

OVW Special Populations Webinar Series Discussion Guide

Vulnerable and Underserved: Victim Advocacy for Incarcerated LGBTI Survivors

“My rape crisis counselor was the first person to see me as a woman, apart from the people who wanted to abuse me.” - Michelle, a transgender survivor of sexual abuse behind bars

Introduction

Vulnerable and Underserved: Victim Advocacy for Incarcerated LGBTI Survivors is a webinar that will help advocates who are working behind bars. It explores strategies for helping prisoners who identify as LGBTI, a group of people who are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse. As the webinar discusses, many LGBTI prisoners have suffered prior trauma and, once locked up, face barriers in accessing culturally sensitive support services. The presenters will provide guidance for advocates on evaluating their program’s readiness to serve incarcerated LGBTI survivors and identifying additional training needs — with a special focus on working with transgender clients. It also highlights the ways that advocates can use the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards as a tool to ensure the safety and dignity of LGBTI prisoners. The webinar is part of a series on providing victim services for especially underserved incarcerated populations, including Deaf and hard of hearing survivors, survivors with disabilities, survivors of sexual abuse perpetrated by women, and survivors with mental illness.

Discussion Questions

1. Has your agency provided victim services for survivors who identify as LGBTI? What about incarcerated or formerly incarcerated LGBTI survivors?

2. Please complete the following queries:
 - a. Our staff is culturally competent to address the needs and concerns, including safety, of LGB (lesbian, gay, bisexual) survivors.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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b. Our staff has the capacity to address the specific needs and concerns of transgender survivors.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

c. Our staff has the capacity to address the specific needs and concerns of intersex survivors.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- If you responded *strongly disagree*, *disagree* or *somewhat agree* to any of the above questions, discuss with your organizational leadership the gaps in your agency's readiness to provide culturally sensitive services to incarcerated LGBTI survivors.
- What steps can your organization take to ensure services for LGBTI survivors are culturally sensitive? Here are some tips to build cultural competence:
 - Create space for staff to openly discuss concerns around serving incarcerated LGBTI survivors
 - Provide (additional) staff training on working with LGBTI survivors and on the protections for LGBTI prisoners under the PREA standards
 - Build internal competency by recruiting LGBTI staff, board, and volunteers
 - Ask LGBTI advocates to join your SART
 - Conduct outreach to local LGBTI organizations in your community for training, technical assistance, and collaboration
 - Request feedback from survivors on the services provided

Additional Resources

Resources Related to the PREA Standards

- For links to the PREA standards and other resources for the corrections field, visit the National PREA Resource Center, at www.prearesourcecenter.org/

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- The “PREA Audit Supplementary Questionnaire on Community Advocate Engagement”, <https://justdetention.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Supplementary-Questionnaire-on-Community-Advocate-Engagement.pdf>. The questionnaire may be useful for victim advocates to review as they prepare to speak with a PREA auditor about conditions in the facilities where they provide services.
- PREA Standards in Focus includes an in-depth look at:
 - PREA’s requirements on screening inmates for vulnerability, including identifying as LGBTI, in “Screening for Risk of Sexual Victimization and Abusiveness,” https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/sites/default/files/library/115.41_0.pdf
 - PREA’s limits on searches of transgender and intersex prisoners, in “Limits to Cross-Gender Viewing and Searches,” <https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/sites/default/files/library/115.15.pdf>.

Survivor Stories

- JDI Survivor Videos: (available at https://justdetention.org/media_type/video/)
 - *Michelle-Lael’s Journey to Healing*
 - *Survivor Voices: Troy*
 - *Survivor Voices: Rodney*
 - *My Name is Joe*
- The New York Times, “The Rape Jokes We Still Laugh At”, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/09/opinion/contributors/the-rape-jokes-we-still-laugh-at.html>

Webinars and Other Resources

- JDI Advocate Resources, <http://www.justdetention.org/advocate-resources>
- Video, *What It’s Like to Be Intersex*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAUDKEI4QKI>
- JDI Webinar, *In Danger – LGB Survivors Behind Bars*, <https://justdetention.org/webinar/in-danger-lesbian-gay-and-bisexual-survivors-behind-bars/>
- JDI Webinar, *Not Alone – How to Help Transgender Survivors in Detention* (Parts I and II):
 - <https://justdetention.org/webinar/not-alone-how-to-help-transgender-survivors-in-detention-part-1/>
 - <https://justdetention.org/webinar/not-alone-how-to-help-transgender-survivors-in-detention-part-2/>

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National LGBTI Rights and Anti-Violence Organizations

- FORGE, www.forge-forward.org
- National Center for Transgender Equality, www.transequality.org
- National Center for Lesbian Rights, www.nclrights.org
- Transgender Law Center, www.transgenderlawcenter.org
- Gay and Lesbian Task Force, www.thetaskforce.org
- Lambda Legal, www.lambdalegal.org
- Human Rights Campaign, www.hrc.org

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