





Tasmania's gender, sexuality and intersex support, education & advocacy service

The report describes the ethos, practice and process of the LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Guidelines Project, by Engender Equality in partnership with Working It Out.

The data represented in this report was collected May 2024 and March 2025.

The LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Guidelines Project was funded by the Tasmanian Government under the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Engender Equality acknowledges Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Traditional Owners of the land, water and air of Lutruwita/Tasmania. Engender Equality acknowledges that colonisation and its impacts are ongoing, and that Aboriginal sovereignty was never ceded. Engender Equality acknowledges the ongoing leadership role of Tasmanian Aboriginal communities in addressing and preventing family violence.

Engender Equality honours all people who have experienced family violence. We recognise the importance of system changes being guided by their experiences, expertise and advocacy. We also remember and pay respects to those who did not survive and all of those who have lost loved ones to family violence.

August 2025

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Introduction

This report reflects the successful completion of a unique project aimed to strengthen Tasmania's response to family and sexual violence experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, people with innate variations of sex characteristics (intersex), queer, asexual and other gender and sexuality diverse (LGBTIQA+) people.

At the time the project commenced, there were no dedicated family violence service options specifically for LGBTIQA+ people in Tasmania. Nor were there tailored resources that family violence professionals could use to guide inclusive and affirmative practice. As a result, many LGBTIQA+ people were left to navigate services without knowing whether providers had the skills or understanding to meet their needs, or as is too often the case, chose not to access services at all.

In response to these gaps, Engender Equality partnered with Working It Out (WIO) to build the capacity of both organisations and the broader sector to deliver inclusive, culturally safe, and trauma-informed support to LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors.

The project built on the recommendations of the *Opening Doors: Ensuring LGBTIQ-inclusive family, domestic and sexual violence services report* (ARCSHS 2022), by developing a set of LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Practice Guidelines, accompanying training package and informed the establishment of an LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Service. The project was the result of a deep and meaningful collaboration between the two services, involving reciprocal training of staff, facilitated reflective practice, and input from LGBTIQA+ community members, including Engender's Advocates for Change lived experience program.

The participation of WIO staff and LGBTIQA+ staff within Engender Equality, ensured practice wisdom and lived experience were centred throughout.

The final stage of the project involved translating the guidelines into a professional development package. The package offers practical guidance on inclusive and affirmative service delivery and practice and is available by request through Engender Equality.

This report outlines the process, outcomes, and impact of the project. In doing so, it contributes to a growing body of evidence that demonstrates the power of collaboration with specialist family violence services.

"When provided the resources to reflect and problem solve, [LGBTIQA+ community-controlled and specialist FDSV services] have the capacity to deliver innovative and pragmatic solutions." Opening Doors: Ensuring LGBTIQA-inclusive family, domestic and sexual violence services report.

Partners with specialisations

Engender Equality is a specialist family violence service with a focus on gender-based violence, trauma-informed therapeutic practice, and lived experience advocacy. Engender works to promote safety, dignity, and healing for all victim-survivors, with a commitment to social change and intersectional practice.

Working It Out is Tasmania's dedicated service for LGBTIQA+ people and communities, providing advocacy, education, and direct support to individuals and organisations across the state. With extensive community ties and specialist knowledge, WIO plays a vital role in celebrating the value of LGBTIQA+ people and communities, promoting inclusion and challenging discrimination.

Engender promotes a partnership approach with all human services that encounter victimsurvivors. Without partnerships services risk missing signs of abuse, misidentifying victimsurvivors, or inadvertently compounding harm through uncoordinated or unsafe systems. Partnering with family violence specialists strengthens screening, risk assessment and safety planning, and helps address the structural and cultural barriers that prevent victim-survivors from achieving safety and support.

Through this partnership, we developed resources that address the specific risks, barriers, and needs of LGBTIQA+ people experiencing family violence. Additionally, we exchanged specialist knowledges and skillsets across organisations to improve our service design and build the capacity of staff to respond to LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors.

Crucially, both services bring long-standing trust and connectedness within Tasmanian communities. This foundation allowed us to engage meaningfully to create resources that supports the delivery of safe, affirming, and relevant services.

What we wanted to achieve

Family violence and intimate partner violence can occur in the relationships of LGBTIQA+ people but are often unaddressed, and people face multiple barriers when they seek support.

Family violence services are typically designed with a heterosexual and cisgendered view of relationships. This means identifying and responding to LGBTIQA+ experiences of family violence can present specific challenges.

Engender and WIO set out to increase the capacity of both services via a highly collaborative approach to improve how we support LGBTIQA+ people experiencing family violence. Together we wanted to:

- 1. Increase awareness and understanding: The collaboration sought to foster increased awareness and understanding of the unique challenges faced by LGBTIQA+ individuals who experience family violence. It aimed to help practitioners and service providers gain insights into the specific needs of LGBTIQA+ clients, and the dynamics of violence and abuse they experience, leading to more effective support.
- 2. Create tailored support services: The collaboration was to develop specialised support services that understand the needs of LGBTIQA+ individuals experiencing family violence. This was to include approaches, resources and referrals that are inclusive and affirming, considering the diverse identities and experiences of LGBTIQA+ people.
- **3.** Improve access to services: LGBTIQA+ individuals who experience family violence may face additional barriers to seeking help. By collaborating, the organisations aimed to work together to address these barriers and create safe, inclusive spaces where individuals feel comfortable seeking support.
- **4. Capacity building:** The collaboration aimed to provide opportunities for knowledge exchange and capacity building between the two organisations. Family violence counselling services can learn from the expertise of the LGBTIQA+ organisation, while the LGBTIQA+ organisation can benefit from the experience of the family violence counselling service in addressing issues related to family violence.

What we did

Consulted

The LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Guidelines Project Officer conducted over 10 intensive individual consultations with subject matter experts and engaged regularly with:

- · Working It Out Leadership and Training Team
- Engender Equality LGBTIQA+ Working Group
- LGBTIQA+ Health Australia's Family, Sexual and Domestic Violence worker (bringing Tasmania into the national conversation)
- Advisory and policy groups: Shaping Women's Services, Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee, Systems Abuse Subcommittee, and the Tasmanian Risk Assessment Management Framework Project

Developed guidelines

The project created the comprehensive resource: *LGBTIQA+ Family Violence: Guidelines for Tasmanian family violence workers*. This comprehensive practice guide was informed by current research and emerging evidence regarding best practice for working with LGBTIQA+ people experiencing family violence, alongside practice-based insights from practitioners and people with lived experience.

The guidelines cover the fundamentals of trauma-informed, inclusive and affirmative practice, the unique forms of violence and abuse experienced by LGBTIQA+ people, and a range of practice tips for working with LGBTIQA+ experiencing family violence.

Designed specifically for the Tasmanian family violence sector, the guidelines improve recognition of experiences of family violence, cross-agency support for people seeking services, and strengthen family violence response for LGBTIQA+ people.

What we did cont.

Established the LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Service

Alongside the work undertaken to create the guidelines, Engender and WIO partnered to establish a specialist LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Service to deliver trauma-informed counselling for LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors. This involved collaboration between the services on a service design, promotion and recruitment of a LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Practitioner.

The establishment of the LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Service also provided an opportunity to implement the work being undertaken with the guidelines in a practice setting. This led to the creation and trialling of innovative clinical practice tools tailored to the specific needs of LGBTIQA+ people experiencing family violence. These included specific referral processes, intake assessment, a predominant aggressor indictors tool and more recently, a screening tool for use by WIO staff.

Developed and delivered training

The project also involved the creation of a Tasmanian-specific professional learning package based on the guidelines. This package includes an overview of LGBTIQA+ people and identities, the unique experiences and needs of LGBTIQA+ people in relation to family violence, inclusive and affirmative practice, and how to embed safety and inclusivity throughout an organisation. The training was offered as a professional development workshop to other family violence service providers and practitioners around the state.

About the guidelines

LGBTIQA+ Family Violence: Guidelines for Tasmanian family violence workers, is a comprehensive manual designed to assist family violence workers and other frontline workers to support LGBTIQA+ people who have experienced family violence.

The guidelines are based on a framework that emphasises inclusive and affirmative practice, cultural humility and intersectionality.

The guidelines are divided into three main parts.

Part one: Fundamentals

This section covers essential information and tips for inclusive practice with LGBTIQA+ people. It includes definitions of key terms, the difference between sex, gender, and sexuality, the importance of pronouns, and fundamental knowledge about relevant issues for LGBTIQA+ people such as mental health, minority stress, drug and alcohol use, HIV, and protective factors.

Part two: Family violence in LGBTIQA+ relationships

This part delves into how family violence can present differently in the relationships of LGBTIQA+ people. It discusses barriers to support, the application of a gendered lens, drivers of violence, unique forms of violence and abuse, intersectionality and identifying the predominant aggressor in non-heterosexual relationships.

It introduces the *Power, Control, and Space for Reaction Wheel* (originally developed by Donovan and Barnes 2020) which supports practitioners and their clients to locate abuses of power and patterns of harm in LGBTIQA+ intimate relationships.

It presents the Predominant Aggressor Indicators Tool. This tool is designed to support family violence practitioners to identify the predominant aggressor in non-heterosexual relationships. The tool is used alongside reflective practice to identify indicators that a client may be using violence or abuse against an intimate partner. This is done by inviting the practitioner to examine the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours expressed by the client towards their intimate partner and combine this with a social and gendered analysis of violence.

About the guidelines cont.

Part three: Affirmative and inclusive practice

The final section provides extensive practice tips for making family violence practice more inclusive and safe for LGBTIQA+ people. This section emphasises affirmative practice, which moves beyond the concept of inclusion, to practices that value and affirm the experiences and identities of LGBTIQA+ people. Additionally, this section covers the importance of cultural humility and self-reflection.

It also offers additional useful concepts, theories, and resources to support workers to further develop in their practice.

About the training package

The one-day training package, *LGBTIQA+ Family Violence*, was designed for professionals and community members who interact with victim-survivors of family violence.

The training focuses on LGBTIQA+ inclusive practices, covering topics such as systemic drivers of prejudice and discrimination, family violence in the intimate relationships of LGBTIQA+ people, and inclusive and affirmative family violence practice. It aims to build upon existing knowledge from comprehensive LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice training delivered by WIO.

Promotion for the training was conducted through multiple channels, including email campaigns, professional networks, social media, and e-newsletters.

Participants were able to select their preferred location and register via an online booking platform. Sessions were delivered across Tasmania, including Glenorchy, Rosny, Huonville, Devonport, Launceston, and Burnie, as well as in collaboration with specific organisations. All publicly advertised workshops sold out, with waitlists for those unable to secure a spot.

In April 2025, Engender Equality, in partnership with WIO and with the support of Tasmanian Premier Jeremy Rockliff, officially launched the guidelines and promoted the training at a Parliament House event in Nipaluna/Hobart.

Session outlines

Session 1 - LGBTIQA+ knowledge foundations

This session is delivered by Working It Out (WIO) and is optional for participants who have already completed a LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice training delivered by WIO. It aims to provide participants with a foundational understanding of LGBTIQA+ issues and inclusive practices.

Session 2 - Family violence in LGBTIQA+ relationships

This session builds on the learnings from session 1 to introduce family violence in the intimate relationships of LGBTIQA+ people. It covers common themes of all family violence, prevalence of family violence experienced by LGBTIQA+ people, barriers they face to accessing support, applying a gendered lens, distinct abuse types, the Power, Control and Space for Reaction Wheel, intersectionality and case studies.

Session 3 - Affirmative practice in action

This session focuses on affirmative practice in family violence work. It covers important issues such as minority stress, and practical tools and approaches such as how to start with self-reflection and humility, the ASSESS framework, affirmative practice elements, supporting healthy survivorship, referral pathways and additional self-directed learning.

Each session is built on the last, guiding participants toward a deep and practical understanding of LGBTIQA+ inclusive and affirmative practice—an essential foundation for effective and safe family violence support.

"Great training. As a FV practitioner it has provided a lot of useful information for me to use in my daily practice." TRAINING PARTICIPANT

Unique and impactful

Focus on inclusive services: The training specifically addresses the needs and barriers faced by LGBTIQA+ individuals navigating a family violence service landscape that has historically had a cisgendered and heterosexual focus. This supports participants to gain essential insights into how they can enact more inclusive service design and delivery that can provide affirming support to LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors.

Robust theoretical frameworks: The training is based on emerging research and evidence that underscore the importance of LGBTIQA+ affirmative approaches in family violence practice. Best practice is grounded in robust theoretical frameworks—including queer theory, feminism, and intersectionality—which provide critical lenses for understanding the complex, layered experiences of LGBTIQA+ people affected by family violence.

Affirmative practice: The training emphasises affirmative practice, which involves validating clients' identities, addressing the impacts of discrimination, and promoting positive self-regard and resilience. This approach creates a supportive and empowering environment for LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors.

Minority stress: The training addresses the concept of minority stress; the chronic stress and alienation experienced by LGBTIQA+ individuals due to societal stigma and discrimination. Understanding minority stress helps participants to better support their clients' mental and physical health.

Practical tools and resources: The training provides participants with practical tools and resources, such as the Power, Control and Space for Reaction Wheel, case studies and the Predominant Aggressor Indicators Tool. These tools help participants to identify and address the unique forms of abuse that occur in LGBTIQA+ relationships.

Intersectionality: The training highlights the importance of intersectionality, recognising that individuals' experiences of marginalisation are shaped by multiple factors such as race, class, disability and age.

Supporting healthy survivorship: The training concludes with a focus on supporting healthy survivorship, providing psychoeducation, grounding exercises, and strategies for restoring safe community connections. This supports LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors to thrive and rebuild their lives after experiencing violence.

Training Outputs

Training Sessions Delivered by Engender Equality to Working It Out:

Family Violence Masterclass

- · 1 day training package
- · Delivered to Working It Out staff
- \cdot 12 staff completed this training

Training Sessions Delivered by Working It Out to Engender Equality:

Positive Mental Health Outcomes for LGBTIQA+ Clients

- · 2 day program
- · Delivered to Engender Equality staff
- · 18 staff completed this training

How 2 LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Training Program

- 4 day package
- · Delivered to a public group including Engender Equality staff
- · 3 staff completed this training

Training Sessions Delivered by Working It Out and Engender Equality:

LGBTIQA+ Guidelines Training

- · One day program
- · 10 completed training sessions
- · 4 of the 10 sessions were delivered to specific services including Safe Choices, Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and Safe Families Coordination Unit
- 6 public facing sessions were delivered at meeting rooms in Public Libraries in Glenorchy, Rosny, Huonville, Burnie, Devonport and Launceston.
- 135 participants (see Appendix 1 for list of participating services)

Key Outcomes

"This is fantastic training, both content & delivery.

Thank you so much for developing & running it."

TRAINING PARTICIPANT

Strong Overall Satisfaction: Out of 63 participants, 57 (90%) said they were Very satisfied with the training; 6 (10%) were Somewhat satisfied. This indicates overwhelmingly positive feedback on the workshop.

Knowledge Gains for Working with LGBTIQA+ Survivors: 40 (63.5%) Strongly agreed they now have more knowledge, and 20 (32%) Agreed. Only 3 (4.5%) Strongly disagreed. Nearly everyone felt their knowledge improved.

Perceived Usefulness of the Training: A combined 58 (92%) said Agree (18) or strongly agree (40). A very small minority (2) Strongly disagreed, and 3 were Neutral.

Facilitator Effectiveness: 44 (70%) Strongly agreed the facilitator was informative/helpful; 16 (25%) Agreed. Only 3 (5%) Strongly disagreed. This shows the facilitator was well-received overall.

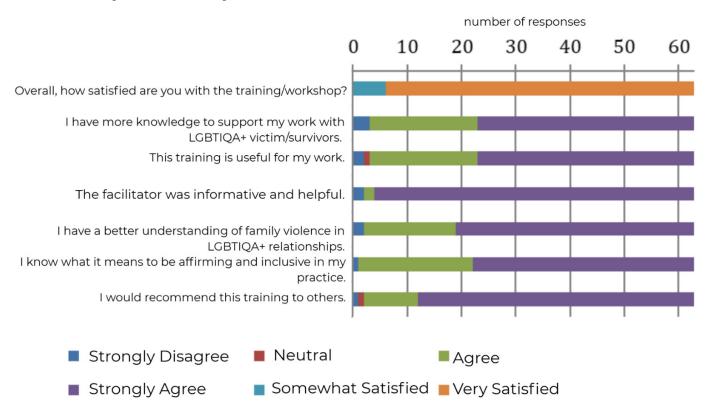
Understanding of Family Violence in LGBTIQA+ Relationships: 37 (59%) Strongly agreed they gained a better understanding; 24 (38%) Agreed. Only 2 (3%) Strongly disagreed. Thus, 97% indicated that their understanding increased.

Affirming/Inclusive Practice: 37 (59%) Strongly agreed they know what affirming, inclusive practice means; 21 (33%) Agreed; 5 (8%) Strongly disagreed. 92% felt more confident in inclusive practice.

Likelihood to Recommend: 38 (60%) Strongly agreed they would recommend it; 21 (33%) Agreed; 1 (1.5%) was Neutral; 3 (4.5%) Strongly disagreed. Overall, 93.5% would recommend the training.

Key Outcomes Cont.

Likert Response Comparison



Insights from Comments

Strong Praise for Content and Facilitator: Many described the workshop as "fantastic," "brilliant," or "invaluable," often highlighting that it was "very informative and practically based." Several comments specifically named Eugenie (the facilitator) as "engaging," "well informed," and "passionate," noting that her delivery made complex material easier to digest.

Practical, Take-Away Resources Were Valued: Multiple people mentioned appreciating the concrete tools and examples (e.g., the Predominant Aggressor Indicator Tool). Attendees said they now felt better equipped to "implement it into my practice" and "know where to find referral pathways."

Requests for Follow-Up or More Advanced Content: A handful of participants asked for "more if available down the track" or expressed interest in additional/advanced sessions.

In conclusion

"Brilliant, highly recommended for everyone. This training helped to deepen my understanding and clarify many things I never knew. The presenter was fantastic, provided incredible insight and shared current and past knowledge and experience that were invaluable in building my understanding. Highly recommend." TRAINING PARTICIPANT

The LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Guidelines Project represents a significant step towards a more inclusive, informed, and effective family violence sector for all Tasmanians. By drawing on the deep specialisation of both Engender Equality and Working It Out, this project has created a community-based response that is grounded in research, lived experience, professional expertise and the trust our organisations hold within the community.

There have been multiple positive outcomes from this project for both organisations including:

- Increased recognition of the unique experiences of LGBTIQA+ people affected by family violence;
- Strengthened cross-agency collaboration;
- · Improved safety, access, and responsiveness for LGBTIQA+ people.

As the guidelines continue to be embedded into practice and we continue to rollout the training, we look forward to continuing to work together to ensure all LGBTIQA+ people and communities across Tasmania can access safe and affirming family violence services and support.

For more information

To access the guidelines and find out more about Engender Equality's LGBTIQA+ work please go to www.engenderequality.org.au/lgbtiqa-family-violence-service/

To find out more about training opportunities please contact us <u>www.engenderequality.org.</u> au/contact-us/

APPENDIX 1

Participating Organisations that received the LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Training

54 Reasons (formerly Save The Children)

CatholicCare Tasmania

Child Health and Parenting Service

Clarence City Council

Department of Children, Education & Young People

Department of Health

Department of Justice

Engender Equality

Equilibrium Mental Health Management

Family Violence Counselling and Support Service

Glenorchy City Council

Hobart City Mission

Hobart Community Legal Service

Interagency Support Team

Laurel House

Maxima Employment Support

McCombe House / The Salvation Army

No To Violence

Safe at Home

Safe Choices Tasmania

Safe Homes, Safe Families Team

Sexual Assault Support Services

Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre

Tasmanian Health Service

Tasmania Legal Aid

The Huon Domestic Violence Service

The Link Youth Health Service

Tasmania Police

Uniting Tasmania

Women's Health Tasmania

Women's Legal Service Tasmania

Yemaya Women's Support Service

Youth, Family and Community Connections

With appreciation Engender Equality acknowledges the profound contribution of Eugenie Cole, Project Officer for the LGBTIQA+ Family Violence Guidelines Project. Eugenie's leadership, insight, and commitment to inclusive practice were instrumental in shaping a resource that centres the voices and needs of LGBTIQA+ victim-survivors and strengthens the capacity of services across Tasmania.

