

El Camino

Supporting Healthy Relationships for LGBTQ+ Young People

Healthy relationships

Healthy LGBTQ+ relationships share similar characteristics as all healthy relationships—open communication, boundaries, and mutual respect. LGBTQ+ young people also have some unique considerations for their relationships as it is important for their sexual and gender identity to be respected by their partner.¹ Young people should accept and affirm their partner's sexual and gender identity and respect their partner's choice to share or not share their gender and/or sexual identity with others.

- [LGBTQ Relationships](#): information on signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships for LGBTQ+ youth, barriers, and supports
- [Supporting your partner through transition](#): guidance on navigating a partner's transition
- [Dating while trans](#): guidance on dating, sex, and relationships for trans youth

Intimate partner violence

Research shows that LGBTQ+ young people are at a greater risk for experiencing intimate partner violence.^{2,3} Therefore, it's important to make sure discussions about intimate partner violence are inclusive of LGBTQ+ young people by talking about what abuse can look like in LGBTQ+ relationships.

Misconceptions about what LGBTQ+ relationships are like can make it difficult for LGBTQ+ young people to identify abuse.⁴ LGBTQ+ relationships are commonly perceived to be less violent and abusive than cisgender, heterosexual relationships because most of the stories we hear about abuse are about cisgender men abusing cisgender women.⁵ This can lead to false narratives, like the assumption that women can't abuse women, men can't be abused, and feminine people can't abuse masculine partners.⁶ However, it's important to emphasize that anyone can experience abuse or abuse a partner and teach young people to recognize the signs of abuse in all relationship dynamics.

- [Trans-Specific Power and Control Tactics](#) details abuse tactics specifically used by and against trans partners
- [Power and Control Wheel for LGBT Relationships](#) describes abuse tactics for all LGBTQ+ people
- [Stalking and LGBTQ+ Individuals](#): information on the prevalence and impact of stalking among LGBTQ+ people and support resources

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- ¹ Rollè, L., Giardina, G., Caldarera, A. M., Gerino, E., & Brustia, P. (2018). When intimate partner violence meets same sex couples: A review of same sex intimate partner violence. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1506. <https://doi.org/10.3389%2Ffpsyg.2018.01506>
- ² Reuter, T. R., & Whitton, S. W. (2018). *Adolescent dating violence among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth*. In D. A. Wolfe & J. R. Temple (Eds.), *Adolescent dating violence: Theory, research, and prevention* (pp. 215–231). Elsevier Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-811797-2.00009-8>
- ³ Garthe, R. C., Kaur, A., Rieger, A., Blackburn, A. M., Kim, S., & Goffnett, J. (2021). Dating violence and peer victimization among male, female, transgender, and gender-expansive youth. *Pediatrics*, 147(4), e2020004317. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2020-004317>
- ⁴ Rollè, L., Giardina, G., Caldarera, A. M., Gerino, E., & Brustia, P. (2018). When intimate partner violence meets same sex couples: A review of same sex intimate partner violence. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1506. <https://doi.org/10.3389%2Ffpsyg.2018.01506>
- ⁵ Cannon, C. (2015). Illusion of inclusion: The failure of the gender paradigm to account for intimate partner violence in LGBT relationships. *Partner Abuse*, 6(1), 65–77. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1891/1946-6560.6.1.65>
- ⁶ Rollè, L., Giardina, G., Caldarera, A. M., Gerino, E., & Brustia, P. (2018). When intimate partner violence meets same sex couples: A review of same sex intimate partner violence. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1506. <https://doi.org/10.3389%2Ffpsyg.2018.01506>