

Sexual and gender minorities assigned male at birth have higher odds of partner violence

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Intimate partner violence is chronic among young sexual and gender minorities assigned male at birth, with bisexual, transgender and lower-income people in this group having the highest likelihood of victimization, a Rutgers study has found.

"Our findings demonstrate just how common and chronic intimate partner violence is for young gender and [sexual minorities](#)," said Marybec Griffin, an assistant professor in the Department of Health Behavior, Society and Policy at Rutgers School of Public Health and coauthor of the study published in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.

"The common perception is that violence happens only once," Griffin said. "But victims stay a long time in relationships where there is violence occurring for a number of reasons, and those most vulnerable to this cycle are economic, social and sexual minority groups."

To determine how chronic and prevalent intimate partner violence is among this group of individuals and to determine whether sociodemographic characteristics have an effect, researchers surveyed 665 young people in New York City.

Data was drawn from Project 18, an ongoing cohort study that began in 2014. Participants recruited in two waves were between ages 18 and 24, self-reported being assigned male at birth, had sex with a [male partner](#) in the previous six months and were HIV-negative.

Participants were asked about their [gender identity](#), race and ethnicity, [sexual identity](#) and income and education levels.

Nearly half of the participants (47.1 percent) reported being the victim of intimate partner violence in the past year. Psychological violence was the most common form of victimization reported, at 37.6 percent, followed by [sexual violence](#) (22.1 percent) and physical violence (19.5 percent). Psychological violence was the most common form of perpetration.

Bisexual, transgender and lower income participants were more likely to report victimization, while participants who were Asian and Pacific

Islanders, bisexual, transgender and lower income were more likely to report perpetration of intimate partner violence.

Transgender participants were more likely to report severe psychological or minor and [severe injury](#) victimization than cisgender participants. Bisexual participants were more likely to report severe injury and severe sexual victimization than gay participants.

Participants who made less than \$5,000 annually (34.6 percent of the sample) were more likely to report severe injury and minor and severe sexual victimization than participants who earned more than \$5,000.

The findings suggest that intimate partner violence "is a prevalent and chronic health problem" for many young sexual and gender minorities assigned male at birth and reveal "sociodemographic disparities in [intimate partner violence] experiences in this historically-marginalized group ... reflecting larger systems of oppression and privilege in our society," the researchers noted in the study.

Griffin said the data should be used to develop intimate partner violence prevention and intervention programs and to develop and strengthen education and health policies.

"The takeaway from our work is that the range of people experiencing [intimate partner violence](#) is shockingly high, and that for sexual and gender minorities, the violence is often repeated," Griffin said.

More information: Christopher B. Stults et al, Sociodemographic Differences in Intimate Partner Violence Prevalence, Chronicity, and Severity Among Young Sexual and Gender Minorities Assigned Male at Birth: The P18 Cohort Study, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (2021). [DOI: 10.1177/08862605211021985](https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211021985)

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