a survivor confides in you.

Myth: Rape is something only men do to exclusively women.

Truth: Any person can be a survivor or perpetrator of sexual violence, regardless of gender. All survivors deserve to be treated respectfully and to have their assaults taken seriously.

Myth: LGBTQ people are raped more frequently because they have riskier sexual habits.

Truth: Why LGBTQ people experience sexual violence at such high rates is not clear, some factors include:

LGBTQ people are incorrectly believed to be “more sexual” than straight and cisgender people, therefore making it acceptable in the minds of some to harass and sexually assault them

LGBTQ people face greater marginalization, stigma, homelessness, and poverty, all of which increase the risk for sexual violence
Sexual violence is often a hate crime against LGBTQ people, especially those of racial minorities.

Myth: Being sexually assaulted makes a person more likely to be LGBTQ.

Truth: There is no evidence that experiencing sexual assault influences orientation or gender identity.

Myth: LGBTQ people are more likely to sexually assault others.

Truth: There is no evidence to suggest that LGBTQ people sexually assault others at any higher rate than straight and cisgender people. Whereas sexual assault can and does occur in same sex relationships, LGBTQ people often experience sexual assault at the hands of straight and cisgender people.

References

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