

Media Relations

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Carsey Institute: More Than 40 Percent of LGBTQ+ College Students Report Intimate Partner Violence

DURHAM, N.H. – More than 40 percent of LGBTQ+ college students (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and other nonheterosexual identities) report that they have experienced intimate partner violence in their current relationships, a rate that generally aligns with the rate of violence among heterosexual couples, according to new research from the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire.

Katie Edwards, assistant professor of psychology and women's studies and faculty fellow at the Carsey Institute, and Kateryna Sylaska, a doctoral student in social psychology at UNH, authored the Carsey Institute brief "Intimate Partner Violence Among LGBTQ+ College Students."

"These findings have important implications for prevention and intervention efforts. Although components of intimate partner violence prevention programming developed for heterosexual students, such as assertiveness skills training, are relevant for LGBTQ+ students, programming for LGBTQ+ college students should integrate techniques to reduce internalized feelings of negativity toward homosexuality," the authors said.

"Such an approach, which might include developing positive self-regard, increasing social support networks, and exposure to positive LGBTQ+ messages and role models, could help reduce violence perpetration in a relationship," they said.

The key findings are as follows:

- Four in 10 LGBTQ+ college students in the sample reported intimate partner violence victimization or perpetration within a current relationship.
- More than one third of the victims told no one about the abuse, a rate that is higher than what is generally found among heterosexual college students.
- The most common reason for not revealing the abuse was the perception that it was "no big deal" or that it was normal, or they justified the abuse because the partner was drunk or annoyed.
- Victims most frequently turned to friends when revealing the abuse, followed by family members. Only 9 percent turned to formal supports such as counselors.
- The majority said that friends were both the most helpful and least helpful as sources of support.

"Widespread efforts are needed to reduce homophobia and heterosexism broadly, as are educational efforts, such as social media and other campaigns, to raise awareness about intimate partner violence among LGBTQ+ college students," the authors said.

This research is based on a survey of 391 college students in same-sex romantic relationships from across the United States.

The complete Carsey Institute report about this research is available at <http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publication/1066>.

The Carsey Institute conducts policy research on vulnerable children, youth, and families and on sustainable community development. The institute gives policy makers and practitioners the timely, independent resources they need to effect change in their communities. For more information about the Carsey Institute, go to www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu.

The [University of New Hampshire](http://www.unh.edu), founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,300 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

GRAPHICS

Rates of intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration in college students' current same-sex relationships.

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/lgbtq1.jpg>

Source: Carsey Institute at UNH

Rates of victims' disclosure to various sources following intimate partner violence.

<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/lgbtq2.jpg>

Source: Carsey Institute at UNH

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