

LGB&T

Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender **Self Help Toolkit**

If you or anyone you know has felt mistreated out and about in Hertfordshire we want to help you

DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!



HERTFORDSHIRE LGB&T PARTNERSHIP

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Hate and harassment can take many forms

Many people from Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities have experienced some form of violence, harassment and verbal abuse, damage to property, gossip and even social isolation.

Words hurt

The reality is that some people will just be hostile towards people who they see as different. They can put prejudice into action when they feel as if their sense of self is threatened.

Whilst these views are often in the minority, there will be people that act on these and may use insults to reduce you to a status that makes sense to them. It is wrong, small minded and unfair but it happens. Prejudice without reason or knowledge can lead to unfair and harmful discrimination, rudeness, abuse and sometimes violence - and it isn't limited to any one particular group.

You cannot always control what others say or do but there are some steps you can take to make things better for yourself and others.

Remember. If you are discriminated against, threatened, bullied or abused in any other way for being LGBT it is **NOT** your fault.

This toolkit aims to help you help yourself, know when to ask for help and where to go to get it to make sure you feel safe, happy and supported living in Hertfordshire.

Challenging and reporting incidents

Challenging discriminatory behaviour is difficult if you fear the response of the person you challenge. If you are out and about you should only directly challenge discrimination if you feel it is safe to do so. If you are at work you should use your organisation's policies and procedures for addressing bullying, harassment or discrimination. In the unlikely event that your organisation does not have these, you can contact the Equality & Human Rights Commission helpline on 0845 604 6610.

People are unlikely to think they are prejudiced and will usually be defensive if they are challenged. It's always best to calmly question the behaviour and attitude rather than labelling the person.

- Invite the person to question their own attitude and stereotypes to better understand what they are saying.
- Provide some appropriate facts if you have them.
- Explain how it makes you feel.
- Be heard but stay calm and try and say things in private if possible.
- Ask for help with how to challenge the behaviour, or in joining the challenge.

It is very important to report hate crime to the police

A hate crime is any criminal offence that is motivated by hostility or prejudice based upon a victim's disability, ethnicity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, gender, gender identity, nationality or membership of any other protected group.

Effective action against specific instances of discrimination can be a powerful deterrent to others. Reporting makes a difference – to you, your friends, and your community. There is more information on [Hertfordshire police website](#) around how to report a hate crime. Incidents of hate crime can be reported via the non-emergency number 101. In an emergency, where there is an immediate threat of danger to yourself or property always dial 999.

You can find out how to contact your local Community Support Officer from your Safer Neighbourhoods Team on the [contacts page](#) of the website.

Online reporting

Hertfordshire Constabulary understands that victims and witnesses may not always feel comfortable with talking directly to the police. Online reporting allows people to report a hate crime via a system which will then be dealt with by dedicated hate crime officers.



True Vision provides information for victims and the public about what hate crime is, why it is important to report it when it happens and sets out the range of ways hate crimes can be reported, including via a new online reporting form. Access the True Vision website at www.report-it.org.uk

The site also provides links to organisations that can offer support and advice on hate crime related issues. The police take hate crime very seriously and will record and investigate the offence even if you do not want to give your details.

Whenever you are reporting a hate crime or hate related incident, it's important that you make it clear that you think the incident is related to your identity so that it is recorded correctly. Saying 'I think this is happening because I am gay/trans' will help the person you're talking to understand that this is a hate crime or hate related incident and get the right people involved in dealing with it.

Local support for Hate crime

Your local district council may also be able to help you deal with hate crime. At Dacorum, St Albans and Stevenage the Anti-Social Behaviour Team can investigate hate crime incidents independently of the police. They will also be able to signpost you to local support.

If you live in one of these three districts, you can call and ask to speak to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team on the following numbers:

Dacorum: 01442 228000
(Textphone for d/Deaf people): 01442 228656

St Albans: 01727 819566/01727 819538
(Textphone for d/Deaf people: 01727 819570)

Stevenage: 01438 242 242
(Textphone for d/Deaf people): 01438 242555)

If something happens

It is quite normal for people to experience anxiety and/or stress when they have experienced an unpleasant event.

DO	DONT
Talk about what happened with someone you trust	Bottle things up and allow anger to mask your feelings
look to friends and colleagues for support	Stay at home and not go to work
Recognise if you need to do something about it	use alcohol, nicotine or other drugs to hide your feelings
try to keep your life as normal as possible	Be afraid to ask for help

If you are experiencing signs of excessive stress - you may find self help books and guides helpful in coping with low mood or depression. Self-help therapy has some advantages over professional face-to-face counselling. It's convenient, cheap and you can do it in your own time and when it suits you. For more information you can look on [NHS Choices](#).

Local support for your emotional wellbeing

One in four people experience some problems with their emotional wellbeing in their lifetime. This is usually triggered by a difficult event which may result in depression, anxiety, phobias, stress or more serious issues. The support for dealing with these issues is available from Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. The Single Point of Access (SPA) service provides 24/7 advice and access to professionals in Hertfordshire who will help find you the most appropriate support:

Tel: 0300 777 0707

Fax: 0300 777 0808

Text phone: 0300 777 0909

Books on prescription

Your GP or other health professional can prescribe a self-help book from your local library, which will give you information about your condition and suggest ways to help you manage it, if you choose to use the scheme. More information is available on the [Library Service website](#).

LGBT specific support

Pace is London's leading charity promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. They provide support and counseling by people who have a background in specifically supporting LGBT people. Please note that if you are outside of their catchment area you may be charged for counseling services www.Pacehealth.org.uk.

Talk About It

[Talk About It](#) is an online video designed to address some of the stigma that often exists in communities around mental health and wellbeing (developed for Ethnic Minorities in Hertfordshire but relevant for everyone).

When to ask for help

Occasionally, the traumatic event is so painful that support or sometimes professional assistance may be necessary. This does not imply weakness or inadequacy. These feelings can be very common and simply indicate that the particular event is just too powerful for the person to manage by themselves.

- If you have no-one to talk to about what has happened.
- If you have intense feelings that are hard to handle – you may start taking it out on others.
- If things don't start to feel better in the weeks following the event.
- If you can't sleep or you are tired all the time. .
- If you start having problems with relationships.
- If after the event, you smoke, drink or take more medication, or other drugs.
- If your work performance suffers.
- If your health deteriorates.

Where to get help



If you need help and don't know where to turn, contact HertsHelp.

We can help you or put you in touch with someone else who can.

HertsHelp ☎ 0300 123 4044
www.hertsdirect.org/hertshelp

“Thank you for the rapid response and help.”

“So pleased to be able to speak to someone about my concerns.”

“This is a great service - you can call about anything and they try to help.”

HertsHelp

makes getting the right support easy in Hertfordshire.



Call or go online to get free help, advice and information as quickly and simply as possible.

www.hertsdirect.org/hertshelp
Phone lines: Monday to Friday 9am until 5pm, Thursdays 9am until 7pm

Phone: 0300 123 4044 (local rate) Fax: 0300 456 2365
Email: info@hertshelp.net Minicom: 0300 456 2364
Text: hertshelp to 81025 Skype: Skype - HertsHelp

Post: HertsHelp, Hertlands House, Primett Road, Stevenage, Herts SG1 3EE

HertsHelp network of organisations can provide the following to aid with speech and language: interpretation services, signers, assistive technology, Makaton, easy read and communication toolkits.

Supported by   Facilitated by 

POhWER
advocacy, making your voice heard

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POhWER is a free, confidential and independent advocacy service.

The Advocacy Support Centre is open from 9am - 5pm Monday, Tuesday Wednesday and Friday, and from 9am to 7pm on Thursdays.

Telephone 0300 456 2370.

Outside these hours you will be able to leave a message and we will call you back the next working day, or you can email us at pohwer@pohwer.net or contact us through the POhWER website www.pohwer.net.

POhWER is an information, advice and advocacy organisation, providing a range of services throughout England. We aim to meet the needs of people protected under the Equality Act 2010 and those who face isolation and/or social exclusion. Last year we supported over 13,000 people with 1:1 advocacy and over 70,000 people with enquiries.

POhWER specialises in providing:

- Information, Advice and Signposting Services,
- Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA) and DOLS,
- Independent Complaints Advocacy Services (ICAS),
- Independent Mental Health Advocacy Services (IMHA),
- Community Advocacy,
- Children and Young People Advocacy,
- Advocacy in secure settings,
- Community Engagement,

We regularly work with:

- Older People,
- People with mental ill health,
- People with sensory impairment,
- People with physical disabilities,
- People with learning disabilities,
- Children and young people,
- People with dual diagnosis,
- People with autism.

We are also experts in safeguarding, empowering individuals and communities, building social capital and preventing the deterioration of individuals' health and wellbeing.

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is about taking action to make sure people have the information they need to make the right choices for them, supporting people to say what they want, to secure their rights, take a full part in their communities and get the services and support they need. The Advocacy Charter explains the principles of advocacy and how you should expect an advocate to work with you.

An advocate can:

- listen to you,
- help you talk to people and ask them questions,
- go to meetings with you,
- help you understand your rights,
- make telephone calls for you,
- write letters with you.

An advocate cannot:

- tell you what to do,
- talk to people you do not want them to talk to,
- keep information from you,
- give you advice.

Our POhWER Advocates aim to empower you by giving information so that you know your rights, supporting you to consider your options and make your own choices and decisions. It is important that you feel that you have been listened to and that feel that you have equal rights. POhWER services are accessible to everyone; we can support you appropriately and in a way that suits you.

Providing Information

We provide leaflets and information in a variety of languages and formats, Easy Read, audio and DVDs. We have access to translation and interpreting services. We use communication toolkits, traffic light cards, Makaton and other signing techniques.

How to contact us:

POhWER
Hertlands House
Primett Road
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 3EE
Tel: 0300 456 2370
Minicom: 0300 456 2364
Fax: 0300 456 2365.

What to do if you are worried about someone else who is vulnerable?

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 years or over

- who is or may be in need of community services because of mental or other illness, disability or age, and
- who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights and may consist of a single act or repeated actions. It may be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or institutional, or may relate to neglect or discrimination.

If you have concerns that a vulnerable adult is being abused:

Call Hertfordshire County Council on the adult social care number (including out of hours): 0300 123 4042

If there is a danger to life, a risk of injury or a crime is taking place, call the Police by dialling 999..

Alternatively if you are seeing a public service professional, such as a social worker, community nurse, GP, probation officer or district nurse, you can share your concerns with them. They have responsibilities under the county's adult protection procedure and can advise you about what to do next.



For more information on support for adults visit
www.hertsdirect.gov.uk/hcs

The ABC of CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy)

What is CBT?

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a practical technique to help you identify and deal with negative thoughts in a sensible and practical way so that you can improve the quality of your life and make reasonable decisions. It can be used when you are feeling anxious or stressed, worrying about something that is happening in your life or struggling to overcome patterns of repeat behaviour and negative thoughts which seem to recur in your life. If you [Google](#) 'Cognitive Behavioural Therapy' there is a wealth of information and books you can get to learn more about this technique.

Ten steps to positive thinking

CBT is about making a sensible assessment of your situation and making the most constructive choices that you can to improve it or cope with it.

Thinking determines your mood – if you change your thinking, you will change your life. Cognitive therapy helps you identify your negative thinking and replace it with healthier thinking.

Keeping a thought record gives you the chance to reflect on your thinking *after the fact*, when you're not reacting out of fear or resentment, and a systematic approach to come up with healthier alternatives.

10 steps to a thought record

The first six steps guide you through understanding your negative thinking, and where it came from. The next four steps help you come up with healthier thinking and incorporate it into your life. Write a thought record about unpleasant experiences that you would like to have handled differently. You can write about past or current experiences. Start with easy ones at first. Wait until you are more practiced before dealing with more uncomfortable experiences.

1. The situation. Briefly describe the situation that led to your unpleasant feelings.

This will help you remember it later if you want to review your notes.

I made a mistake at work. I felt anxious and was reminded of past failures.

2. Initial thought. What thought first crossed your mind? This was probably a subconscious or automatic thought that you have had before.

I feel like a failure. If people knew the real me, they wouldn't like me.

3. Negative thinking. Identify the negative thinking behind your initial thought.

Choose one or more from the list of common types of negative thinking.

This is self-labelling and disqualifying the positives.

4. Source of negative belief. Can you trace your thinking back to a situation or person? Is there a deep belief or fear driving your thinking? Search your heart.

I can hear the voice of my parent saying that I'm a failure and that I'll never amount to anything.

5. Challenge your thinking. Look at the evidence both for and against your thinking.

Have you been in a similar situation before? What did you learn from it? What

strengths do you bring to this situation? Make sure you see the whole picture.
I'm hard on myself. I don't always succeed, but I do sometimes. People have complimented me on my work. I feel overwhelmed when I try to be perfect.

6. Consider the consequences. What are the short-term and long-term consequences if you continue to think like this? Look at the physical, psychological, professional, and emotional consequences.
I'm damaging my self-esteem. If I continue to think like this, my negativity will affect my relationships and possibly my health. I'll become exhausted.

7. Alternative thinking. The previous steps of the thought record helped you understand your thinking and lower your defences. Now that you've considered the facts, write down a healthier way of thinking.
I don't have to succeed at everything. I can learn from my mistakes. I'm not a failure. I want to get rid of this negative thinking. I'm being hard on myself.

8. Positive belief and affirmation. Write down a statement that reflects your healthier beliefs. Find something that you can repeat to yourself.
A mistake is not failure. I am successful in many ways.

9. Action plan. What action can you take to support your new thinking?
The next time I make a mistake, I won't dwell on the negatives. Instead I will focus on what I can learn from my mistake. I will remind myself of my past successes.

10. Improvement. Do you feel slightly better or more optimistic? This step reinforces the idea that if you change your thinking, you will change your mood. Gradually over time, your thinking and life will begin to improve.
Ask your doctor or therapist if cognitive therapy is right for you. These techniques can complement the work you do with your doctor or therapist, but they should be used in combination with professional guidance.

This thought record template is provided as a public service by www.CognitiveTherapyGuide.org. It can be printed without restrictions. For a more complete guide to cognitive therapy refer to the book "I Want to Change My Life" by Dr. Steven M. Melemis. This handout may complement the work you do with your doctor or therapist, but *should only be used in combination with professional guidance.*

Sources of support

Herts LGBT Guide

Information about LGBT services in and around Hertfordshire (see extract below)

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/h/hertslgbtguide.pdf>



NATIONAL INFORMATION *also see page 23*



Emergency Contact Details

In an emergency always dial 999

NHS Direct

Help and advice line for health/medical issues
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk 0845 46 47

Friends + Family of Lesbians + Gays (FFLAG)

www.fflag.org.uk 0845 652 0311

London Lesbian + Gay Switchboard

www.llgs.org.uk 020 7837 7324

Project for Advocacy, Counselling + Education (PACE)

www.pacehealth.org.uk 020 7700 1323

Terrence Higgins Trust Sexual Health & HIV

www.tht.org.uk 0845 1221 200

Stonewall Gay rights and campaigning

www.stonewall.org.uk 08000 50 20 20

Beaumont Society Support for Trans people

www.beaumontsociety.org.uk 01582 412220

Press for Change

Campaigning for rights of Trans people
staff@pfc.org.uk www.pfc.org.uk

Galop - www.galop.org.uk

Preventing and challenging homophobic and transphobic crime

Naz Project - www.naz.org.uk

Sexual Health and HIV info and support to LGBT minority ethnic communities

Outlet - www.outlet.co.uk

Gay and Lesbian accommodation service

Regard - www.regard.org.uk

The national organisation of Disabled Lesbians, Gay Men, Bisexuals and Transgendered People

Albert Kennedy Trust - www.akt.org.uk

Supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans homeless young people. 0207 831 6562

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HertsHelp (www.hertsdirect.org/hertshelp) a network of community organisations working together. They can help you find the practical support, guidance and information from 100s of community groups in Herts who may be able to help

The Gender Trust

PO Box 3192

Brighton

BN1 3WR

Helpline: 0845 231 0505

www.gendertrust.org.uk

The Gender Identity and Research and Education Society

Melverly

The Warren

Ashted

Surrey

KT21 2SP

Tel: 01372 801554

Fax: 01372 272297

www.gires.org.uk

FTM net Telephone Support

Tel: 0)161 432 1915

This line only operates on Wednesday evening between 8pm and 10.30pm, UK time and is operated entirely by unpaid volunteers, from their own homes. The phone line is **not** available at other times.

Cortex Support and Social Group for Transgender people in **Hertfordshire**

<http://www.tgcortex.com/>

The following websites contain useful information on equalities and contain directories of community support organisations

http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/atozoflinks/	Guide to external websites
http://www.hertsdirect.org/your-community/distborserv/	Information and services provided on the Hertfordshire district and borough council websites
http://www.hertsdirect.org/your-community/comvol/	A-Z Community directory
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/	The equality and Human Rights Commission has a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights; and to protect, enforce and promote equality across the nine protected grounds - age, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.
http://www.stonewall.org.uk/	Stonewall works with a whole range of agencies to address the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals in the wider community and campaigns for equal rights.
http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1363	ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relations.
http://www.advicenow.org.uk/	Website to make sense of the law and your rights
directgov.uk	If you think you have been discriminated against at work there is information on the support available to you at directgov.uk .
http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/libraries/	Hertfordshire Libraries are a source of useful LGBT information and stock that may support you. Find your local library from our website or use our online enquiry services. Information about other LGBT services can be found at: http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/libraries/aboutlib/watcan1/libsergay/ .