



Bisexual and Pansexual Responses:



**Building Rainbow communities free
of partner and sexual violence**

Sandra Dickson 2017



About the Author

Sandra Dickson is the Project Manager for Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence. She is a bisexual Pākehā cis woman of Canadian and Scottish descent living in Newtown, Wellington, with a passion for creating communities free of violence.

Sandra has more than two decades' experience of voluntary and paid work to prevent and respond to sexual and family violence. This includes advocacy, policy and education programme development, research, training and project management including national roles for Te Ohaakii a Hine – National Network Ending Sexual Violence Together and Women's Refuge in Aotearoa New Zealand and launching 24 hour support services for migrant women trafficked into the sex industry in London. She has also contributed to developing policy and protocol guidelines to respond to partner violence for New Zealand Police, Child Youth and Family and health providers and in 2013/14 worked inside ACC developing their National Sexual Violence Prevention Plan which included secondary school healthy relationships programme Mates & Dates.

Sandra has also been actively involved inside Rainbow communities, locally, nationally and internationally for more than two decades, primarily through the Wellington Bisexual Women's Group. She has delivered violence prevention programmes with young people from Rainbow communities; run training in working with Rainbow survivors of partner and sexual violence; introduced Rainbow content into mainstream violence prevention work and managed a Refuge safe house for women escaping similar-gender partner violence in London. Her writing appears in the US anthology, *Queering Sexual Violence*, published in 2016, and she wrote the first Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence report, *Building Rainbow communities free of partner and sexual violence* (2016).

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Section 1: Introduction – why Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence?

Sex, sexuality and gender diverse communities are increasingly recognised as vulnerable to intimate partner and sexual violence, but very little is known of specific experiences of people from these communities in Aotearoa New Zealand due to a lack of research and Rainbow specific services.

In recent years there has been a surge in limited, small scale studies in the United Kingdom, Australia and the USA. While most of these studies cannot be used to deduce population scale rates of partner or sexual violence, they consistently demonstrate such violence is a significant issue for the Rainbow community. There are indications across surveys that lifetime sexual violence experience for trans people may reach 50%, and that trans women of colour are most likely to be victimised.¹ Recent national surveys in Australia and the United States indicate rates of partner violence and sexual violence for Rainbow communities are as high² or higher than heterosexual people.

Youth 2000 research in New Zealand indicates 32% of same or both sex attracted secondary students report being touched in a sexual way or made to do sexual things they didn't want to do.³ These rates are higher than those reported by opposite sex attracted female or male secondary school students.

Bisexual and pansexual people are a heavily under-researched population group in terms of violence in Aotearoa New Zealand and elsewhere. In fact, due to bi-erasure, historically bisexual and pansexual people's experiences of violence have been conflated with lesbians and gay men in research about similar-gender violence and invisible entirely in research about different-gender violence. It has only been more recent research that has attempted to tease out different experiences across sexuality. The only piece of national population level research which compared rates of violence across sexualities indicated that women and men who are attracted to more than one gender experience the highest rates of partner and sexual violence of all sexualities.⁴ This research did not investigate gender identity so does not explicitly include the experiences of non-binary bisexual and pansexual people.

The first Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence report⁵ identified high levels of experiencing violence for the people who responded, and a lack of appropriate or safe responses when people tried to seek help. Most often, people were asking friends for support, because they did not think existing services were “for” them.

¹ Fileborn, B. (2012). *Culturally Competent Service Provision to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Survivors of Sexual Violence*, (2009); *Transgender Rates of Violence* (2012); *Responding to Transgender Victims of Sexual Assault* (2014) and *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected Hate Violence in 2014* (2015).

² Walters, M.L., Chen J., & Breiding, M.J. (2013). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA and Leonard, W., Pitts, M., Mitchell, A., Lyons, A., Smith, A., Patel, S., Couch, M., and Barrett, A. (2012) *Private Lives 2: The second national survey of the health and wellbeing of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) Australians*.

³ Le Brun C., Robinson E., Warren H., Watson P.D. (2004), *Non-heterosexual Youth - A Profile of their Health and Wellbeing: Data from Youth2000*. Auckland: The University of Auckland.

⁴ This has been established at a population prevalence level in Walters, M.L., Chen J., & Breiding, M.J. (2013). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA.

⁵ Dickson, S. (2016), *Building Rainbow Communities free of partner and sexual violence*, Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence.

There were explicit fears of discrimination from services, and many experiences of people not receiving the support they needed when they did ask.

There are a number of limitations on the ability of “mainstream” services to respond effectively to Rainbow people experiencing partner or sexual violence. Services in Aotearoa New Zealand responding to family and sexual violence are primarily set up to respond to men’s violence against women. They may treat “sex/gender” as binary (only male and female) and immutable (does not change from birth). There have also been challenges for bisexual and pansexual people attempting to access services, because their sexuality is often assumed (as straight or gay/lesbian) according to the gender of their current partner. Bisexual and pansexual people can therefore fall “between” the provision of services and struggle to have the violence towards them responded to in ways which recognise the impacts of biphobia.

For Rainbow people including bisexual and pansexual people who are not Pākehā there may be additional difficulties accessing a service due to limited kaupapa Māori or culturally specific services available to address violence. A context of limited resources is likely to have contributed to the limitations in services’ responsiveness to bisexual and pansexual people.

Rainbow communities themselves have low recognition of partner violence and sexual violence as the majority of awareness raising has targeted relationships between men and women and has treated all people as cis, or comfortable in the gender they were assigned at birth. Dynamics of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and gender policing underpin intimate partner violence and sexual violence in Rainbow communities and must be understood as the cultural scaffolding which enables such violence, as well as making help-seeking difficult and complex. For Māori, Pacifica, Asian or other non-Pākehā people who experience racism both inside and outside Rainbow communities, understanding and responding to gendered violence must include recognising the structural, interpersonal and internalised violence of racism. Bisexual and pansexual people may experience partner and sexual violence from others in the Rainbow community, or, if they are in different gender relationships, from people who identify as heterosexual. Biphobia may structure this violence, whatever the gender or sexuality of the person causing harm.

This mini-report supplements the first Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence report *Building Rainbow Communities free of partner and sexual violence* (2016). A full description of the project is given in the first report, including set-up and composition of advisory group members, our survey about experiences of harmful or abusive sexual encounters and relationships, details of the 18 community hui held around the country and resources available on the website, www.kahukura.co.nz

Building Rainbow Communities free of partner and sexual violence (2016) analysed all the survey responses we received, for all Rainbow identities. After the report was made public, we received requests to release the data for specific identities and smaller groups for analysis. This was not possible because we had promised those responding that their answers would only be seen by the researcher.⁶

⁶ The survey is available from a link on <http://www.kahukura.co.nz/uncategorized/survey-and-hui/>

We put a call out through our newsletter, GayNZ and other networks asking for requests for more targeted data analysis and received five requests: for asexual people; disabled people; by geographic location; trans and gender diverse people, and **bisexual/pansexual and other non-monosexual people**.

Originally, we intended to apply for funding for this analysis. Once the first stage of this project was finished, the Advisory Group was disestablished and I made the decision not to seek funding, to allow specialist groups working with smaller groups within Rainbow communities to access the very limited pool of funding that exists. This and other reports are a result of many hours of voluntary work by the author, with peer review from Rainbow community members.

This is the report for bisexual/pansexual and other non-monosexual people, and focuses on survey responses only. I will use "bisexual+" as an umbrella term in this report to cover a range of sexual orientations involving attraction to more than one gender. Those orientations include but are not limited to bisexual, pansexual, polysexual, fluid, and queer. Bisexual+ is my preferred term due to the continuity with historical human rights challenges made by people attracted to more than one gender.

Separate reports for disabled people and trans and gender diverse people will also be released. Unfortunately, I cannot provide analysis by geographic location, as information about where people lived was not collected. I also cannot provide data for asexual people because our participant numbers were too small to produce meaningful information and this would risk identifying individuals.

It is important to note that accurate comparisons for different smaller groups of our data is not possible, because the original sample size was not random, and the size of the groups being compared is not large enough. However, this report shows how vulnerable bisexual+ people are to experiencing abuse within relationships and sexual encounters, with very high rates of abusive behaviour being reported in every category.

As with the first report, I dedicate this to the people who hosted and came to our hui, answered our survey, email to ask for support or give feedback, published stories about this project in social and other media, and shared our website, factsheets, hui and survey in their own networks – and all Rainbow survivors but in particular bisexual+ survivors. I hope it can guide further work to assist organisations and communities in advocating for bisexual+ people.

For more information, including links to organisations that can help, please visit www.kahukura.co.nz

Terms used / glossary

“Bisexual+” - umbrella term to cover a range of sexual orientations involving attraction to more than one gender. Those orientations include but are not limited to bisexual, pansexual, polysexual, fluid, and queer. Bisexual+ is my preferred term due to the continuity with historical human rights challenges made by people attracted to more than one gender.

“Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura” – recognising we are on Māori land must be central to any project addressing violence in Aotearoa. Colonisation sought to impose British understandings of gender and sexuality on Māori,

and in doing so, disrupt the place of takatāpui inside whānau. Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura asks us to cultivate peace based on loving and equitable relationships through strengthening our own social networks – with partners, others in the Rainbow community, our families, whānau and wider communities. Relationships between people and relationships between peoples are fundamental. Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura invites our communities to respect one another for all that we are to create a thriving Rainbow community.

“Outing Violence” – homophobia, biphobia and transphobia mean Rainbow relationships and experiences of partner and sexual violence can be marginalised and not seen as important. Outing Violence encourages us all to name and see all kinds of violence towards Rainbow people as unacceptable and asks our community to support each other to resist abuse, live without violence and cultivate peace.

“Rainbow” replaced my very Pākehā “queer and trans,” to seek to include all people in Aotearoa New Zealand under the sex, sexuality and gender diversity umbrellas, recognising there is not a perfect umbrella term. Rainbow seeks to include people who identify as aka’vaine, asexual, bisexual, fa’afafine, fakafifine, fakaleiti, FtM, gay, gender fluid, gender-neutral, gender nonconforming, genderqueer, gender variant, hinehi, hinehua, intersex, lesbian, mahu, MtF, non-binary, palopa, pansexual, polysexual, queer, questioning, rae rae, tangata ira tane, takatāpui, 同志 (tongzhi), trans man, trans woman, transfeminine, transgender, transmasculine, transsexual, vaka sa lewa lewa, whakawahine and more.

“Sex” – biological make-up (body and chromosomes). Everyone has a sex. Although there are infinite possibilities of bodies, people are usually assigned either “male” or “female” at birth. Sex is usually determined by a variety of things including chromosomes, reproductive organs and secondary sex characteristics. Intersex is the term used to apply to a wide range of natural bodily variations, and is much more common than typically thought. Some intersex traits are visible at birth while in others become apparent in puberty. Some chromosomal intersex variations may not be physically apparent at all.

“Sexuality” – who someone is sexually, emotionally, physically and/or romantically attracted to. Everyone has a sexuality. Sexuality can change over time, for example, someone may be usually attracted to people with similar genders to them, but sometimes also be attracted to people with different genders to them. There are infinite possibilities. For example, takatāpui is a traditional term meaning ‘intimate companion of the same sex.’ It has been reclaimed to embrace all Māori who identify with diverse genders and sexualities.

“Gender identity” – how someone identifies their own gender internally – there are an infinite number of possibilities including male, female, both, neither or somewhere in between. Everyone has a gender identity. Gender identity is independent of sexuality. For example, people assigned female at birth for whom “woman” does not fit may describe themselves as FtM, transmasculine or trans men. People assigned male at birth for whom “man” does not fit may describe themselves as MtF, transfeminine or trans women. People who view themselves as neither male or female, both male and female or different combinations at different times may describe themselves as gender non-conforming, genderfluid or genderqueer.

“Takatāpui” - traditional term meaning ‘intimate companion of the same sex’. It has been reclaimed to embrace all Māori who identify with diverse genders and sexualities such as whakawāhine, tangata ira tāne, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer. All of these and more are included within Rainbow communities.⁷

“Fa’afafine” (Samoa, American Samoa and Tokelau), **“Fakaleiti”** or **“Leiti”** (Tonga), **“Fakafifine”** (Niue), **“Aka’vaine”** (Cook Islands), **“Mahu”** (Tahiti and Hawaii), **“Vakasalewalewa”** (Fiji), **“Palopa”** (Papua New Guinea) are all traditional terms for many Rainbow people who are of Pasefika descent. These terms have wider meanings which are best understood inside their cultural context. For Pasefika Rainbow communities cultural belonging and identity is anchored in genealogy and vā relationships.⁸

“Rainbow relationships” refers to any relationship with at least one Rainbow identified person in it. This means Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence responds to partner violence in similar sex/gender relationships (for all Rainbow people) and different sex/gender relationships (eg for trans, intersex and bisexual people), since transphobia and biphobia also may operate in these relationships. This term replaces “lesbian and gay partner violence” or “same-sex partner violence” which leave many Rainbow identified people and relationships out.

⁷ *Takatāpui: Part of the Whānau*, (2015).

⁸ *Strengthening Solutions for Pasefika Rainbow*, (2014).

Section 2: The Recommendations

These recommendations are based on all research undertaken by Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence including findings from our community hui, survey and advisory group conversations.

1. **Include sex, sexuality and gender diverse people’s experiences of partner and sexual violence at strategic, policy and service planning levels.**

Our findings demonstrate that partner and sexual violence are significant issues for people in Rainbow communities, and that existing frameworks and responses are inadequate at best and harmful at worst. In particular, there is an urgent need for:

- a. Explicit inclusion in all victimisation research through consultation with Rainbow communities; asking demographic questions about sex, sexuality and gender identity; and asking questions about experiences of partner and sexual violence that are specific to Rainbow people’s experiences
- b. Explicit inclusion in national violence prevention campaigns of Rainbow people, experiences of violence, and language which does not exclude sex, sexuality and gender diverse people
- c. Explicit inclusion of Rainbow relationships in healthy relationships programmes and resources which are aimed at whole populations, including in school sexuality education
- d. Services planning and funding to include expanding the Rainbow capacity and competencies of existing “mainstream” partner and sexual violence services and responses
- e. Shifts in strategic planning and services which stop treating sex and gender as binary (only male and female) and unchanging from birth. Neither of these things are true, and both harm all Rainbow people, particularly trans and gender diverse people.

2. **Relationships with Rainbow communities and training for “mainstream” violence services on preventing and responding to sex, sexuality and gender diverse people’s experiences of partner and sexual violence.**

People in Rainbow communities are highly unlikely to seek help at the moment from “mainstream” violence services as there is a perception they will not receive appropriate responses. When people do seek help, they report negative experiences, most of which are related to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. “Mainstream” violence services need relationships with their local Rainbow communities so people know where to go to get help, and there is clarity on who will receive help.

3. **Training for Rainbow community agencies on preventing and responding to sex, sexuality and gender diverse people’s experiences of partner and sexual violence.**

The Rainbow support sector could provide a bridge to people experiencing or causing partner or sexual violence to seek help. Many Rainbow community agencies have experiences of supporting Rainbow survivors, but the Rainbow sector as a whole lacks appropriate training and tools. Without this training, there is a risk Rainbow groups will not know how to respond safely.

4. **Resources for Rainbow communities focused on friends, family and whānau knowing what to do to help**

People in Rainbow communities experiencing violence are far more likely to talk to people they know than anyone else, partly due to barriers noted above. Culturally appropriate and diverse resources which provide tools for friends, family and whānau to support healthy Rainbow relationships will encourage conversations, prevent violence and encourage help-seeking. At the moment, most resources of this nature leave sex, sexuality and gender diverse people out.

5. Resources which are culturally appropriate and diverse for the many communities inside the Rainbow community which explore healthy relationships and outing violence.

In our first stage, we created factsheets for survivors of different Pākehā identities. Our community hui resoundingly wanted to see more resources and role modelling of healthy Rainbow relationships, including diverse identities, ethnicities and types of relationships. These must include resources which specifically target coming out and transitioning as key and unique experiences for Rainbow people, and resources which explore Māori, Pacifica and Asian understandings of sex, sexuality and gender diversity and relationships.

6. Resources which are culturally appropriate and diverse for families, whānau and wider communities to support their Rainbow family members.

Isolation is a key issue for people from Rainbow communities, and for those experiencing partner or sexual violence it creates an additional barrier in help-seeking and increases vulnerability, especially for young people who may be forced to choose to stay in abusive relationships because families are not safe for them. Supporting families, whānau and wider communities to support Rainbow family members is protective of violence.

7. Working with Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence to create a central hub for information, resources and training to raise awareness and improve responses for Rainbow community members experiencing violence.

Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence has the community relationships and expertise to develop training, resources and tools identified in this report as the next steps to prevent and respond to partner and sexual violence and ensure there is Rainbow participation in strategic planning and research in these areas. This includes continuing to raise awareness inside the Rainbow community.

Section 3: The Survey: Introduction

The Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence survey was developed through drawing on international violence surveys, surveys specifically targeting sexuality and gender diverse populations, our analysis of existing research about partner and sexual violence in Rainbow communities and discussions and feedback from the Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence advisory group about community experiences.⁹

The resulting survey¹⁰ included an introduction page explaining the purpose of the survey, who it had been developed by, who it was open to, what kinds of questions would be asked and when, how long it would take, and how the information would be stored and analysed. There were also points throughout the survey referring people back to information about helping services, including on the front page. Specifically, the front page, and all communications about the survey made it clear it was for all Rainbow identified people in Aotearoa New Zealand over the age of 16, not only those who recognised they had experienced some form of partner or sexual violence.

The survey asked general information about age, identity, ethnicity and disability status, then moved on to ask about experiences in intimate relationships; unwanted sexual experiences; the effects of any abuse; and what any help-seeking experiences were like.

Due to resourcing, we utilised a snowball online survey technique rather than the vastly more expensive random sampling. This technique has proven effectiveness with hard to reach populations, including the Rainbow community,¹¹ and involved promoting the survey through Rainbow online, print, radio and social media, and using the advisory group members as “champions” to ensure various groups in the Rainbow community were aware of the survey. It was also promoted through the community hui road trip. However, snowballing means it is unclear whether people responded to this survey because they were more likely to have experienced partner or sexual violence than the average person in the Rainbow community. This means the results are indicative rather than a reliable guide to population prevalence rates.

The survey was available online from 8 September 2015 until 8 January 2016 (four months). It was answered by 407 respondents. Not all respondents answered every question. This mini-report focuses on all respondents who identified as bisexual, pansexual or any other identity where they specified they were attracted to more than one gender. In total, this included responses from 131 people.

⁹ For survey questions, see Leonard, W., Mitchell, A., Patel, S., and Fox, C., (2008), *Coming forward: The underreporting of heterosexual violence and same sex partner abuse in Victoria*, The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, La Trobe University; Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M.R., (2011), *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Walters, M.L., Chen J., & Breiding, M.J. (2013), *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Findings on Victimization by Sexual Orientation*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

¹⁰ Questions are available from a link on <http://www.kahukura.co.nz/uncategorized/survey-and-hui/>

¹¹ Lavender Islands: The New Zealand Study, (2007).

Section 4: The Survey: Demographic Findings for Bisexual and Pansexual People

The Hohou Te Rongo Kahukura – Outing Violence survey began by asking questions about demographics, including general information about age, identity, ethnicity and disability status. The ability to identify in respondents' own words was offered for many questions.

For bisexual+ respondents, the age group most likely to answer our survey were 19-24 year olds, perhaps reflecting the significant support we received from the Rainbow support sector working with young people. More than three-quarters of our bisexual+ respondents were aged between 19 and 40.

Table 1: Demographics by Age – Bisexual and Pansexual People

Answer Options	Responses (n=130)	Percentage
16-18	17	13
19-24	46	35
25-29	25	19
30-39	30	23
40-49	6	5
50-59	5	4
60-69	1	1
70 or older	0	0

Respondents were offered three options in terms of intersex status. In the overall sample, eight people knew they were intersex. One intersex person also identified as bisexual+.

Table 2: Intersex Status – Bisexual and Pansexual People

Are you intersex?	Responses (n=131)
Yes	1
No	110
Don't Know	21

For gender, sexuality and ethnicity, respondents could select as many terms as they wished, and for all of these questions, many selected multiple responses. Bisexual+ respondents gave 181 responses to gender identity, and were more likely to identify as female or non-binary than male.

Table 3: Preferred Gender – Bisexual and Pansexual People

Answer Options	Responses (n=181, from 131 respondents)
Takatāpui - all Māori with diverse gender identities and sexualities	5
Whakawāhine	0
Tangata ira tāne	1
Female	89
Male	20
Transgender	22
Non-Transgender	10
Non-binary/genderfluid	36

For sexuality, 131 bisexual+ respondents answered the question and gave 209 responses. Many commented on choosing “Gay” or “Lesbian” in addition to “Bisexual/Pansexual” as being identities they were often assumed to be, despite them not being how people felt for themselves. After “Bisexual/Pansexual,” respondents were next most likely to identify as “Queer.”

Table 4: Sexuality – Bisexual and Pansexual People

Answer Options	Responses (n=209, from 131 respondents)
Takatāpui - all Māori with diverse gender identities and sexualities	5
Lesbian	15
Gay	13
Bisexual/Pansexual	131
Queer	45

For ethnicity, 131 respondents answered the question and gave 165 responses, with multiple selections relatively common and/or people self-identifying ethnicities which were not listed. These figures show a wide range of ethnicities of people living in Aotearoa New Zealand answered the survey. Comparison percentages from the last New Zealand Census are provided in brackets if comparison is possible.¹²

Table 5: Ethnicity – Bisexual and Pansexual People

Answer Options	Responses (n=165, from 131 respondents)	Percentage
Māori	18	14% (15.6%)
Pākehā/New Zealand European	114	87% (74.6%)
Asia	8	6.1% (12.2%)
Pacifica	9	6.9% (7.8%)
Other European	16	12.2%

¹² Source from New Zealand Statistics website, 26 April 2016.

In terms of disability, the survey used the last New Zealand census question to identify whether people had experienced, lasting six months or more, a health condition or disability which caused them difficulties. This question was answered by 131 bisexual+ respondents who provided 149 answers. Forty-nine percent identified as having difficulties with at least one area of their lives for at least six months. Some bisexual+ respondents had multiple areas in which they experienced difficulties. The most common difficulty was in communicating, mixing with others or socialising.

Table 6: Health Conditions and Disabilities – Bisexual and Pansexual People

Answer Options	Responses (n=149)	Percentage
Seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses	3	2%
Hearing, even when using a hearing aid	1	1%
Walking, lifting or bending	2	2%
Using your hands to hold, grasp or use objects	2	2%
Learning, concentrating or remembering	35	27%
Communicating, mixing with others or socialising	39	30%
No difficulty with any of these	67	51%

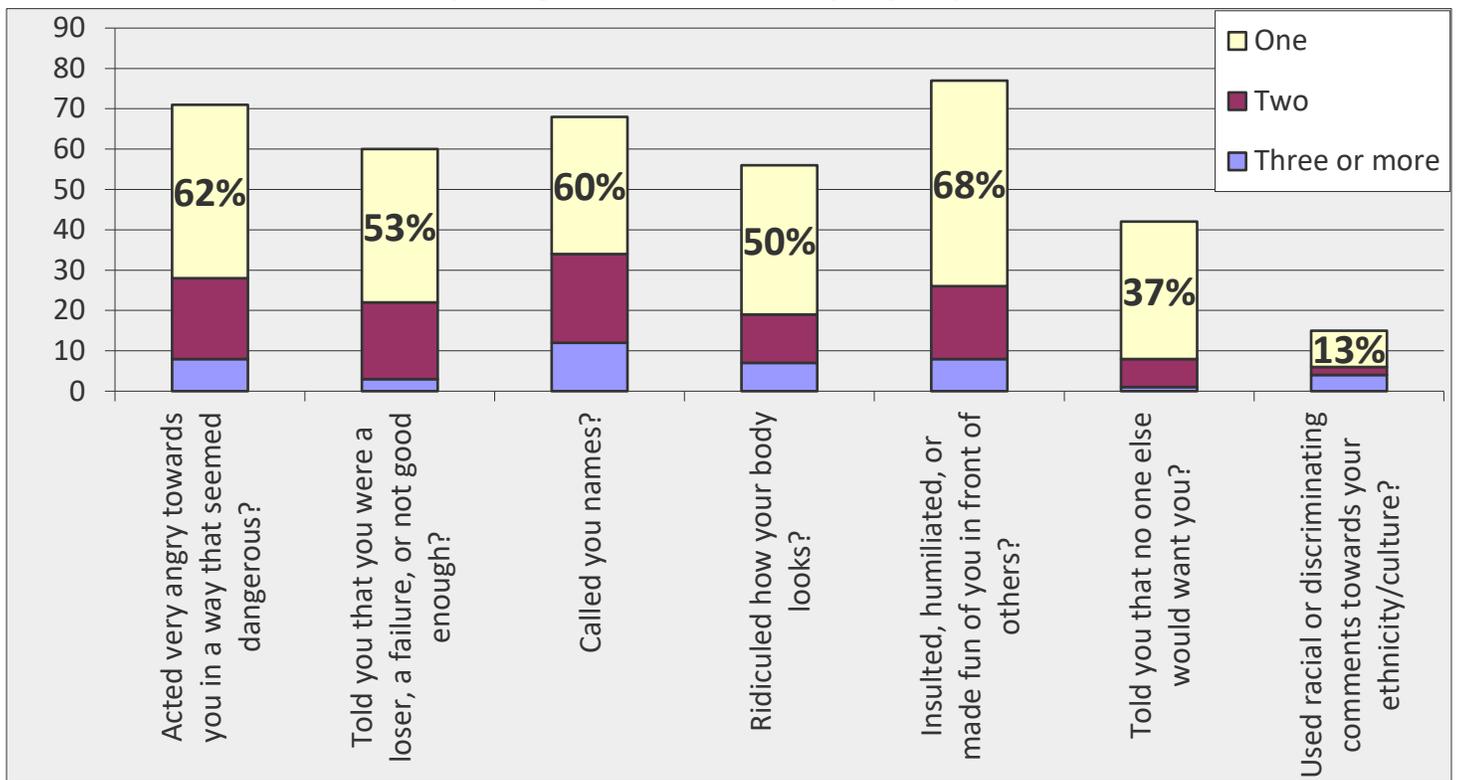
Section 5: The Survey: Experiencing Abuse within Relationships

The next survey section was introduced by telling respondents questions would be asked about non-sexual behaviour they may have experienced in romantic, dating or sexual relationships, from a partner with any gender identity. Respondents were asked how many partners had done specific things, and offered the chance to answer None, One, Two or Three or More. The following graphs will illustrate responses from these questions from the bisexual+ respondents who answered these questions. Not every respondent answered every question. The percentage figure at the top of each category illustrates how many bisexual+ respondents from those who answered experienced this behaviour from **at least one** of their partners.

As noted earlier, accurate comparisons for different smaller groups of our data is not possible, because the original sample size was not random, and the size of the groups being compared is not large enough. However, the following graphs show how vulnerable bisexual+ people are to experiencing abuse within relationships, with very high rates of abusive behaviour being reported in every category.

Categories in Chart 1 describe actions that are usually considered Emotional, Verbal or Psychological Abuse, particularly when they are repeated over time or are part of other kinds of controlling or coercive behaviour. These forms of abuse may have a negative impact on self-esteem and confidence and lead to depression, anxiety or even suicidality. More than two thirds of bisexual+ people responding had experienced humiliating and insulting behaviour from at least one partner; just under two-thirds had experienced name-calling and frightening displays of anger. Half were ridiculed about how their body looked by at least one partner, or told they were a loser. More than a third were told no one else would want them. Racial abuse was experienced by just under one in eight bisexual+ people responding.

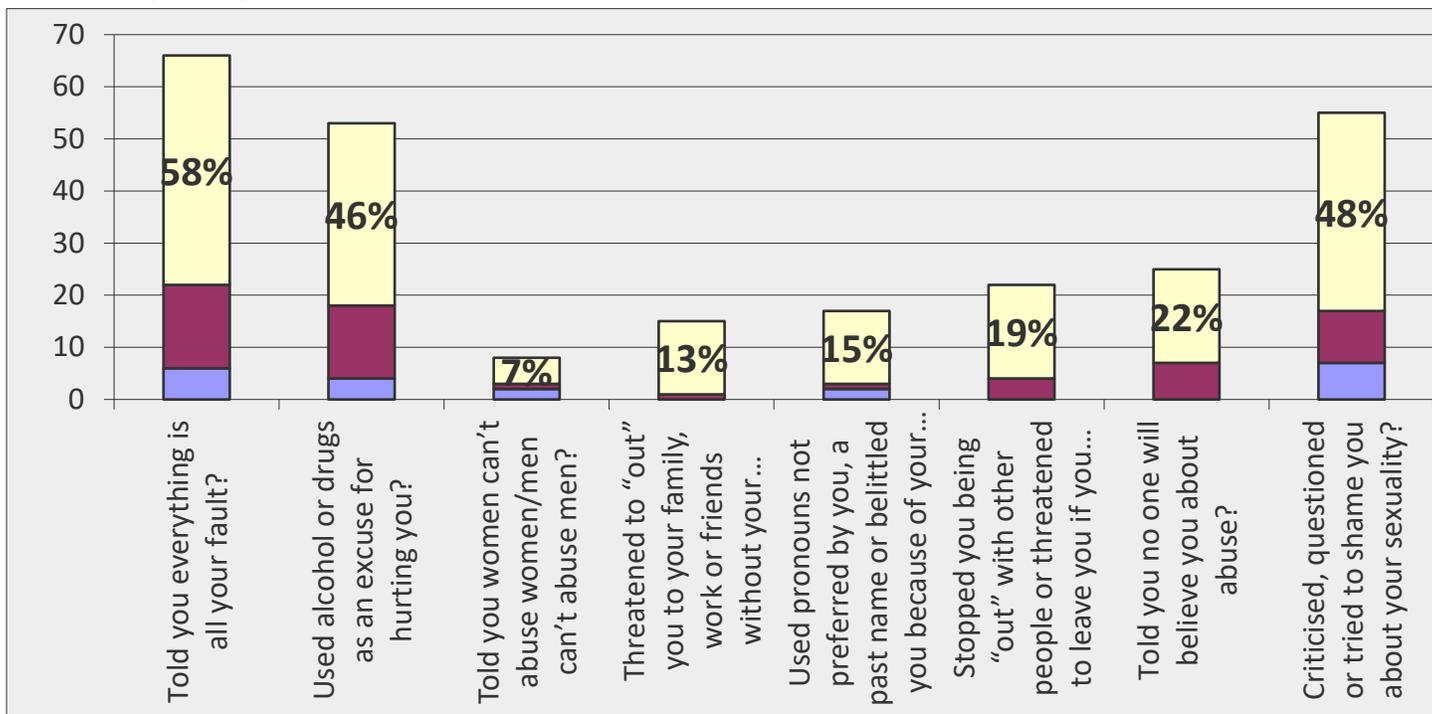
Chart 1: Emotional, Verbal and Psychological Abuse: How many of your partners have.....



Categories in Chart 2 describe behaviours that are usually considered Psychological Abuse or Isolation, particularly when they are repeated over time or are part of other kinds of controlling or coercive behaviour. They commonly have the effect of making people feel like abuse they are experiencing is their fault and reducing their opportunities to seek help – or other opinions – from other people in their life. This makes the partner using the abuse more powerful. Significantly more than half of those answering this question had been blamed by at least one partner for everything going wrong in their relationship and just under half had a partner use alcohol or drugs as an excuse for abusive behaviour. One in five bisexual+ respondents were told no one would believe them about abusive behaviour by at least one partner.

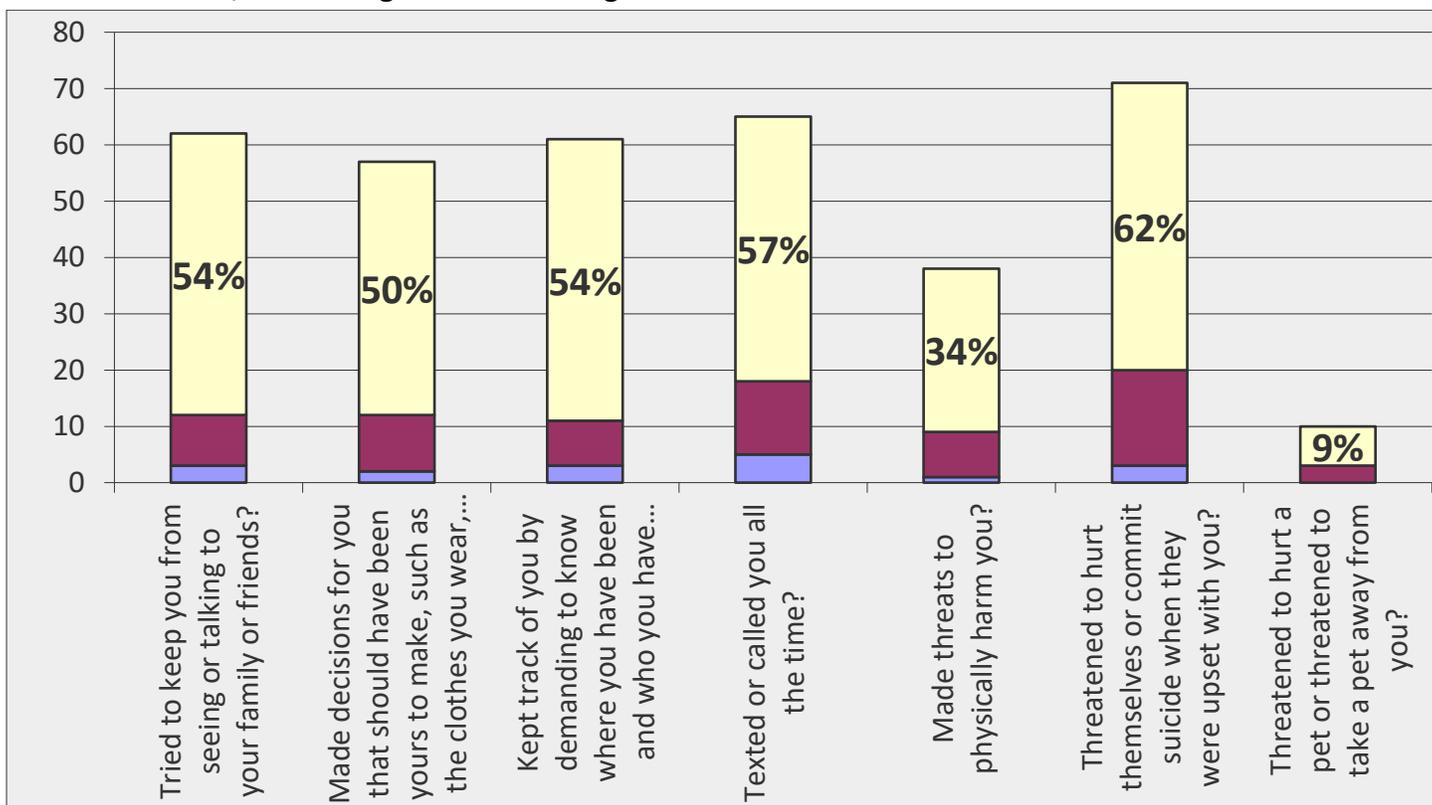
Many forms of psychological abuse and isolation are specific to people in Rainbow communities. Half of bisexual+ respondents were criticised about their sexuality or gender identity by at least one partner. One in five bisexual+ respondents had experienced at least one partner who tried to stop them being “out” or open about their sexuality or gender identity. Given barriers to finding community for bisexual+ people, this is significant because biphobia may impact on bisexual+ people being able to talk about their relationships in either Rainbow or “mainstream” contexts. About one in eight were threatened with being “outed” by at least one partner in situations like work or family. One in six bisexual+ respondents had partners use pronouns or names which were not preferred. Finally, 7% of bisexual+ respondents were explicitly told by at least one partner that similar sex partner violence was impossible, ie that partner violence is only used against women by men.

Chart 2: Psychological Abuse and Isolation



Categories in Chart 3 are usually considered Isolation, Controlling or Threatening Behaviours, particularly when they are repeated over time or are part of other kinds of controlling or coercive behaviour. They have the effect of reducing help-seeking options and reducing someone's power, options and sense of self in a relationship.

Chart 3: Isolation, Controlling and Threatening Behaviours

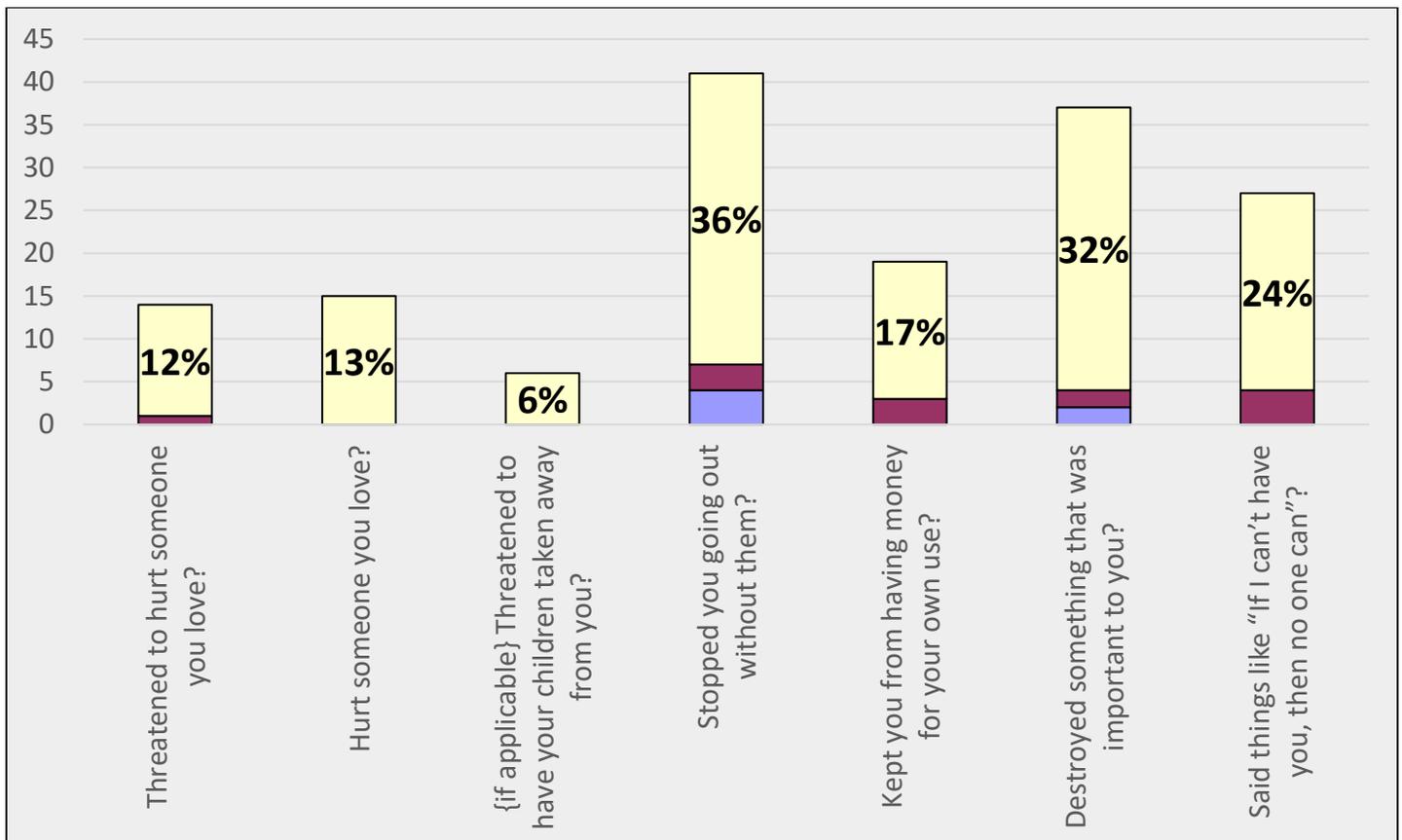


Nearly two-thirds of bisexual+ respondents experienced a partner threatening to kill themselves when they were upset with them. Given the rates of self-harm and suicidality in Rainbow communities, this is likely to be particularly frightening.¹³ More than half experienced at least one partner making decisions for them, keeping track of them, texting or calling or the time or trying to stop them seeing people important to them. One in three bisexual+ respondents had experienced at least one partner threatening them with physical harm, and one in ten had been threatened with harm towards a pet.

Categories in Chart 4 describe behaviours that are usually considered Threats and Violence, particularly when they are repeated over time or are part of other kinds of controlling or coercive behaviour. They have the effect of introducing fear into a relationship, of harm to the person, their property, or people they care about.

More than one in three bisexual+ respondents had experienced at least one partner stopping them going out or destroying something that was important to them. One in four people had been threatened with harm like “if I can’t have you then no-one can.” Just over one in six bisexual+ respondents had been kept from having money for their own use by at least one partner. Other threats received included threats to loved ones or actually hurting loved ones, experienced by over one in ten bisexual+ people, or threats to take children away, experienced by 6% of respondents.

Chart 4: Threats and Violent Behaviour

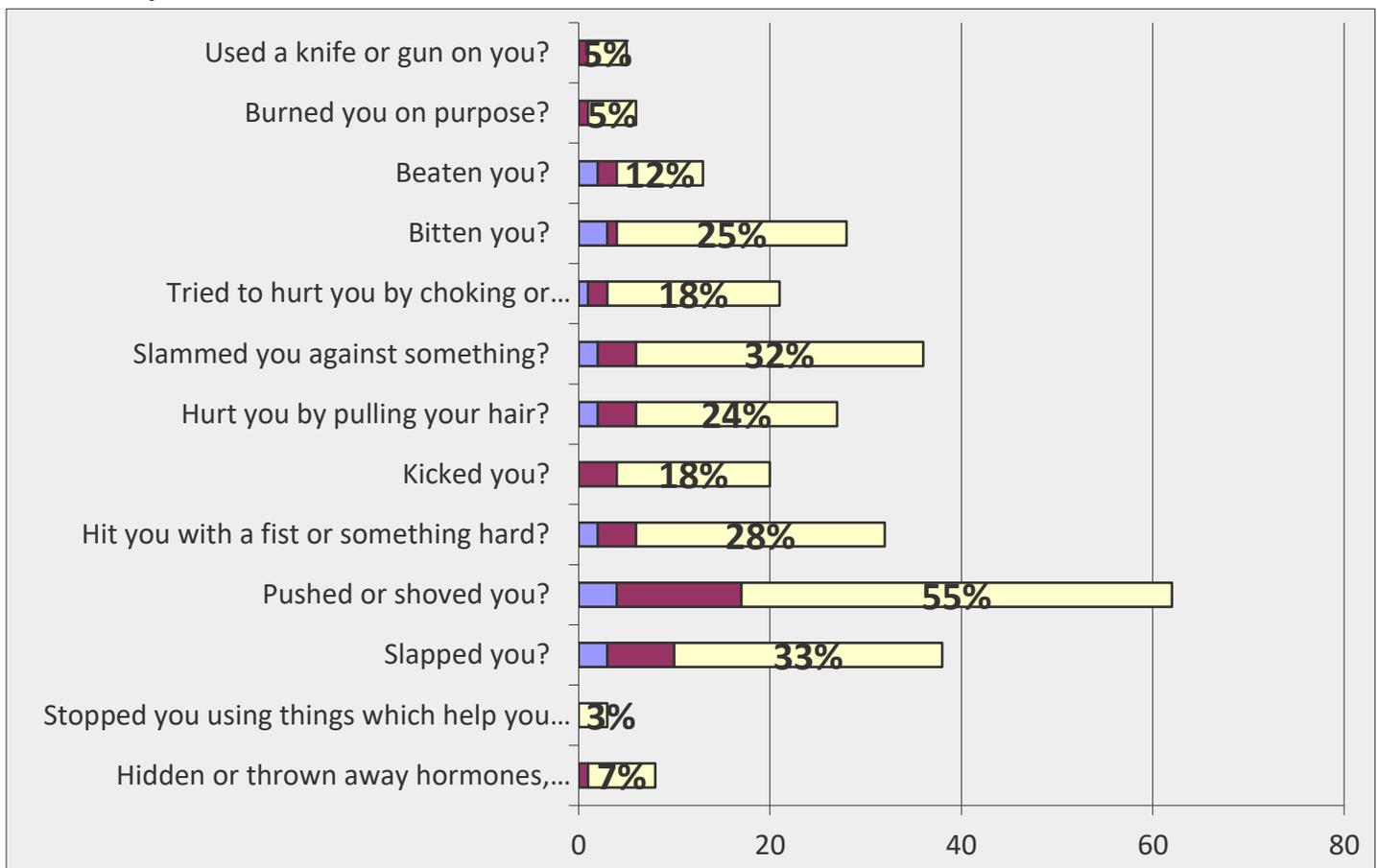


¹³ See, for example, Ara Taiohi Sexuality and Transgender Infographics.

Chart 5 lists responses to questions about physical violence from partners directed towards bisexual+ people answering the survey. Consistent with other research, these rates are lower than rates of psychological abuse, isolation, coercive and controlling behaviour and threats. However, there was still evidence of high and very concerning levels of violence.

More than half of bisexual+ people answering the survey had been pushed or shoved by at least one partner; and about one in three had been slapped or slammed into something hard. About one in four had been hit with a fist, had their hair pulled or bitten by at least one partner. Just under one in five bisexual+ respondents had been kicked or choked by at least one partner. More than one in ten bisexual+ people had been beaten by at least one partner, and 7% had hormones or gender affirming equipment hidden or thrown away. Being burnt on purpose, or having a knife or gun used was experienced by one in twenty bisexual+ respondents, and 3% had had disability aides taken away by at least one partner.

Chart 5: Physical Violence Towards Partner



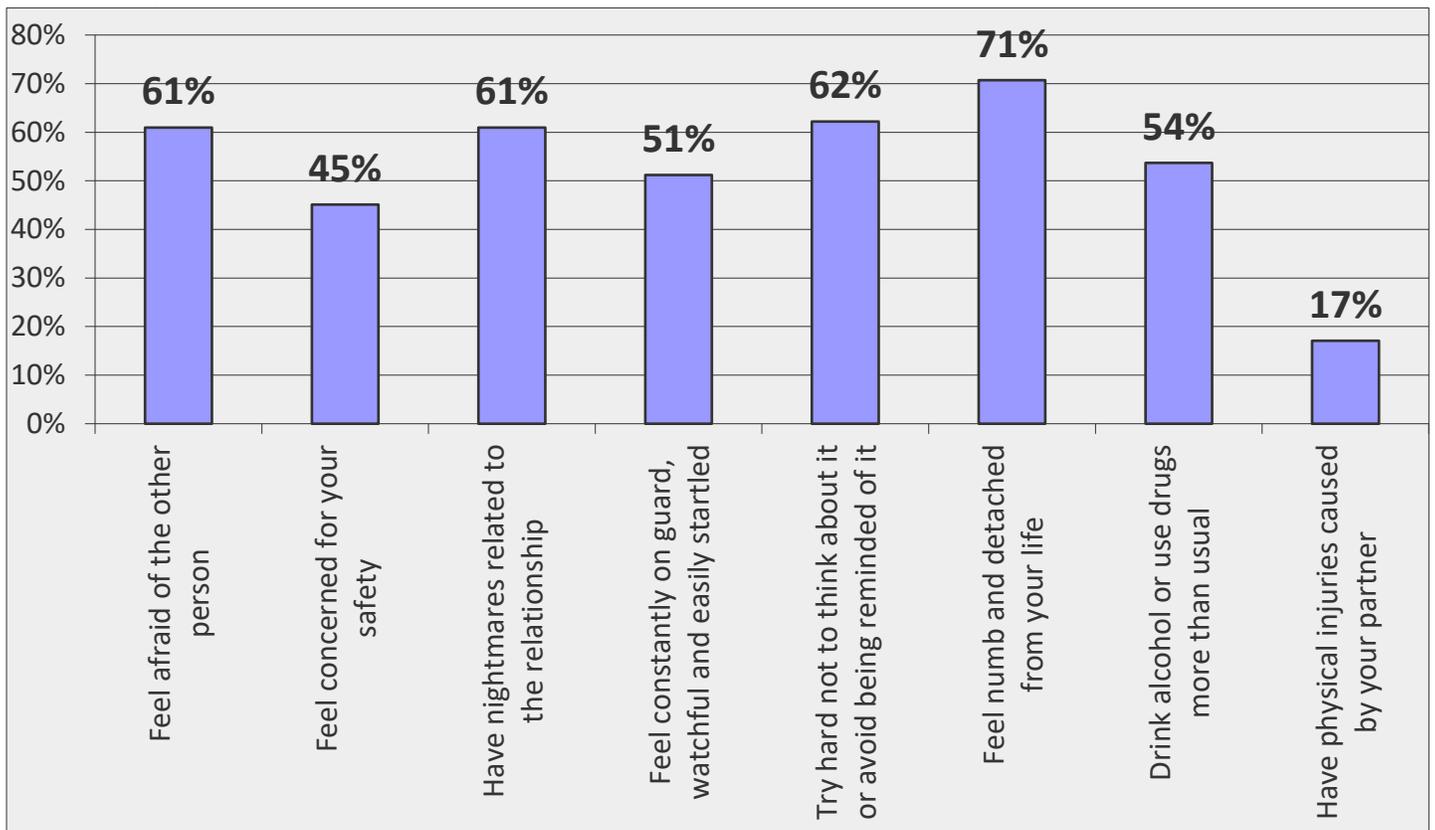
In summary, Charts 1-5 reveal concerning levels of partner violence were experienced by bisexual+ respondents. Some behaviours were generic, and might be experienced in any relationship that was abusive, but many behaviours have specific meanings in Rainbow relationships (eg gender affirming equipment being hidden or thrown away, or criticisms of sexuality or gender identity, or isolation from peer support through putting

pressure on people not to be “out”). The results above clearly identify bisexual+ people as a population group that desperately needs resources around preventing and recovering from partner violence.

People who had experienced partner violence were asked to rate the impacts of that violence – either while in the relationship or after leaving - in their **most recent** experience of an abusive relationship. This question was answered by 82 bisexual+ respondents.

Consistent with the overwhelming evidence of partner violence and harm, nearly three quarters of bisexual+ respondents reported feeling numb and detached. Just under two thirds tried really hard not to think about it, were afraid of their partner or experienced nightmares. More than a half of bisexual+ respondents reported being constantly on guard or using alcohol or drugs more than usual to cope with impacts. Just under one half felt concerned for their safety. Over one in six bisexual+ people answering this question sustained physical injuries from their most recent abusive relationship.

Chart 6: Impacts of Partner Violence



Section 6: The Survey: Unwanted Sexual Activities

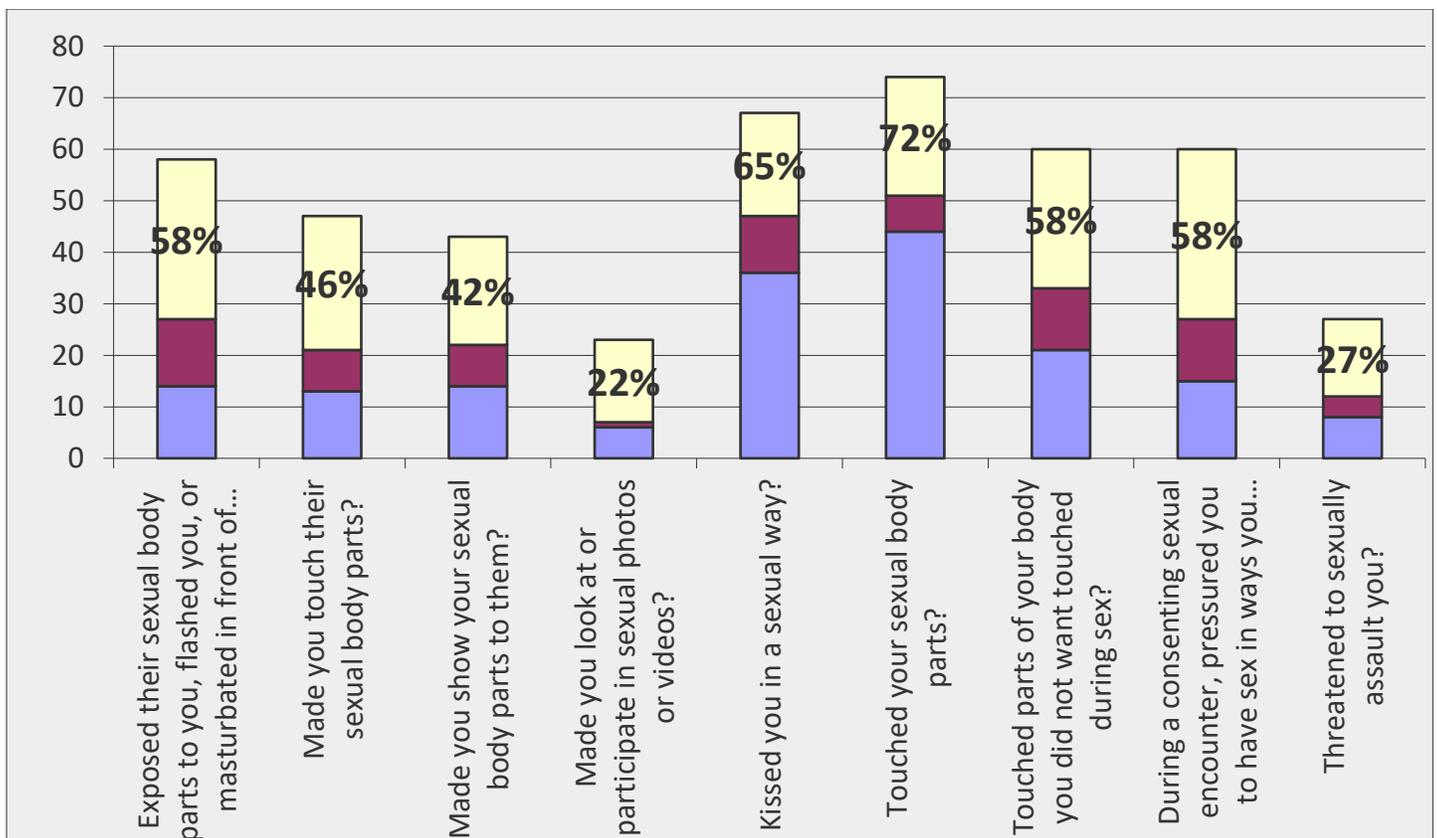
The next survey section focused on “sexual things that you did not want to happen” from a partner, family member, someone you knew, or a stranger. Respondents were asked how many people had done specific things, and offered the chance to answer None, One, Two or Three or More. Not every bisexual+ respondent

answered every question. The percentage figure at the top of each category illustrates how many bisexual+ respondents experienced this behaviour from **at least one** person.

Chart 7 shows unwanted sexual behaviour which does not involve penetration. Many of these activities meet definitions of crimes in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the levels reported in our survey by bisexual+ people who answered these questions are very high. Not only are the figures high for people experiencing unwanted sexual behaviour from at least one other person, but significant numbers of bisexual+ people reported experiencing such behaviour from multiple perpetrators.

Just under three quarters of bisexual+ people answering this question reported unwanted touching of sexual body parts; significantly more than one third of respondents had experienced this from at least three people. Two thirds had been kissed in a sexual way when it was unwanted; a third of bisexual+ respondents had experienced this from at least three people. Significantly more than one half of bisexual+ people responding had been touched in places they did not want to be touched, been pressured to be sexual in ways they did not want during otherwise consenting sexual encounters or had experienced someone flashing or masturbating in front of them. Just under half of bisexual+ respondents had been forced to touch someone else’s sexual body parts; more than a third had been forced to show their own sexual body parts to someone else. Just over one in four bisexual+ people had received threats of sexual assault, and just under one in four had been forced to participate in sexual videos or pictures without their consent.

Chart 7: Unwanted Sexual Behaviour

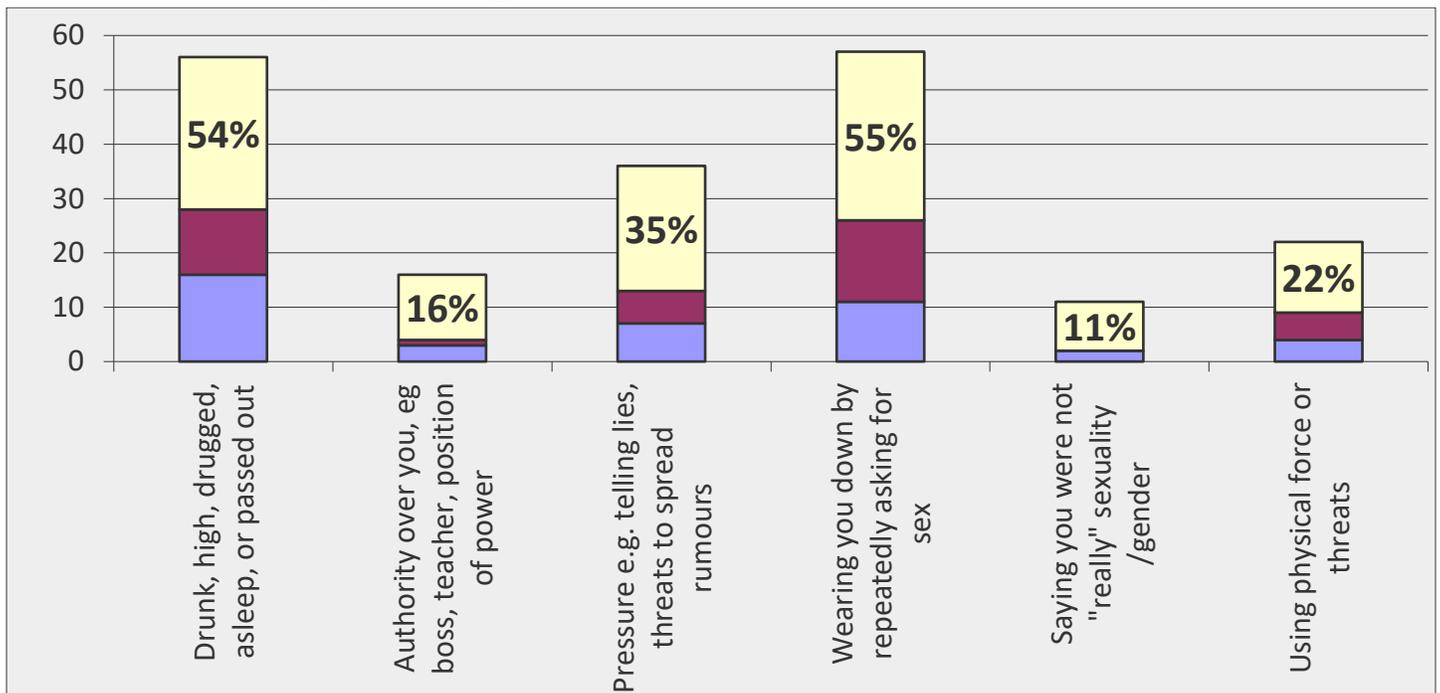


The next set of questions covered activities which fall under rape or unlawful sexual connection in New Zealand criminal law. Respondents were asked how many people had made them perform or receive unwanted oral, anal or vaginal penetration in various circumstances. The results are shown in Chart 8.

More than half of bisexual+ respondents were forced to perform or receive these kinds of penetration by being worn down with repeated requests or when they were drunk, drugged, asleep or passed out. One in six bisexual+ people had experienced this from three or more people. Just over one in three bisexual+ respondents were pressured by someone threatening them with negative consequences (eg spreading rumours) if they did not give in, and just over one in five were subject to physical force or the threat of physical force. One in six were forced into these kinds of unwanted penetration by someone misusing authority over them (eg an employer or teacher). One in ten bisexual+ respondents were pressured to be sexual in these ways by someone telling them this was expected behaviour for their sexual or gender identity.

As with the first set of questions about unwanted sexual behaviour, these figures demonstrate concerning levels of sexual violence for bisexual+ people who answered our survey. Biphobic stereotypes of bisexual+ people as promiscuous and sexually available contribute to social norms which enable sexual violence towards bisexual+ people.

Chart 8: Unwanted Oral, Anal and Vaginal Penetration



Respondents were also asked their relationship to the person who did the unwanted sexual acts at the time of the incident(s). Multiple responses were possible. This question was answered by 98 bisexual+ respondents, who listed a minimum of 196 perpetrators (this underestimates the numbers of perpetrators due to the survey asking people about "Three or more").

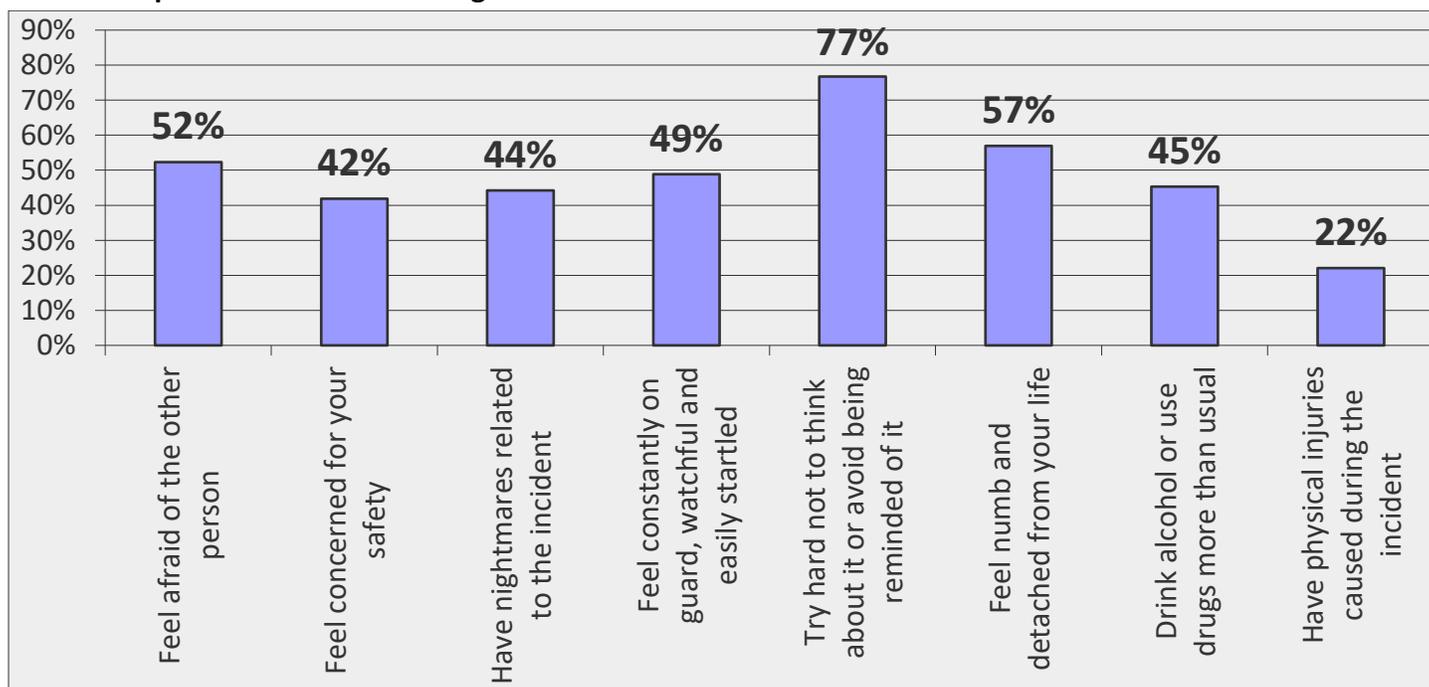
Two thirds of bisexual+ respondents who answered this question experienced unwanted sexual acts from partners and just under a half from someone they had just met. One in three bisexual+ people experienced unwanted sexual acts from a friend. Just over one in ten identified a family member as a perpetrator; it is likely this refers to child sexual abuse. Six percent experienced sexual violence from a work colleague. While these figures are high, they are consistent with existing knowledge sets which suggest sexual violence is much more likely to be perpetrated by those known to the victim/survivor.

Table 7: Relationship to Person Perpetrating Unwanted Sexual Behaviour

Relationship to you when the incident(s) occurred: (n=196, from 98 respondents)	Percentage
Partner, boyfriend or girlfriend	65
Friend	36
Work colleague	6
Someone I'd just met	44
Family member	12
Stranger	37

However, our survey also found that more than one in three bisexual+ respondents had experienced sexual violence from a stranger, which is significantly higher than other research in New Zealand.¹⁴ Being targeted for sexual violence because your sexuality or gender identity differs from the “norm” creates additional, and considerable, risks for Rainbow people. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia provide the context for sexual violence to be used as a punishment towards people who do not wish to, or are not able to, conform.

Chart 9: Impacts of Most Distressing Unwanted Sexual Incident



¹⁴ See, for example the Report for the Taskforce on Sexual Violence (2009).

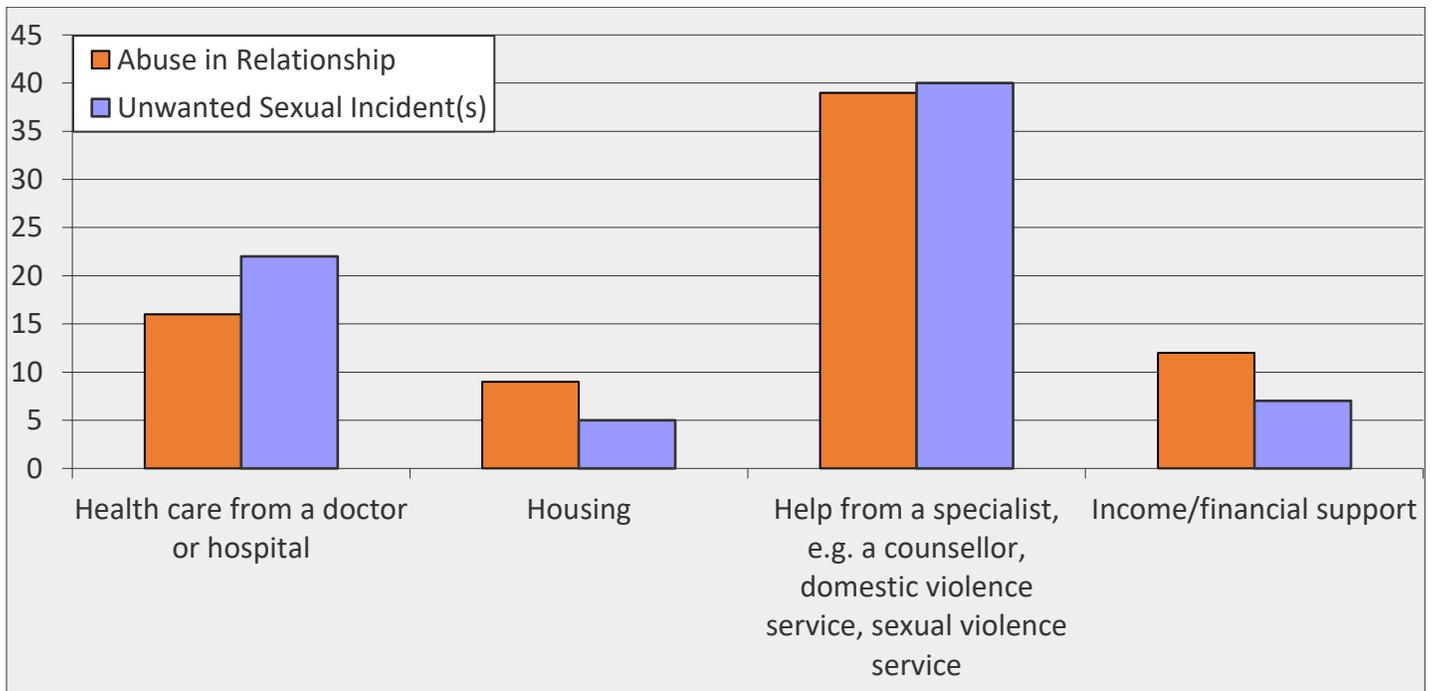
Finally, people who had experienced sexual violence were asked to rate the impacts of that violence either during the incident or after it was over for the **most distressing** unwanted sexual incident they had experienced. This question was answered by 79 bisexual+ people and the results are shown in Chart 9.

The impacts reported in our survey were consistent with other evidence of sexual violence and harm. More than three quarters of bisexual+ respondents reported trying not to think about the incident(s). More than half said they had felt numb and detached or afraid of the person who caused the sexual harm. Just under half of bisexual+ people responding said they were constantly on guard, used alcohol or drugs more than usual to cope with the impacts or had nightmares related to the incident(s). Just over one third were concerned for their safety. More than one in five bisexual+ people answering this question sustained physical injuries from the unwanted sexual incident.

Section 7: The Survey: Needing and Seeking Help

For both partner and sexual violence, the survey asked respondents if they needed help, whether or not they asked for that help. These questions were answered by 46 bisexual+ respondents. Significant numbers of bisexual+ people indicated they needed help for both kinds of violence. In particular, 85% indicated they needed specialist help from either a counsellor or a specialist domestic violence service for partner violence and 91% bisexual+ respondents indicated they needed specialist help for sexual violence. Partner violence created slightly larger needs for housing and income and financial support; healthcare was needed by those who had experienced both forms of violence.

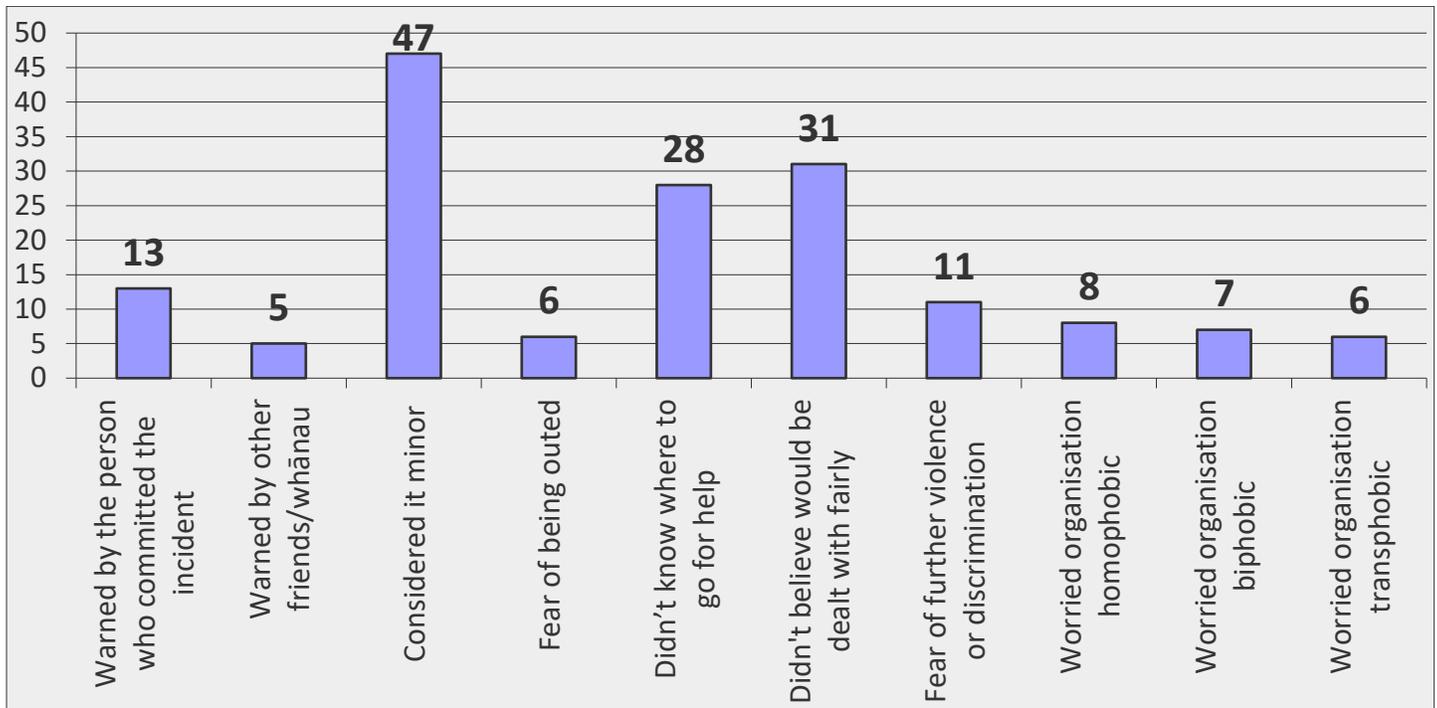
Chart 10: Did you need help, whether or not you sought help?



Respondents were asked about help-seeking experiences and also about the reasons why they had not sought help, if they did not. Chart 11 shows most bisexual+ respondents did not seek help because they considered their experience minor – despite the serious impacts reported earlier in the survey. Minimising violence by

survivors is not uncommon; however, for people from Rainbow communities, the additional challenges in recognising partner and sexual violence towards them are structured by the heteronormativity of dominant images of partner and sexual violence.

Chart 11: If you didn't seek help, why not?



The next most common responses were people saying they did not believe they would be treated fairly and they did not know where to go for help. Bisexual+ respondents reported not seeking help because they were worried about further violence and discrimination from services, specific concerns around homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, and concerns they would be “outed” if they sought help. Finally, as with other survivors, being warned not to seek help by perpetrators or other people connected to the survivor was reported by bisexual+ respondents.

Respondents were offered the chance to describe in free text what were or are the barriers to asking for help or seeking professional assistance after experiencing partner violence or sexual violence. This question was answered by 61 bisexual+ people, and answers reflected the themes from the graph above:

“It took me 7 years after I first experienced abuse to seek help. The barriers for me included: being aware of the lack of funding and support for sexual violence services and feeling like what I experienced wasn't 'bad enough' to deserve help, despite experiencing PTSD. Being unsure if I could find a counsellor who would understand me and that it might take me time to build enough trust to talk about what happened and access my feelings. Worrying that orgs would be homo/biphobic (or transphobic about my partners) and make assumptions that I am queer because of being abused. For a long time feeling like it was my fault/not really rape because of being drunk in one case, and experiencing abuse from partners in other situations.”

Bisexual+ respondents reported significant levels of shame and blame as acting as barriers in help-seeking.

"I didn't understand that what was happening was partner violence, because it was from a woman. I was too ashamed to tell anyone at the time, because I believed her when she said it was my fault."

Pressures on their sexuality often contributed to abuse and self-blame:

"Compulsory heterosexuality - was what happened to me assault or was I trying to be into it?"

Many respondents were concerned about what would happen to perpetrators, in the context of homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and racism within the criminal justice system and wider society, and the ways people in Rainbow communities are pathologised, particularly Māori, Pacifica and other non-Pākehā people.

Bisexual+ people reported particular concerns around being sexually assaulted while drinking, so feeling like they would be blamed:

"Felt like there were people more in need than me, that if it was your partner it wasn't really sexual violence, that it was my fault if I was drunk or said yes under pressure."

"Drunk people cannot consent to sex, but it seems that many people believe that they are 'asking for it'."

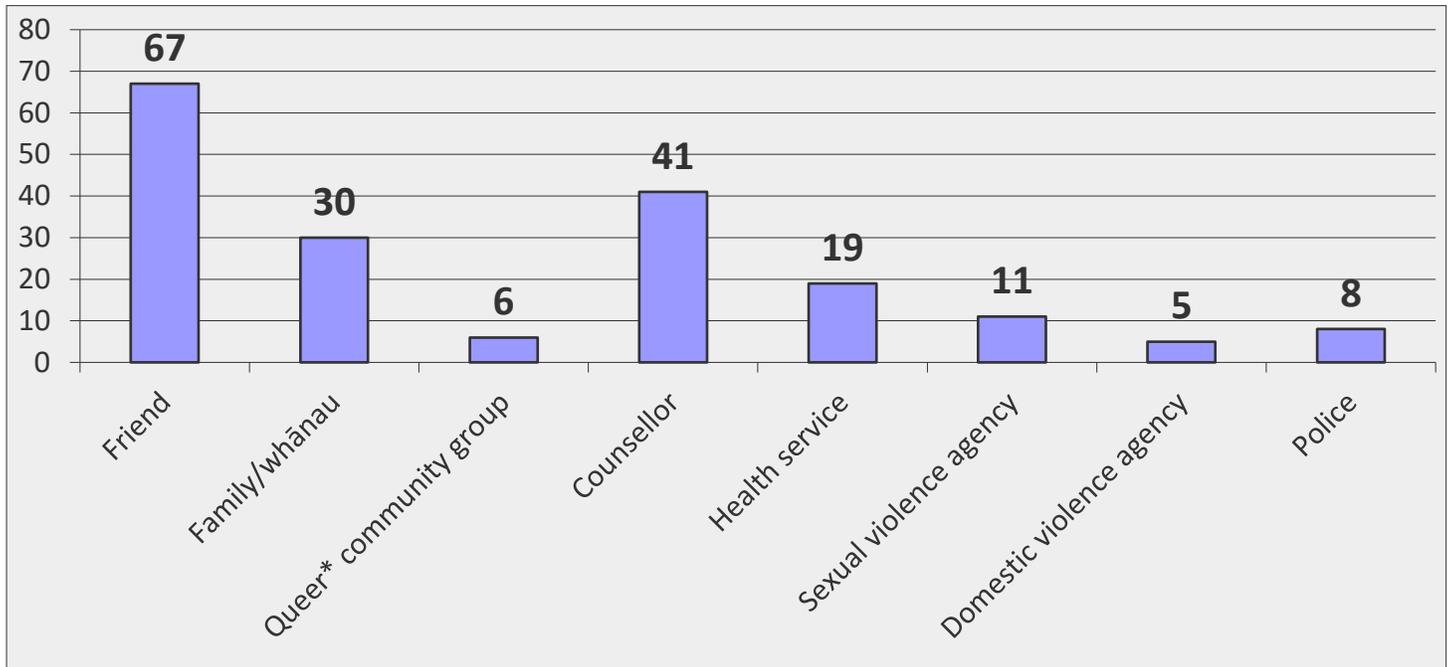
"Didn't think that it would be handled fairly as I was drunk at the time and there is a lot of victim-blaming in the police and in the courts."

Many bisexual+ people also talked about not understanding what was happening to them was abuse, for a variety of reasons, including early experiences of violence:

"Be aware that sex without consent is abuse, that no one has the right to touch me if I don't want to be touched. I didn't know those things because I had been abused as a child and thought that it was "normal" for men to touch women whenever they felt like it. So I felt that what happened was not a real issue, that no one would care. Knowing that help is available is paramount."

The survey then asked, for those who had asked for help, who they had approached. This question allowed multiple responses. Bisexual+ respondents, like other Rainbow respondents, are significantly more likely to seek help from their friends than anyone else. The next most popular group were counsellors. Healthcare was sought by fewer bisexual+ respondents than those indicating healthcare as a need (Chart 10), but the biggest disparity is for specialist domestic/partner violence or sexual violence agencies. Just a handful of those who reported they needed specialist help actually sought that help. These figures suggest how difficult it is for specialist agencies responding to violence to have any real sense of the degree of need for bisexual+ survivors, because so few reported attempting to seek help.

Chart 12: Actual Help Seeking



It is also clear that very few bisexual+ people answering our survey indicated they had sought help from a queer* community group. This suggests that the Rainbow community is currently aware of just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to partner and sexual violence inside the community. Very few respondents had tried to report to New Zealand Police. Overall, these figures demonstrate that most bisexual+ people experiencing partner or sexual violence are not seeking specialist help, even when they have recognised they need it.

Finally, the advice offered by bisexual+ people for specialist agencies was considerable, focused on wanting to see services that were friendly to all Rainbow identities, that treated them with respect, and that did not pathologise sex, sexuality or gender diversity. Biphobia from services was named as a specific barrier by many.

“Having well trained staff who are known to NOT have discriminatory attitudes. Biphobia.”

“Knowing that I didn't have to worry about people judging my experience and sexuality.”

Many of the recommendations from Section 2 were explicitly asked for in individual survey responses, as well as discussed in community hui. The final word:

“Knowing organisations that completely get the nuance of violence of all kinds that happen within our relationships Not thinking that I'm gonna have to educate a support worker about how my relationship works based on diverse sexualities or genders Knowing that there are places which are kaupapa Maori who can do this as well Knowing that our rainbow communities are held, safely and ethically - and aren't dictated by people who abuse power.”