

Working with Incarcerated Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Survivors of Sexual Abuse

July 24, 2024



Presenters



Leyla Dost (they/them)

Program Officer
Just Detention International

Nicole de la Torre (she/her)

Program Director
Just Detention International

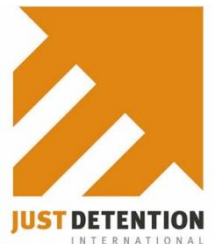


JDI's Work

JDI is a health and human rights organization that seeks to end sexual violence in all forms of detention.

JDI's Core Goals:

1. To hold government officials accountable
2. To change public attitudes about sexual violence behind bars
3. To ensure survivors get the help they need



JDI's Core Principle

No matter what
crime a person
may have
committed,
rape is not part
of the penalty.

JUST DETENTION
INTERNATIONAL
RAPE IS NOT PART OF THE PENALTY

This Webinar Series

This webinar is one of a 13-part series focused on providing accessible services for currently and formerly incarcerated survivors who are from particularly underserved groups.

If you're not already on our mailing list, send us your name and email in the chat and we'll add you so you don't miss announcements on future webinars!



Thanks to OVW

JDI's work to help survivors of sexual abuse in detention is possible because of generous support from the Office on Violence Against Women.

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GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO

TAKE DEEP
BREATHS

NOURISH
YOUR BODY

STEP OUT AS
NEEDED

TURN YOUR
CAMERA OFF



Today's Objectives:

- Identify specific challenges lesbian, gay and bisexual people face in and out of detention
- Recognize dynamics of sexual abuse experienced by lesbian, gay and bisexual people in detention
- Learn strategies for making support services more accessible to incarcerated lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals

Defining the Issue



California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Language



Preferred Terms:

- People who are incarcerated
- Survivor
- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual

Who Are We Talking About?

- Sexual minorities
- Sexuality is a spectrum



Share Out!

Why do you think it's important to specifically talk about the experiences of incarcerated lesbian, gay and bisexual survivors?

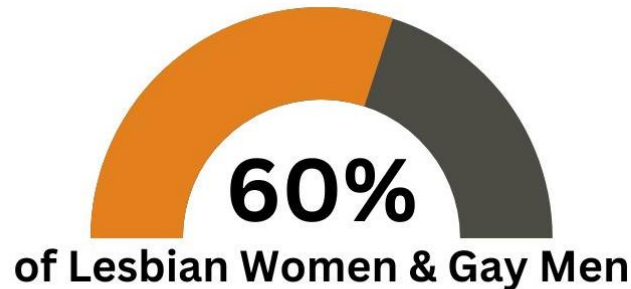
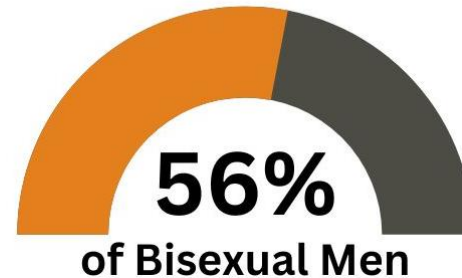
Why It's Important

LGB people:

- Face social stigma and discrimination
- Experience disproportionate rates of sexual violence in and out of custody
- Are overrepresented at every stage of the criminal legal system and are incarcerated at higher rates than heterosexual people
- More likely to face administrative or disciplinary action in custody

Sexual Abuse of LGB People

Prevalance of Sexual Abuse in the U.S.



The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey 2016/2017 Report on Victimization by Sexual Identity

Discrimination to Prison Pipeline

- Pushed out of school
- Family/community rejection
- Job discrimination
- Discrimination in crisis centers and shelters
- Unequal access to opportunities and resources



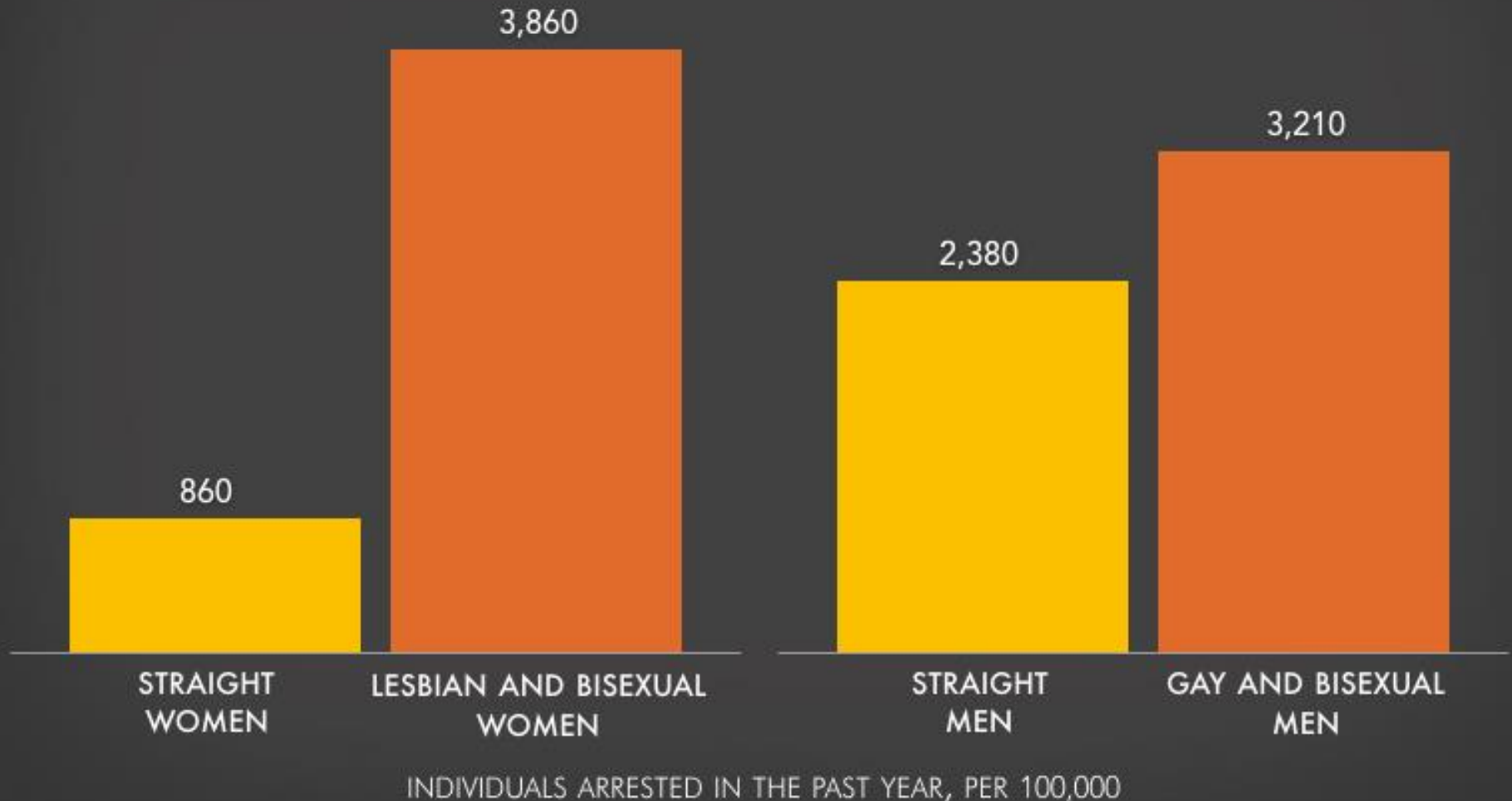
Discrimination to Prison Pipeline



- Homelessness/poverty
- Participation in underground economies to survive
- Targeted with anti-LGB violence
- Same issues during re-entry
- Recidivism

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people are much more likely to be arrested than straight people

Number of straight versus lesbian or bisexual women, and straight versus gay or bisexual men, who report being arrested in the past year, per 100,000 people in each category



Characteristics of Detention

- Hyper-masculine & misogynist environments
- Deeply rooted systemic racism & anti-LGBTQIA+ discrimination
- Abuses of authority



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Rodney's Story



Life in Detention for LGB People



Shutterstock

Let's Discuss!

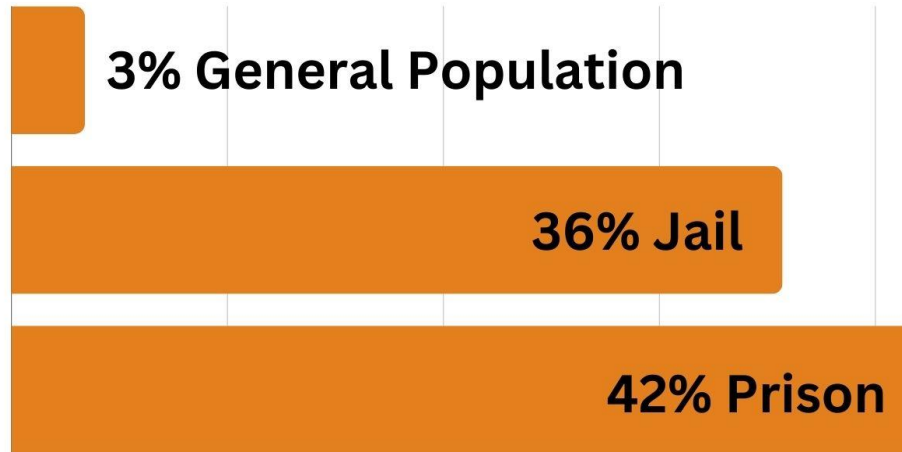
**What are specific challenges
lesbian, gay and bisexual
people face during
incarceration?**

(Tell us in the chat)



Disproportionate Representation

Lesbian & Bisexual Women in the U.S.



Incarceration Rates and Traits of Sexual Minorities in the United States: National Inmate Survey, 2011–2012

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Disproportionate Representation

Gay & Bisexual Men in the U.S.

4% General Population

6% Jail

9% Prison

Incarceration Rates and Traits of Sexual Minorities in the United States: National Inmate Survey, 2011–2012

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Abuse & Discrimination Against LGB People in Detention

- Targeted for abuse and disciplinary action
- Sexually objectified
- Intimate partner violence is prevalent
- Charged for consensual sex

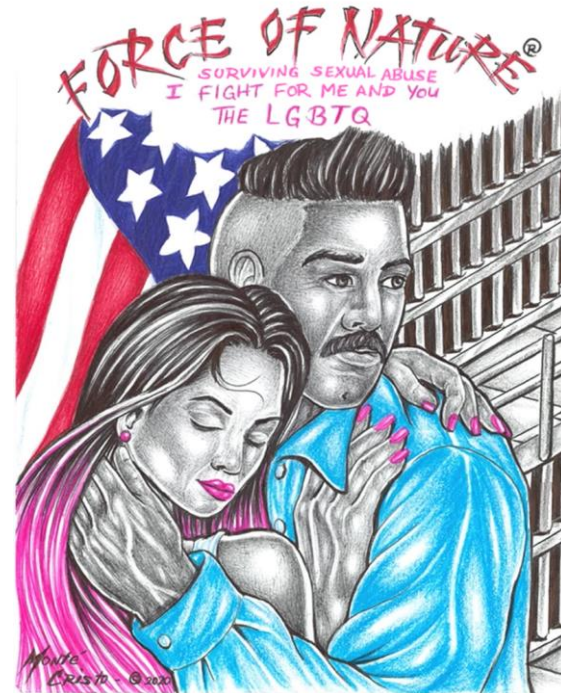


Image: Art by Montecristo, longtime JDI writer

Dynamics for Lesbian/Bisexual Women

- Culture that punishes gender non-conformity
- Familial-type structures that may conceal abuse
- Coercion is prevalent
- Lesbian/bisexual women more likely to be seen as perpetrators



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and Rehabilitation*

Dynamics for Gay/Bisexual Men

- At greater risk for physical abuse
- Misconception that gay and bisexual men are “happy” to be incarcerated
- Sexual minorities are treated as weak, deviant
- Targeting by gangs



Troy Isaac, JDI Survivor Council

PREA and Incarcerated LGB Survivors

- Everyone should be safe
- Professional communication
- Intake screening (LGB status and perception)
- Housing
- Incident reviews



Sexual Abuse of Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People in Detention

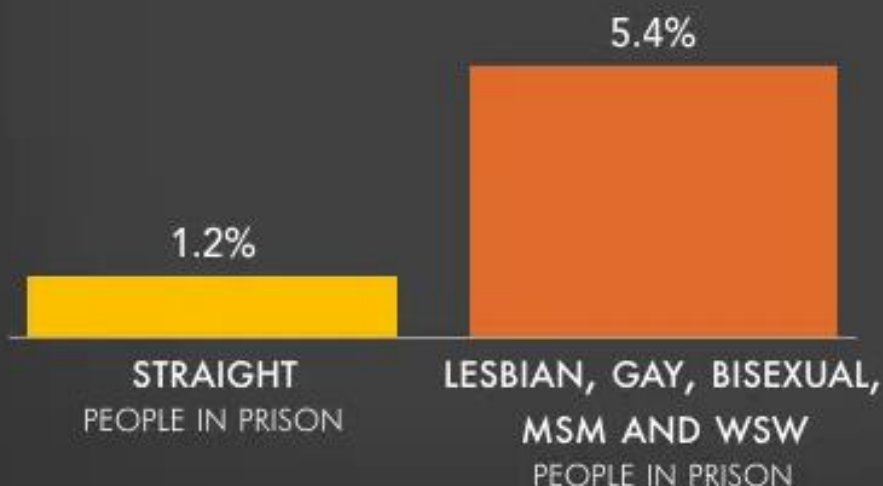


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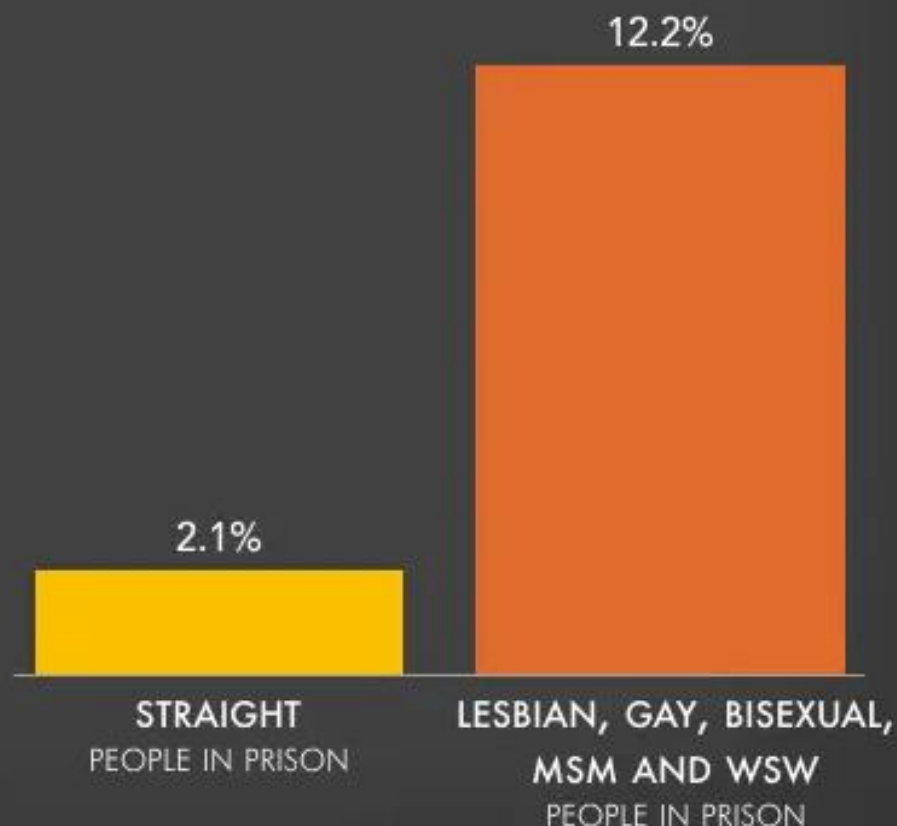
In prison, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and other non-straight people are sexually victimized at much higher rates than straight people

Percentage of straight people sexually victimized in state and federal prisons compared to incarcerated people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, men who have sex with men (MSM) or women who have sex with women (WSW)

VICTIMIZED BY STAFF



VICTIMIZED BY ANOTHER INCARCERATED PERSON



Types of Sexual Abuse

- Protective pairing
- Survival sex work
- Corrective rape
- Coercion by staff
- Abusive and invasive searches
- Verbal harassment



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Corrections and Rehabilitation*

Let's Discuss!

Why might lesbian, gay and bisexual survivors of sexual abuse in detention not report or seek help?

(Tell us why in the chat)

Barriers to Reporting

- Anti-LGBTQIA+ discrimination
- Fear of being charged with consensual sex
- Risk of retaliation
- Increased isolation of protective custody



Increasing Dignity for LGB People in Detention

- Protections from abuse
- Staff education
- Sexual safety
- Access to inclusive healthcare
- Gender affirming clothing and commissary
- Culture change



Rosa's Story

“Today, I’m scared to let someone so much as pat my hand or give me a supportive hug, fearing that it will be misconstrued as a sexual advance. I am paranoid when I shower. I feel dirty and used. I feel let down by those who were supposed to protect me — the warden, the jailor, the Department of Corrections.”

Rosa, a bisexual survivor of sexual abuse in detention



Best Approaches for Supporting Incarcerated Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Survivors



Joe's Story



"I had a rape crisis advocate. I cannot tell you how much of an angel she was. She was the first person to ask me what my first name was and treat me like a person, not just a number. I'm a human being."

Joe Booth (1968-2021)



Getting Prepared

- Develop an awareness of the dynamics of the environment and dynamics of abuse
- Recognize how your identity may impact how you are perceived
- Be a resource for your agency to ensure a nuanced understanding and strategic approach

Tips for Providing Support

- Discuss who the survivor is out to at the facility
- Don't make assumptions about a person's sexuality
- Explain confidentiality practices
- Allow for additional time to build rapport



Tips for Providing Support

- Forensic exam and investigatory interview accompaniment and advocacy
- Know the rights of LGB survivors and be prepared to advocate on their behalf



Just Detention International

Organizational Considerations

- Think about language used by your agency.
 - Be clear and specify that your agency serves LGB people
- Partner with your local LGBTQ+ organizations
 - Additional training
 - Resources for detention facilities
- Learn about national, state and local laws and trends that impact LGB people

Additional Resources

Agencies which support incarcerated

LGB People:

- National Center for Lesbian Rights
- Black and Pink
- Lambda Legal



Contact your local and state LGBTQ+ centers

Questions



Upcoming JDI Events:

Office Hours:

- July 31 at 1pm ET/12pm CT/11am MT/10am PT

NSAC:

- August 14 in Washington, DC

Webinars:

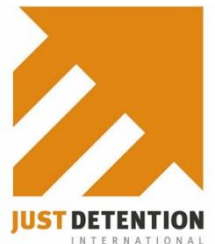
- September 2024: *Providing Services to Incarcerated Survivors who are Deaf*
- October 2024: *Supporting Incarcerated Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*



Coaching Opportunity

- One-on-one coaching from JDI to help expand your services for incarcerated survivors
- Intake session and four personalized 1-hour coaching sessions
- Completely FREE

<https://justdetention.org/coaching-ta-application/#search>



For More Information

For additional information, please visit JDI's Advocate Resource page: www.justdetention.org/advocate-resources

Direct questions to: advocate@justdetention.org

For more information about **Just Detention International**, visit www.justdetention.org.

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