

# Gender-Integrated Sexual Assault Support Groups: A Practical Guide for Support Group Facilitators, Therapists, and Decision-Makers

July 2024 ●



**FORGE**

[forge-forward.org](https://forge-forward.org)

“There are so many different experiences, so many different identities, and everybody deserves to feel safe. So if we’re not a part of that solution, then we are a part of the problem. I would hope that people would want to be part of the solution.”

<b>About this Guide</b>	<b>6</b>
Authors	6
Publisher	6
Date	6
Permission to reproduce	6
Acknowledgements	6
Photos	7
Who is FORGE?	7
Social media	8
Trans survivors blog	8
Training and technical assistance	8
Introduction	9
Why this matters	11
Legal compliance: VAWA non-discrimination policy	12
<b>01 Benefits of gender integration</b>	<b>14</b>
Gender-integrated groups create access for more survivors.	15
Gender-integrated groups ensure that survivors do not experience rejection.	15
Gender-integrated groups recognize and serve nonbinary survivors.	16
Gender-integrated groups reduce survivors’ sense of isolation and increase inclusion.	17
Gender-integrated groups promote healing and connection.	17
Gender-integrated groups enhance examination of gender roles and stereotypes.	18
Gender-integrated groups benefit facilitators.	18
What Facilitators Said: Benefits and Successes	19
<b>02 Barriers: perceived and experienced</b>	<b>21</b>
“There aren’t enough of them.” Or “There’s only one.”	22
“Women will be triggered by men.”	23
“Women and men have different needs.”	24
“Women and men can’t talk to each other.”	24
“Gender-integrated groups require female and male co-facilitators.”	25

What facilitators said: socialization and participating in groups 26

**03 Training 27**

**04 Creating supportive groups: building community 29**

Screening and orienting group members 30

At the start of a group 31

Pronouns 32

What facilitators said: gathering feedback 33

**05 Facilitation techniques to support inclusion and safety 35**

Give people choices 35

Encourage members to “own” the group 36

Ask permission to be flexible 36

Point out commonalities 36

Acknowledge positive growth 36

Create space for group members to visually connect with each other, or not 37

Encourage kind questions 37

Evaluate periodically 38

End well 38

**06 Discussion topics 40**

Assault and survivorship 40

What facilitators said: trauma 41

Boundaries 41

Survival strategies 41

Gender stereotypes 41

**07 Handling conflict through embracing difference 45**

Framing as a prevention technique 45

Coping with conflict 46

Addressing conflicts as the facilitator 47

Supporting group members to address conflicts 47

Offering counter-examples 48

Modeling and coaching	48
Educating group members	49
Other techniques	49
What facilitators said: challenging stereotypes	50
<b>08 In summation</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Appendix A: role plays</b>	<b>54</b>
Role-play scenarios	55
Small group roleplays	57
About this project and its respondents	58
<b>Appendix B: about this project</b>	<b>58</b>
About this survey	59
Survey deadline	59
About FORGE	59
<b>Appendix C: survey instrument</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Appendix D: interview questions</b>	<b>63</b>
Hands-on activities	65
<b>Appendix E: activities and topics for groups</b>	<b>65</b>
Art, poetry, and quotations	66
Resource packets	66
Mindfulness	67
Affirmations	67
Working in pairs	67
Gallery walk	67
Circle up	68
Transgender/nonbinary survivors of sexual assault	69
<b>Appendix F: continuing education resources</b>	<b>69</b>
Male survivors of sexual assault	73
General support group resource	75
<b>Appendix G: bibliography</b>	<b>79</b>

## Authors

Loree Cook-Daniels, Policy and Program Director & FORGE staff

## Publisher

FORGE is the nation's leading organization focused on violence against transgender and nonbinary people. Since 2009 FORGE has held multiple federal contracts to provide training and technical assistance nationwide to the victim service providers who work with trans and nonbinary victims and to provide direct services to transgender and nonbinary victims of crime. FORGE was founded in 1994.

## Date

Revised March 2023

## Permission to reproduce

Permission to reproduce in full, without abridgment or edits and with FORGE authorship intact, is granted to all. To adapt or reproduce parts of this report, please obtain written permission from FORGE. Email a detailed request to [AskFORGE@FORGE-forward.org](mailto:AskFORGE@FORGE-forward.org).

The content of this publication may be reprinted with the following acknowledgment: "This material was reprinted, with permission, from FORGE's publication entitled Gender-Integrated Sexual Assault Support Groups: A Practical Guide for Support Group Facilitators, Therapists, and Decision-Makers. This guide is available on the web at [www.forge-forward.org](http://www.forge-forward.org)."

## Acknowledgements

FORGE would like to thank [Raliance](#), a collaboration comprised of the [National Sexual Violence Resource Center](#), [PreventConnect/California Coalition Against Sexual Assault](#), and the [National Alliance to End Sexual Violence](#), funded by the National Football League, for funding this project. Thank you to our program manager, Julie Patrick, for making this project enjoyable and easy.

We are extremely grateful to the 18 seasoned support group facilitators who donated an average of an hour each (and sometimes much more) to share with us their experiences and expertise in running gender-integrated support groups for survivors of sexual assault and sexual violence. They did the work—including the courageous trailblazing and painful mistake-making—that made this guide possible.

We also thank the 97 support group facilitators who answered our online survey about their experiences with and/or concerns about facilitating all-gender support groups. Their feedback allowed us to focus our interviews on the areas facilitators are most concerned about.

FORGE is grateful to Brice Smith, Ph.D., who set up and conducted the interviews, and 3PlayMedia for transcribing them. Tristen Taggart checked links and gathered additional resources. Alex Kapitan and Emil Rudicell helped with revisions, line editing, references, and citations. Loree Cook-Daniels, Policy and Program Director for FORGE, spearheaded analysis of the survey and interview results and drafted the first version of the guide.

## Photos

Photos and images in this guide are primarily from the Espavo Project and other FORGE-sponsored photoshoots of trans and nonbinary individuals and community members. Espavo means “Thank you for taking your power.” Photos taken by hand-selected, trauma-informed, and trans

community members aim to embody the resilience, empowerment, and healing of trans and nonbinary survivors and loved ones whose lives have been affected by sexual violence. Not every person in the photos of this Guide identifies as transgender and/or nonbinary, or is a direct survivor of sexual violence.

## Who is FORGE?

FORGE is a national transgender anti-violence organization founded in 1994.

Since 2009, FORGE has received federal funds to provide direct services to transgender and nonbinary survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and other forms of victimization and crime. We provide training and technical assistance to providers around the country who work with transgender (and, at times, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer) survivors of violence and trauma. Through this work, FORGE has tracked continuing and emerging challenges many agencies face in serving survivors of all genders.

FORGE reduces the impact of trauma on trans/nonbinary survivors and communities by empowering service providers, advocating for systems reform, and connecting survivors to healing possibilities. FORGE strives to create a world where ALL voices, people and bodies are valued, respected, honored, and celebrated; where every individual feels safe, supported, respected, and empowered.

Our work focuses around the following four central beliefs:

**A belief that trans/nonbinary people and loved ones are resilient (but may still benefit from some reminders and skills);**

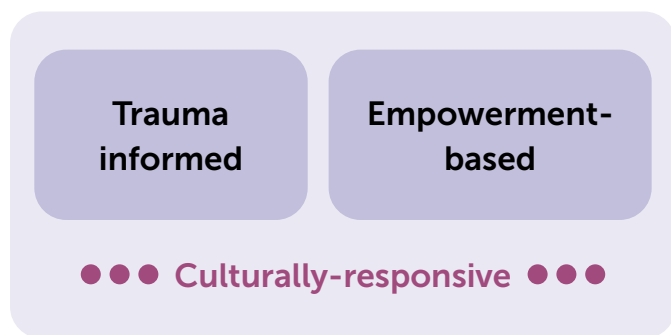
**A belief that service providers have the profession-specific skills they need to serve trans/nonbinary people, but simply need additional trans-specific knowledge and confidence;**

**A belief that EVERY person is valuable and has a great deal to contribute to society; and**

**A belief that binary systems and thinking create arbitrary lines between people and communities, which damage spirits and resilience.**

FORGE's work is also rooted in two foundational principles: being **trauma-informed** and **empowerment-focused** in all aspects of work—with both survivors and service providers. These foundational principles are consistently guided by a culturally responsive lens. The work is also informed by research and evidence-based strategies, although we recognize that when working with marginalized populations, sometimes the most successful solutions require charting new territory and creating new best practices.

## Guiding principles



FORGE has a long history of crafting dynamic, in-person, remote-access, and print-based training materials in ways that are highly accessible to many types of victim service providers, as well as many learning levels and styles. Please note that this Guide is not intended to substitute for Trans 101 training. Instead, we direct you to our online archive of free training webinars and publications, including:

- Over 80 hours of recorded webinars (<https://forge-forward.org/resources/service-providers-2/>)
- Dozens of short and long publications (<https://forge-forward.org/resources/service-providers-2/>)

- An extensive toolkit created in 2014 with the Office for Victims of Crime. A revised and more comprehensive [toolkit](#) will be released in 2025. (<https://www.ovc.gov/pubs/forge/>)

## Social media

- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/FORGE.trans>)
- Instagram ([https://www.instagram.com/forge\\_forward](https://www.instagram.com/forge_forward))
- TikTok (<https://www.tiktok.com/@forge.trans>)
- YouTube: (<http://www.youtube.com/c/FORGEForwardTrans>)

## Trans survivors blog

- Blog (<http://www.trans-survivors.com>)

## Training and technical assistance

Learn more about how to request trainings or learn more about training opportunities at <https://forge-forward.org/training/trainings/>. Many providers are also interested in one-on-one, agency-specific support, and technical assistance. Learn more about some of the types of technical assistance FORGE offers here: <https://forge-forward.org/training/technical-assistance/>

- Website: [www.FORGE-forward.org](http://www.FORGE-forward.org)
- Contact form: <https://forge-forward.org/about/contact/>
- Email: [AskFORGE@FORGE-forward.org](mailto:AskFORGE@FORGE-forward.org)
- Telephone: 414-559-2123



# Introduction

This guide is meant to supplement, not substitute, many of the fine guides and training curricula that already exist to help support group facilitators increase their skills. “Additional Resource” boxes throughout this guide point to where facilitators can locate exceptional exercises or explanatory sections from some of those guides and workbooks. This guide focuses very specifically on the aspects of creating and running **gender-integrated**<sup>1</sup> sexual assault support groups—groups that are intentionally inclusive of people of multiple genders, including transgender/nonbinary individuals. In an online survey, FORGE asked nearly 100 facilitators of support groups for sexual assault survivors if they had run gender-integrated groups and, if not, why not—then took these identified barriers and concerns back to 18 seasoned facilitators of gender-integrated support groups and asked them in-depth questions about their lived experiences: Did these things happen? What did happen? What have you learned? What advice would you give other facilitators? (See [Appendices C, D, and E](#) for more information about the research, the respondents, and the survey instrument.)

This guide provides insight into how facilitators have successfully created and maintained richly successful gender-integrated support groups for sexual assault survivors.

To ensure that everyone felt free to share more fully, each participant was promised

Throughout this document, we use the language of “trans,” “transgender,” and “nonbinary.” We recognize that some individuals may identify with all, some, or none of these words. We acknowledge that trans and nonbinary people may view themselves as within one large community, or in multiple distinct communities. We honor and recognize the complexity and multiplicity of gender identities and expressions, as well as appreciate the wide range of language used within this population. We use these words in their broadest meanings, inclusive of those whose identities lie outside of these often-limiting terms.



We acknowledge that many people who have experienced unwanted sexual touch, assault, or abuse, may refer to themselves as survivors or victims (or many other words). In this document, we default to “survivor” language. We have maintained quotes from support group facilitators in the language they used, which in some cases includes the word “victim.”

1 This document will most frequently use the phrases “gender-integrated” or “gender-segregated” but may also include “sex-segregated” or “sex-integrated” when referring to specific laws or policies.

anonymity. Yet, as you will quickly notice, facilitators' exact words are quoted as much as possible.<sup>2</sup> One reason for this is to emphasize that support group facilitation is *personal*. Each person present—be they group member or facilitator—is an individual with their own distinct history and set of beliefs. Together, their every interaction is unique: it has never happened exactly the same way before and will never be repeated.

As much as many providers would ideally like to be told precisely what steps should be taken to ensure ideal outcomes, that is impossible. Accordingly, this guide is structured as less of a “best practices” manual and more of a rich collection of ideas and experiences from which readers are encouraged to draw what applies and appeals to them; as well as what will best suit the people who they are serving.

This guide is divided into sections. Doing something new or different takes effort, especially when it bucks traditional ways of doing things. After brief reminders of why this work matters and the legal requirements within the Violence Against Women Act, we structure this guide with these sections:

- This guide, therefore, starts with **“Benefits of Gender Integration”** to explain why FORGE and the experienced facilitators we talked to feel this work is so worthwhile.
- The second section, **“Barriers: Perceived and Experienced,”** addresses (with one exception) the primary concerns support group facilitators had about gender-integrated groups, paired with our seasoned facilitators' responses and experiences.
- The third section addresses the concern that people should have cultural competency **training** before they take on facilitating gender-integrated groups.
- In the fourth and fifth sections, the guide turns to **“Creating Supportive Groups: Building Community”** suggestions that experienced facilitators have for creating and maintaining gender-integrated groups that feel **safe and inclusive** for all participants.
- Although this guide does not provide a curriculum for gender-integrated groups, it shares many of the great ideas and insights facilitators offered for **group activities and discussion topics** in the hope that readers will find something inspirational in that section.
- The final section is **“Handling Conflict Through Embracing Difference.”** Here is where readers will find many ideas for addressing stereotypes and resolving conflicts, related to gender and/or identity, or not.

2 All participants were interviewed orally. To make this guide more reader-friendly and in acknowledgment that most of us write for publication more carefully than we're able to speak during live interviews, FORGE has eliminated extraneous words like “um,” deleted repetitions, or reordered sentences to ensure the speaker's meaning is clear. We have made every effort to retain each facilitator's exact words and not alter their intention.

While this particular guide was funded by [Raliance](#), FORGE has been funded by the Office for Victims of Crime and the Office on Violence Against Women under the U.S. Department of Justice, to provide technical assistance and training to victim service providers they fund. If you would like additional support, technical assistance, or training, please contact us. FORGE has also made as many of our products as possible available to everyone online for free on our website: [www.forge-forward.org](http://www.forge-forward.org).

## Why this matters

Nationwide, 81% of women and 43% of men reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment and/or assault in their lifetime. Based on the 2015 [The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey](#)<sup>3</sup> (NISVS), 43.6% of women and 24.8% of men have experienced contact sexual violence in their lifetime. The NISVS did not have adequate information on transgender people<sup>4</sup> to include them in their statistics. However, according to the [2015 US Trans Survey](#), 47% of transgender people have experienced sexual assault in their lifetimes, with rates being higher for specific communities.

Statistical information varies on how many people of each gender have experienced sexual violence. This is in part due to how surveys define sexual violence: some use

legal definitions and focus on penetration, “completed rape” or “attempted rape.” Others look at sexual assault—any unwanted sexual contact, and still other measurements include harassment and non-physical sexual violence. How questions are asked will influence the answers. Further, few surveys specifically include transgender and nonbinary people. All of this leads to a variety of measurements being unavailable and providing conflicting statistical information.

People of all genders experience sexual violence and may benefit from support groups. Currently, in the United States, the majority of sexual violence support groups are gender-segregated, meaning that they are only open to people of a particular gender. Many organizations only offer women’s support groups. As a result, men, transgender people, and nonbinary people are being excluded from support groups or are being included in groups that do not match their identities.

Further, many organizations providing services to sexual assault survivors are legally obligated to provide equitable services to people of all genders. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which provides significant amounts of funding for sexual violence programs, has a non-discrimination policy ([see VAWA pop-out](#)). Family Violence Prevention and

- 3 See [Appendix F](#) (continuing education resources) and [Appendix G](#) (bibliography) for links to data referenced in this guide.
- 4 Throughout this document, the terms transgender and trans will be used interchangeably. In some cases, we will refer to trans and nonbinary survivors/communities when addressing common issues, barriers, and needs that affect a broad section of the community. We will use specific identity language or descriptors when discussing unique identities that may have specific service implications, such as trans men or trans women.

Services Act (FVPSA), the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other federal funding programs also require equivalent services. These policies apply to any organization receiving direct or pass-through funding. Nearly every sexual assault or domestic violence agency receives funds through one of these funding streams.

In addition to funding requirements and the high rates of sexual victimization across all genders, providing gender-integrated support groups can help with staff capacity, as well as providing needed services to more clients. Organizations may be able to run fewer groups for the same number of survivors if groups are not separated by gender.

## Legal compliance: VAWA non-discrimination policy

The 2013 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) added gender identity, sexual orientation, and sex to the list of demographics against which VAWA-funded agencies may not discriminate. In 2014, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued [Frequently asked questions: Nondiscrimination grant condition in the Violence Against Women Act of 2013](#) (see resource box) explaining how the Department expected to implement the law.

Sex-segregated services are still permitted under some specific circumstances but must meet a certain threshold of justification:

“The VAWA nondiscrimination grant condition provides that a recipient may offer sex-segregated or sex-specific programming when it is “necessary to the essential operation of a program. If the Department receives a complaint of sex discrimination based upon a recipient’s sex-segregated or sex-specific services, the onus will be on the recipient to

articulate clearly why sex-segregation or sex-specific programming was necessary to the essential operations of the program. DOJ expects the recipient to support its justification with an assessment of the facts and circumstances surrounding the specific program” and that takes into account “established best practices and research findings, as applicable.”

Furthermore, the DOJ’s Frequently Asked Questions document specifies that the justification for sex-segregated services “cannot rely on unsupported assumptions or overly broad sex-based generalizations.”

Not only that, but individuals who cannot be accommodated in sex-segregated programming—for example, because there isn’t a male-only group or because a person does not identify as female—must be provided with comparable services, which DOJ defines as being “designed to confer a substantially equal benefit. Factors that DOJ will consider, either individually or in the aggregate as appropriate, in determining whether

services are comparable include the following: the nature and quality of the services provided, the relative benefits of different therapeutic modalities or interventions, geographic location or other aspects of accessibility, the characteristics of the facilities where services are provided, and the characteristics of the individuals who provide the service.” The FAQ notes: “Services need not be identical to be comparable, but they must be of the same or similar quality and duration.”

In addition to VAWA, many states and localities have nondiscrimination provisions that include sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression protections that could be used to challenge

agencies that do not or cannot serve survivors of all genders. Increasingly, federal courts are finding that existing federal nondiscrimination laws protect sexual and gender minorities seeking public accommodations, a category that includes many services for survivors.

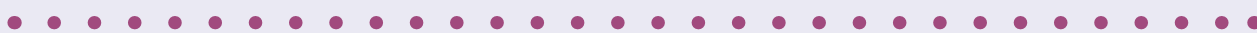
These new and evolving laws challenge many traditional “Violence Against Women” practices, such as sex-segregated sexual assault support groups. Although there are multiple ways to comply with the new laws, FORGE believes that the most financially realistic (as well as most healing) option is to serve all survivors in gender-integrated groups.



**Similar non-discrimination policies to those outlined in the Violence Against Women Act’s nondiscrimination policies have been developed by the [Family Violence Prevention and Services Act \(FVPSA\)](#), the [Department of Education](#), the [Office for Victims of Crime](#), [Health and Human Services](#), and other federal and state agencies.**

**Two resources that summarize the VAWA nondiscrimination providers can be found here:**

- **[Webinar] [An Overview of the Sexual Orientation and Gender-Identity Non-Discrimination Conditions in the Reauthorized VAWA.](#)**
- **[Fact Sheet] [Know your rights! Trans Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence.](#)**





# 01 Benefits of gender integration

Doing something new or different takes effort, especially when doing so challenges the established ways of doing things. Traditionally, sexual assault has been viewed as a crime that men perpetrate against women. Consequently, survivor services have focused on women—often, only cisgender (non-transgender) women. While there has been growing awareness of the existence of sexual assault survivors who are men, transgender, and/or nonbinary, services for these “emerging” survivors have been harder to find, with group services largely being offered only if and when there are “enough” male, transgender, or nonbinary survivors to make up an all-male, all-trans, or all nonbinary group. This section provides seven reasons this should be changed so that all survivors can be included in gender-integrated support groups.

### Gender-integrated groups create access for more survivors.

Survey respondents most frequently said they didn't serve any or many men, transgender people, and/or nonbinary individuals because "we couldn't find enough of them for a group." One facilitator pointed out that in their experience, it didn't work to waitlist people because by the time "enough" participants had been identified, early requesters were often "no longer interested." When groups are gender-integrated, filling a group is far easier, since people of all genders can be welcomed into existing support group offerings.

One of the benefits [of gender-integrated groups] is that when someone calls and they are seeking a group, it just opens the door for everyone.



1



2

### Gender-integrated groups ensure that survivors do not experience rejection.

The sexual assault field prides itself on believing and serving survivors. Unfortunately, telling a survivor who wants group support that they are not eligible because of their gender has exactly the opposite effect: they typically feel alone, isolated, unheard, and unsupported. One facilitator noted:

**"One of the benefits that I see when we have that gender-inclusive support group is that we don't isolate. We don't make individual human beings feel different than everyone else."**

## 3

**Gender-integrated groups recognize and serve nonbinary survivors.**

Trans and nonbinary people are a diverse population. Research indicates that 1.03%<sup>1</sup> (US Census Bureau) to 1.5%<sup>2</sup> (Pew Research Center) of adults identify as transgender (between 3.4 and 4.9 million). In the 2015 US Trans Survey (n=27,715), the plurality of respondents identified as nonbinary (35%), greater than those who identified as male/trans men or female/trans women.

It is critical to keep in mind that a growing percentage of the population—particularly younger people—do not identify as male or female. Among youth up to age 30, 5% (about 16.6 million) (Pew Research Center) of youth say their gender is different from their sex assigned at birth.<sup>3</sup>

These individuals may describe their gender identity in any number of ways, but the bottom line is that most will not feel comfortable in groups that are delineated for men or for women. If groups are defined as being open to people of all genders, nonbinary survivors don't have to make a choice between their gender identity and getting support services they need and deserve. As one facilitator commented:

**“We need many more spaces for people along the gender spectrum to get safe and culturally competent support.”**

- 
- 1 US Census Bureau. Household Pulse Survey. July 2021. <https://usafacts.org/articles/what-percentage-of-the-us-population-is-transgender/>
  - 2 Brown, A. (2022, June 7). About 5% of Young Adults in the U.S. Say Their Gender Is Different from Their Sex Assigned at Birth. Pew Research Center; Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/06/07/about-5-of-young-adults-in-the-u-s-say-their-gender-is-different-from-their-sex-assigned-at-birth/>
  - 3 Brown, A. (2022, June 7). About 5% of Young Adults in the U.S. Say Their Gender Is Different from Their Sex Assigned at Birth. Pew Research Center; Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/06/07/about-5-of-young-adults-in-the-u-s-say-their-gender-is-different-from-their-sex-assigned-at-birth/>



## Gender-integrated groups reduce survivors' sense of isolation and increase inclusion.

All sexual assault support groups are designed to counter the sense of isolation that survivors feel. One facilitator named “one of the best and most productive elements” of their group was the ability for participants to find out that others have had similar experiences and build community from that place of shared experience.

What is essential to recognize is that survivors can feel isolated in many ways, not just because they are sexual assault survivors.

Not being rejected is not always the same as feeling included; it is the latter feeling that many facilitators want to cultivate. One facilitator tied their rural setting to their need to include everyone:

**“Our area is very rural; it’s not necessarily very accepting of anyone. I just wanted everyone to feel included and that they could participate.”**

4

5

## Gender-integrated groups promote healing and connection.

Facilitator after facilitator emphasized the fact that gender-integrated sexual assault support groups promote healing in both global and very particular ways.

Healing from sexual assault requires coming to some sense of acceptance of the past and also, ideally, developing new skills to help build a better future. One facilitator shares with support group members that gender-integrated groups are particularly good places to learn and practice new skills:

**“Survivors can be hesitant to engage in a group that includes members of the gender that hurt them, but we have discussed that as an opportunity to communicate about concerns and boundaries, and rebuild trust with others.”**

## Gender-integrated groups enhance examination of gender roles and stereotypes.

When people of multiple genders talk about gender roles together, participants are often challenged on stereotypical beliefs:

Obviously, people are more than their gender. Most support groups for sexual assault survivors welcome people of all races, nationalities, religions, dis/abilities, belief sets, and more. The highly visible gender differences in gender-integrated groups may help prompt group members to examine many other kinds of assumptions and stereotypes they may hold about people who differ from them.

The general public holds stereotypes about sexual assault that may result in survivors not recognizing it themselves. In joint intimate partner violence/sexual assault groups, sometimes participants recognized themselves in others' stories:

**“One group had a young transgender girl. She realized during this group, because of other people’s experiences, that she had been molested as a child. She had just never labeled it as molestation.”**

6

7

## Gender-integrated groups benefit facilitators.

It is important to acknowledge that it is not just the group members who benefit from a healing environment. As several facilitators shared:

**“We learn so much more about each other, I feel, in groups that are mixed. Culturally we’re trying to solve a problem. We can’t do that in isolation, I don’t think. Not effectively.”**

## What facilitators said: benefits and successes

“Integrated groups are a way that we can support some different kinds of conversations about what gender looks like in our society based on who is allowed to be vulnerable and who is not allowed to be vulnerable. And I think that that’s part of the bigger work that we’re doing. So it just makes good sense to provide a space for all folks to come and share their experiences.”

“An all-gender group can offer a certain kind of space—especially for trans folks, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary folks—a unique opportunity to feel that “not aloneness,” not only around their experience of being a survivor of sexual trauma, but also around their gendered experience. So I think there can be multiple connection points for some folks, depending on the makeup for the group at the time.”

“Really encourage people to create relationships with other people that maybe they wouldn’t think they could have a connection with, or about whom they might not feel they have a lot in common. I think that [gender-integrated] space allows for those connections. And they’re beneficial for everybody.”

“[It was especially good] for those who were raising boys to be able to reexamine: “Do I want to rethink that ‘you need to be tough, don’t cry’ thing, and say instead, ‘you know what, baby, if you need to cry, come over here, I’m going to give you a hug. Just cry it out.’” I think it did really challenge that [expectation of male behavior] and also break the cycle. And that impacted the next generation and a lot of parenting choices.”

“It has been phenomenal in what the group dynamic has brought to both genders. Women survivors have had symptoms around trusting men, relationships, intimacy. . . . When we’ve opened up the group, the women have definitely expressed to us that it was beneficial to not only see that men are also survivors, but I think it helped them decrease some of those symptoms. We’ve heard that trust has increased as far as with males . . . it’s helped with their negative view about men, for sure.”

“One of the men did say he struggled with . . . masculinity, and what his role was in high school; he didn’t really fit in. And the group really responded very supportively, because that was his experience that was related to gender, was related to power. . . . One of the women, she began to cry and just said, ‘I’m so sorry that that that was also part of your experience.’ She didn’t really offer anything that was mind-blowing. But I think for that male, specifically—wow, for somebody to just even recognize that and just say, ‘I’m sorry that was part of your experience,’ I don’t think he’d ever heard that before. And that came up maybe once or twice with two of the men I can think of. I think it was powerful because men could hear from other men who said, ‘Wow, I’m not alone in this,’ and, ‘Yeah, that was a struggle for me too.’ It’s simple group stuff where it’s just validating—you’re not alone—and I think it was very powerful for them.”

“The [men] reported—self-disclosed to me—specifically that the group opened the way that they view and how they interact with women. They reported that they’d been married for 20 years and never felt close to any female, including their wife. Like, “nobody knows me.” Having this interaction with women and being vulnerable and completely honest . . . greatly improved their healing journey. There’s no question.”



# 02

## Barriers: perceived and experienced

One of the primary goals of this project was to identify barriers advocates saw to offering support groups inclusive of survivors who are transgender, nonbinary, and/or male and compare those concerns to what facilitators of gender-integrated groups had actually experienced.

The perceived barriers were identified through two open-ended questions in the online survey: "If you have not offered support groups for sexual assault survivors that include men (transgender or cisgender), what concerns or barriers do you believe stops you?" A parallel question asked what had stopped them from including transgender, gender non-conforming, and/or nonbinary survivors.

We determined what perceived barriers presented most often, and then asked most of our interviewees to reflect on those concerns in light of their own experiences. Five of the most commonly stated perceived barriers are named below, with responses from facilitators of gender-integrated support groups. In some cases, interviewees or survey respondents also volunteered experiences that addressed someone's concerns, and those are also included below.

- For more on the barriers transgender sexual violence survivors might have in accessing services, along with advice on how to support and empower those facing such barriers, see “Service Barriers and Discrimination, and What Can Be Done” in “A Guide for Partners and Loved Ones of Transgender Sexual Violence Survivors” (pp. 79–88), by Michael Munson and Loree Cook-Daniels: <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-partner-guide/>

# 1

## “There aren't enough of them.” Or “There's only one.”

Many respondents said that they do not have enough survivors who are male, transgender, and/or nonbinary coming forward to form male-only or trans-only groups. This very common barrier is one of the primary reasons FORGE encourages offering gender-integrated groups: every survivor can be served, regardless of whether there are enough survivors with a particular identity or identities available at that time to create a viable identity-specific group.

A related concern was only having one person of a particular identity—for example only one person who identifies as male, transgender, and/or nonbinary—in a group. Would that individual feel alone? Stigmatized? Unheard?

A few experienced facilitators said that this concern is valid: people can sometimes feel isolated in a support group if they don't perceive that anyone else identifies as they do. Some facilitators said it was possible that such people felt isolated, but that they had not said anything. A facilitator who ran a group for parents of sexually abused children noted that once only one father showed up at the first meeting. The next meeting, however, several more showed up. They guessed that the mothers had gone home and reported that a father had attended the group, which encouraged other fathers to attend as well.

Facilitators shared stories of participants being the “only one” of a specific identity and feeling safe and included within the group. For some, this was related to privacy—by connecting people who did not share an identity, they were less likely to be with members of a small community. For others, this was cultural. The group they attended felt more comfortable and welcoming to them than other groups of a shared identity. For example, one man shared that he felt more space to be vulnerable in a group with mostly women than he had in a men's group. For him, this was because the men in the men's group were less willing or able to express their vulnerability and feelings.

It remains important that facilitators pay attention to the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. Identity is one of *many* factors that can make people feel welcome in a group. Facilitators can help the group to hold space for all members without tokenizing any one person.

---

### “Women will be triggered by men.”

Many survey respondents and some interviewees said that women often asked if men would be part of a support group, and sometimes—but not always—opted out if they were told that men might be present:

Facilitators reported that participants varied in their opinions about mixed-gender groups. Some women were not comfortable with the idea, some were initially hesitant but willing to try, and some had no concerns.

Trauma reminders or “triggers” often come up in support groups of any kind. One facilitator noted:

**“We’ve definitely had people triggered in group. In a support group, there’s really not a better place to have that experience, because there’s immediate support. We’ve done grounding stuff and then the group has come together to provide a lot of support to that specific person.”**

Support groups often discuss strategies for coping with trauma responses and reminders, and work with participants to develop tools to recognize and respond to intense emotions. Many facilitators noted that this helped participants recognize when/if they were triggered by another person in the group and deepen their understanding of what was happening.

This is also an important place to note that not all women were assaulted by men. Further, men may have been assaulted by men, women, or people who are trans. When we assume that trauma reminders will only go in one direction (women being triggered by men), we are excluding the experiences of people who were assaulted by other genders, and dismissing the experiences of men assaulted by men who are expected to go to a men’s group.

A trauma-informed approach recognizes that trauma responses will happen. The facilitators and group can then work to minimize those, recognize them as they start to happen, and develop tools to cope—rather than exclude people on an assumption of identity-based triggers.



## 3

**“Women and men have different needs.”**

Echoing such popular books as *Women Are From Venus, Men Are From Mars*, some advocates worried that male and female sexual assault survivors had such different needs that they could not effectively be served in the same group.

Most experienced facilitators of gender-integrated groups said that the belief that healing from sexual assault trauma differed for women and men is not true. A few facilitators spoke to the fact that people of different genders sometimes engage with support groups in different ways because of gender stereotypes and how, in our binary world, women and men are socialized differently with respect to things such as how they express emotion or process trauma.

**“Everyone’s trauma is different. I think processing healing isn’t really different for men and women. I think framing it that way is closing people off to more support.”**

**“Women and men can’t talk to each other.”**

Many advocates worried that people of different gender identities could not or would not talk to each other in a mixed group. Although some experienced facilitators of gender-integrated groups admit this occasionally happens, several noted that initial reluctance to talk could change with time and experience. Most felt that the concern that people of different gender identities couldn’t talk with each other in a shared group was baseless.

## 4

**“Usually within the first week of group, when people share about their stories, it tends to squash a lot of the anxious feelings anyone might be coming in with about what someone of a different gender might be thinking, or feeling, or experiencing. Because so many times, people’s stories are so similar.”**



5

**“Gender-integrated groups require female and male co-facilitators.”**

There was a great deal of disagreement on the question of whether gender-integrated groups require male and female co-facilitators. The questions about male/female co-facilitators also reinforces the belief that there are only two genders that could be options for facilitator roles. Others noted that survivors have more identities than just their gender:

**“If you feel like your facilitators need to represent every single identity of your group members, then you’re going to need as many facilitators as you have group members, and probably more, because there’s not going to be a complete representation, and because I believe that there are infinite gender identities. To prepare the facilitators for an all-gender group, you would need infinite facilitators, which would not be realistic.”**

Thus, although some interviewees reflected that having both a female and a male facilitator for a gender-integrated group could be a positive thing, none said that an inability to procure a two-gender co-facilitator team should be a reason not to run a gender-integrated group.

Experienced facilitators of gender-integrated support groups said that most survey respondents’ major concerns about running gender-integrated groups were not, in fact, actual barriers in practice.

## What facilitators said: socialization and participating in groups

“It was great to see men being vulnerable and talking about their feelings and expressing concerns about relationships and things like that. I felt like it was really great to see. Also to see men being really supportive of female healing was great.”

“The group participants, at first, were very judgmental of one another and the experiences they had had in their lives because nobody had sat down and just let them all talk to each other and get to understand one another.”

“One man talked about his experiences with other types of support groups in our small community and why they weren't a good fit for him. . . . The men in the other groups . . . weren't as vulnerable or open in their communication or what they were sharing—there was male stereotype behavior, very manly, very guy-ish. With our group, he feels like he can be more open and share and talk a whole lot more about what's really going on. . . . He wanted to share about his issues with these other support groups, but because of the men in those groups, he couldn't express himself in the same way. With us, he finds that he can be very open. He can talk as much as he needs to or wants to. He can ask all kinds of questions. He can really, truly express himself, and feel safe, and not feel like the odd man out, so to speak.”

“Depending on the background of the man, sometimes they are actually more uncomfortable when there are other men. Because society, still for many men, won't allow them to be vulnerable. That means oftentimes women have been the safer people to be vulnerable around; being the only male still fits into that socially defined safe space. Then when other men are present, that sort of bravado has to go back up.”

# 03 Training



One of the biggest reasons sexual assault support group facilitators do not run gender-integrated groups based on FORGE's survey is that they don't feel culturally competent to do so.

FORGE asked experienced facilitators who had run gender-integrated groups about their thoughts on training and cultural competency. Facilitators reported that some specific skills and knowledge were useful to run groups effectively. These areas included:

- Knowledge about survivors who are transgender, nonbinary, and/or male—including unique dynamics of sexual violence and healing needs
- Knowledge about a wide range of diversity (identities, experiences, cultures), particularly those reflected in the local community
- Skills to support a diverse group—including conflict management, the ability to identify similarities without erasing differences, and a variety of facilitation techniques and styles
- The ability to recognize and address personal assumptions and biases

One of the most helpful things a new facilitator (or an experienced facilitator entering a new environment) can do is practice or role-play responses to problematic scenarios in advance. See [Appendix E](#) for a FORGE-developed exercise specific to the type of conflicts that may come up around gender identity, sex, and sexual orientation.



For more resources, see: “Problems, Pitfalls, and Possible Responses” in “Circle of Hope: A Guide for Conducting Psychoeducational Support Groups” (pp. 79–83), from Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs: [https://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working\\_with\\_survivors/support\\_groups/Circle\\_of\\_Hope\\_2014.pdf](https://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working_with_survivors/support_groups/Circle_of_Hope_2014.pdf)

In addition to attending trainings, new facilitators can also benefit from shadowing more experienced facilitators and working closely with others as they begin to facilitate groups.

Hiring strategies that include intentionally seeking people of a wide range of identities and experiences is also helpful in providing quality support groups.

See [Appendix F](#) for a list of training resources.

# 04

## Creating supportive groups: building community

The core of sexual assault support group work—whether a particular group is all-female, all-male, all-transgender, all-nonbinary, or gender-integrated—is building a supportive community where individual members feel they are safe, heard, valued, and valuable. Creating this safe and healing space takes work, as seasoned facilitators know. In a culture in which men and women are taught they are “opposites” and in which differences in demographics are used to create fear, building community in a diverse group can present extra challenges. It can also, as noted earlier, be exceptionally rewarding.



This section will offer suggestions and best practices from experienced facilitators of gender-integrated groups on building community in such groups. Some of these best practices are specific to or more relevant in groups with people of different genders, but others are things that are beneficial for any support group to practice.

### Screening and orienting group members

Nearly every interviewee who addressed the issue said that it was critical for new group members “to be ready for whatever they’re going to be walking into,” as one facilitator put it. For some support groups—but by no means all—“being ready” includes an individual screening of each member to ensure they will be a good fit for group support.

Although the quote below may not be every provider’s approach—to be this explicit or detailed (or based in appearance)—it is a good reminder that when facilitators share a list of who might be in a group, it provides the opportunity for the survivor to determine if they are comfortable with that group or would prefer a referral to another support option.

**“It’s a notification that we provide services to everybody. So when you’re coming to group, here is what you might expect. There might be people of any different kind of background. That might include background, that might include languages, that might include skin color, it might include political beliefs, it might include judgments of your lifestyle, and it might include genders or different looks. Some people may look very Catholic and some people may look very “out there.” We go through the full range and say we want to make sure that you understand that when you’re coming here so that you can be comfortable. If you need any support around that, we can help give whatever support. And if you don’t feel comfortable with that, we can provide you with some referrals to somewhere else where you might feel more comfortable.”**

Some sexual assault support groups are closed, with the same individuals attending from the first to the last meeting. Others are open or drop-in, with different people attending every meeting. There are also hybrids of the two, where a mostly consistent group also occasionally integrates a new member.

## At the start of a group

### Creating community agreements

Nearly every interviewee mentioned “ground rules,” “discussion agreements,” or another term for a list of expectations for members’ behavior in the support group. Although one facilitator noted that their agency has a “pretty lengthy ground rule list” that they go over with people before they join the group and then again when the group meets, and another facilitator said, “The only two rules are confidentiality and safety,” most groups seem to generate their own unique list. FORGE

particularly likes calling these “community agreements,” as that phrase clearly reminds participants that they are in part responsible for creating the environment in which they want to interact with others. It both empowers them and reminds them of their responsibilities to each other. Some facilitators emphasize their own limitations in order to encourage group members to take ownership of the group.

Community agreements can include any number of topics. Here are just a few that experienced facilitators mentioned in passing:

Use “I” statements

Don’t share others’ stories

Don’t tell others what they should do

Share the space

Be quiet while someone else is speaking

Do not make assumptions

Be respectful

Don’t be judgmental about what somebody shares

The group is a sober environment

Move up/Move back. [Be willing to speak up if you are someone who struggles to take up space, and help create space for others to speak if you are someone who is comfortable talking a lot]

Be conscious or aware of your identities and how that might impact how free you feel to talk and take up space versus how much you’re being quiet and listening or challenging all of ourselves to share the space with each other.

One group provides each member with a composition notebook (“like they have in school”), and uses the first page to write down all of the community guidelines they come up with.

One facilitator noted:

**“I like for everyone in my group to know that we’re responsible for ourselves and to each other for how this [group] is going to turn out. I always tell them, “I’ve never done this before.” They look at me like, “oh God, this grown-up has never done this before!” No, I’ve led a million groups, but not with you and you and you today, with what’s happening in the world today. You know, every day is new. Every group is new. You might be feeling this way this week, and next week you’re going to feel a different way. And that’s okay. That’s kind of my take on connecting people and creating safety and building trust.”**

It can be useful to collaboratively determine additional expectations and preferences for the group. Some of these may end up being decided by the agency or facilitator, but involving the group can increase people’s connection to each other and the community of the group.

- **Identifying feedback preferences:** Facilitators invited participants to discuss how they would like other group members to respond to one another’s sharing. One group talks about what individual members find affirming.
- **Check-ins:** Several other interviewees addressed check-ins as an aspect of group work. Interestingly, the focus of the check-ins differed greatly between groups, ranging from current feelings to thoughts about the week to anything they wanted to share to everyone answering a single specific question.

### Pronouns

Asking all group members to share what pronoun(s) (e.g., she, he, they, ze, etc.) they want to be used when people refer to them is a current best practice. It helps break the habit many of us have of automatically assigning everyone a gender and a perceived associated pronoun. We can’t know a person’s gender or gender identity unless it is shared with us. Similarly, we won’t know someone’s pronoun unless they share it with us.

Just as most people would not call someone else by whatever name pops into their head, the same should be true for pronouns. It is basic respect to learn someone’s name and pronouns—and then use those in every interaction. Using someone’s correct name and pronouns isn’t just important for trans/nonbinary people—everyone feels more respected when they are addressed in affirming ways.



Some group members will need some explanation about this practice, and others will choose not to participate in it:

**“When we start the group and do introductions, we ask people to identify their pronoun. If there are questions, we explain a bit more about why we do that but don’t make a big deal about it. We now also ask people to put their pronouns on their nametag but some choose not to and we don’t pressure about that. It all seems a bit strange at first but people are getting used to it.”**

It’s important to note, as the facilitator above referenced that not all people feel comfortable sharing their pronouns. This could be because of a lack of familiarity with the idea or with trans people, but it could just as easily be because the person is in a place of questioning their own gender—meaning no pronouns feel right and/or they aren’t ready to claim a new or specific pronoun. For this reason, although sharing pronouns is an excellent best practice in gender-integrated groups—and in all group settings—no one should ever be pressured to share. When a person chooses not to share their pronoun(s), that’s a good time for the facilitator to avoid using any pronoun for that person entirely until and unless they ask for a specific pronoun.

---

### What facilitators said: gathering feedback

“Every group we do a check-in. Remind us of your name, how are we feeling right now? Not when you woke up and how you’re going to feel when you get home, but right now. What is it like to be you, right here in this room with these people? We just work on being real and being in the moment and authentic.”

“We just say our first name, and something I want to share with the group. It doesn’t matter what it is. It could be, I enjoy hanging out with my two nieces on the weekend, and I had a blast—just something simple. Then we all go around and just say whatever we want to say about ourselves, just short. So everybody gets a chance to speak a little bit. . . . A lot of times, they’ll start talking about work or their kid. It’s just fun, happy stuff. Then the group participants will start pulling the rest out of them. Two minutes later, they’re talking about the real issue of why they’re here.”

“During check-in you make a statement about what's going on with you, and then you let people know if you want feedback and what kind of feedback. Like, “I only want to hear something if it's something positive.” People connect in that way. Just because you want feedback does not mean you want any feedback, so let's be specific.”

“We talk a lot about what feels affirming to each other. We'll say, “It's very vulnerable to share. After you've shared something, how would you like for others to engage with you?” People say, “I don't really want anyone to say anything right after.” Or some people will say, “I really want people to say, ‘That's completely valid. That makes sense that you feel that way.’” So people do very specific sharing around what they want to hear from each other that's affirming. That's pretty helpful, we've found, because there are not a lot of spaces where we get to tell each other how we want to be received.”

“We do a facilitated check-in and check-out so that everyone has the opportunity and they can start to move away from the details of what happened. Instead, they present how their week went in connection to being a survivor. How did any of the things that were talked about [in group] affect them?”



# 05

## Facilitation techniques to support inclusion and safety

In passing, many facilitators mentioned additional best practices they use to help build safety and inclusion in their groups. What follows is a selection of those techniques.

### Give people choices

Although empowering survivors is a hallmark of sexual assault services, in practice, providers often forget that a key empowerment strategy is to give survivors choices. Whenever agencies had more than one support group and/or knew of other support groups they could refer survivors to, they noted that a best practice was to inform survivors of the choices and let them choose the one that fits them best. Offering a single-gender support group as an option helps serve people who may not be ready to face their own concerns about gender-integrated groups, for example.

Another key empowerment strategy is giving participants the option of passing or opting out of any activity or conversation. One interviewee noted that in their group, “If you don’t want to share your story or if you don’t want to say your name, you don’t have to.”

### Encourage members to “own” the group

Find ways for group members to take ownership or leadership over the group. This could include asking for ideas for topics, getting feedback on how the group is going and what people want to happen in the future, and responding to group needs in the moment. Facilitators shared that they would have discussions with the group about their ideas on a regular basis as well as collect written feedback through surveys.

**“We repeatedly have brief conversations: ‘This is your group. I want to respect your time. I want this group to be valuable to you.’ [Sometimes I prompt them with] ‘Hey, anybody have any ideas for the next group?’ Or, ‘What do you think about this topic?’ I’m always trying to get their input, and I’m always reminding them that this is their group. I’m here to facilitate this, but this is not my group.”**

Facilitators can also celebrate and appreciate the ideas of group members. By being humble and demonstrating that the facilitator doesn’t have all the answers, but that group members have many of the answers themselves, facilitators can increase leadership.

### Ask permission to be flexible

In one group structured around a pre-determined list of topics, the facilitator asks the group “for permission to be flexible.” Facilitators should be prepared to shift from a prepared topic based on the needs of the group. While consistency and structure can help to create a supportive environment

for many people healing from trauma, that structure must include flexibility to meet the current needs and desires of a group.

This also gives participants permission to change. Last week a group may have been interested in discussing anger, but this week most people want to discuss fear instead, or talk about something happening in the news. Participants may also change their mind about how they share in group—someone can go weeks without sharing details of their life and then decide to share them, or someone may decide to be quieter for a while.

### Point out commonalities

One way that facilitators helped to connect group members was by pointing out connections in their stories and experiences.

### Acknowledge positive growth

There is no question that talking about your own sexual assault(s) and listening to others’ stories can be hard and painful. One facilitator shared a conscious strategy of naming people’s strengths and areas of growth throughout the group.

**“I talk to them about positives that I see in the group. What’s happening with people in general as a result of their participation.**

**I talk repeatedly to the whole group about what a privilege it has been to be a facilitator, and to see the transformation I’ve seen in them. I encourage them individually as they encourage each other: “Oh, but Jane, when you first started, you were like this—and now look! You’re actually standing up for yourself. . . .”**

**You're being assertive, which you would never have done before." Even the other group members echoed that."**

### **Create space for group members to visually connect with each other, or not**

One facilitator noted that group members—especially at first—have a tendency to look only at them and direct all of their statements to them. Some facilitators would deliberately move their gaze around the room, to encourage people to look at each other.

Other facilitators swear by hands-on activities during group meetings (see Appendix E for suggestions). One facilitator specifically mentioned the role activities can play in helping people feel more comfortable:

**"We sewed pillows with one group so that they just had something to work on and connect them and bond them. It also gives you something to look at so you're not staring at each other while you talk. It makes the setting a little bit safe and more comfortable."**

### **Encourage kind questions**

One of the most basic things to remember about diversity is that it is created when people have different experiences, different perspectives, and different beliefs. What that means in practice is that if you have a group of people from a wide range of experiences and identities, it is highly likely that members will talk about things that are completely unfamiliar to others in the group. These times of confusion

and misunderstanding can lead to people feeling awkward, left out, misunderstood, or judged. By encouraging discussion and asking questions, facilitators could support the whole group in learning and show that learning isn't a bad thing.

A facilitator of a youth group shared a story about a brief, but meaningful, interaction between a trans man and a cisgender man. Although there were no overt questions, the simplicity of their dialogue helped them both connect and understand each other.

**"One time a transgender trans guy, female-to-male, was talking about his assaults. He was talking about how his assailant kept grabbing what he was calling his junk. And this cisgender [non-trans] male who was in the group kind of had this look on his face. (You hope that people in these groups can kind of control their facial expressions, but the boy who did not understand what his peer was talking about or how that could be the same thing definitely had this look about him.) And so the person who was talking said, "You know, hey, my junk might not look like your junk, but it's still my junk." But I think he was kind of just open to the quick little piece of education. And then they just moved on."**

This doesn't mean that participants should be interrogated or asked inappropriate questions. Facilitators can help set the tone of compassion and curiosity, as well as boundaries where people can answer if they want.

### Evaluate periodically

Some groups have formal written evaluations, which can be used to identify and address issues before they grow too large. Weekly check-ins can be used to provide opportunities for regular feedback. These can be part of the closing activity or done through writing.

Pre- and post-evaluations can help to measure the group's effectiveness and growth within the group.

### End well

Two facilitators explained that they were particularly concerned about group meetings ending in a positive way:

**"We always end on a positive note with a self-care activity."**

Photo by Mx. Bex

“My goal was to make sure that they left smiling and had done something fun that day, regardless of the serious discussions that needed to happen as well.”



# 06 Discussion topics

There are hundreds of things that can be talked about in sexual assault support groups. Below are some selections of what experienced facilitators of gender-integrated groups shared with us.

## Assault and survivorship

By providing open space for people to share the parts of their stories that they want to share or what is coming up for them right now, participants may be able to find connections with each other across differences. Facilitators shared that they took time in groups to discuss ideas of what it means to be a survivor, the messages about assault people had grown up with, and their relationships to the word victim. These conversations gave people opportunities to explore their experiences without having to share specific details if they didn't want to.



## Boundaries

In addition to sharing information about boundaries and discussing how to set them, facilitators shared that they would sometimes practice scenarios in the group. By using situations that were relatable to participants and working with partners, the group was able to explore boundaries in more depth. Discussions on boundaries don't just include the boundaries themselves but how to set them, what they can feel like, how to prepare to set them, and more.

## Survival strategies

Discussing survival strategies can also be meaningful in gender-integrated support groups. Facilitators shared that groups had open discussions about all types of survival strategies and coping mechanisms.

They discussed how those strategies were helpful and if they still helped. This supported survivors to unpack shame and stigma around survival and provided another place of common ground or learning from other group members.

## Gender stereotypes

By directly addressing gender stereotypes as a group topic, facilitators were able to help support groups dig deeper into connecting with each other and challenging stereotypes. Topics related to stereotypes could take several sessions, including family and cultural expectations, how stereotypes are reinforced, and how people break them in their own lives. Facilitators told FORGE that many people are eager to get a chance to talk about this once the discussion is brought up.

---

## What facilitators said: trauma

"As long as we're cognizant of different gender stereotypes about how people are supposed to heal and are supposed to deal with things, we're able to confront that and to let people know that their feelings . . . they're just basically the same as every other human's."

"The differences are really on a social level, not a personal level. Again, we need to look at the sociology of why the perception of difference happens, not the individual psychology."

"My personal belief is socialization plays a huge, huge piece in how the genders are supported in accessing help and support, and the role gender plays in that. . . . But I've never witnessed much difference between the genders [around trauma; the reactions are] so very human."

"Certainly people experience trauma differently, and their identity can impact how they experience trauma. We all experience our trauma through the lens of who we are, our multiple identities. It's informed by our race, our ability, our class, our gender. Absolutely. . . . But I think [the idea that men and women need to be in separate groups] is heartbreaking, because it also seems just, again, so limiting and distancing from each other. . . . Part of what groups provide is that space where you can feel that overlap and feel, in some small way, less alone in a very isolating experience."

"There are so many different ways to experience manhood and womanhood. Even cross-culturally, the way that white men experience trauma healing is going to be totally different from the way that Asian-Pacific Islander men experience trauma healing. And there are so many other identities . . . the way that older men experience trauma healing [is different] compared to younger men. Yeah, there will be differences. But to assume that all of those differences are rooted in gender identity, I think is a little bit silly. It's master status thinking:<sup>1</sup> everything related to that person's trauma recovery is somehow tied into their gender."

"There will be moments where you do feel that loneliness more than you feel togetherness . . . I don't think we can completely protect from that. . . . But there's enough good to make it worth it, I think."

1 To learn more about the master status concept, see FORGE's tip sheet on the topic: "Master Status: Victim Service Providers' Fact Sheet #3" (2012), available at <https://forge-forward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FAQ-07-2012-master-status.pdf>

“Certainly people experience trauma differently, and their identity can impact how they experience trauma. . . . We all experience our trauma through the lens of who we are, our multiple identities. It’s informed by our race, our ability, our class, our gender. Absolutely. There are going to be differences. There’s going to be a multitude of differences in how we experience our trauma. And there are some points of connection, some points of overlap. Part of what groups provide is that space where we can feel that overlap and feel, in some small way, less alone in a very isolating experience. . . . Why would we want to limit ourselves from any possibilities of overlap with other survivors? If you’re saying such-and-such group doesn’t understand my experience, then you’re limiting things before you’ve ever opened up. You’re excluding the possibility that there could be some overlap. And it’s been my lived experience that there can be overlap in unexpected places across unexpected identity lines, and those moments can be powerfully healing—to see that overlap, feel that overlap, with someone who is different from you, so you can feel a lot less alone. So wouldn’t we want that? Wouldn’t we want more of those opportunities?”

“Some of the issues for the men were very different because sexual assault challenged their concept of their masculinity, which is not an issue that comes up for women after an assault (as much). The issues of power and autonomy were the same.”

“A person might say, “I had a little bit of a trigger around this, or I noticed that I’m reacting to this other group member with a little bit of internal hostility. I want to talk through that a little bit.”

“We’ve definitely had people triggered in group. In a support group, there’s really not a better place to have that experience, because there’s immediate support. We’ve done grounding stuff and then the group has come together to provide a lot of support to that specific person.”

"Someone might be looking at a flashback as something negative. We're going to share with them that, actually, having a flashback means that they are feeling safer and that their mind is releasing that because they feel they have support and they're safer."

"Triggers are so very unique to every individual. It can be as simple as the way that glass of water is sitting on the table. Right? If that is the trigger for you, then there it is. And if it's related somehow to your assault, then there it is. And we're not going to keep glasses of water out of our living room."

"People are triggered by a lot of things. They're triggered by cologne, they're triggered by an accent, they're triggered by a hijab. . . . If we give in to the trigger and treat it as though it's real without ever addressing it, we kind of reinforce that that's right: "Because this person was X gender, that's the reason that you were unsafe around them, because their gender is unsafe." And I think that's something we really need to be careful of. We do need to respect somebody's level of safety and work with any trigger in a way that's sensitive and supportive . . . but we aren't going to reinforce the idea that gender is any more of a real basis for that trigger than any of the other things."

"Our philosophy is that there are so many layers of ways that people can be impacted by trauma, and gender dynamics can be a piece of that, that there is this common thread of trauma. Sometimes healing can actually come in unexpected ways. While someone may get triggered [by another member's gender], if they have support from the facilitators as well as the group members and they work through that, it can be a very beautiful experience."



# 07

## Handling conflict through embracing difference

Experienced support group facilitators know that conflict happens. This is true in any support group, including gender-integrated groups. Facilitators shared with FORGE a variety of techniques to prevent conflict as well as ways to respond when it happens.

### Framing as a prevention technique

Because facilitators have so much power to set the tone in their groups, strategically repeating key ideas can be a useful tool for preventing conflicts that might otherwise happen. Some of the framing techniques that facilitators shared include:

- Naming diversity and its importance to the group.
- Setting group agreements around respect and discussing what respect looks like to group members.
- Framing issues as spectrums rather than either/or categories. For example, rather than saying something is always abuse and something else is never abuse, the group discusses a spectrum of harmful or unsafe behaviors.

- Using an anti-oppression lens. This includes naming oppression and socialization, being aware of group members' intersecting identities and experiences, and creating space to talk about privilege and marginalization.

Another normalizing technique was discussed by a facilitator who teaches their support group members about “how trauma can be networked” and how this relates to an anti-oppression lens:

**“Folks have reported having been in other survivor spaces where they would be the only person of color in the space or the only person with a disability. There they didn’t really feel like they could talk about that aspect of their identity. But in my group, we talked about how trauma can be networked, so they could. When you experience racism or ableism, the things that happen physiologically in your body can also trigger other trauma experiences that, on a logical level, may feel unrelated. So there’s validation in the group for how systems of oppression are connected and how oppression relates to sexual trauma. . . . I think that’s part of what folks have reported as being unique to this space—they feel like they can talk about disability and navigating medical health care systems and getting frustrated, and the group sees that as relevant.”**

Framing or tone-setting does not have to be explicit. Facilitators shared examples of bringing in art, poetry, or other works from around the world as a way to value a range of cultures. One facilitator specifically focused on politically subversive artists to

use as examples: *“Here are people who are challenging the system....”*

Another type of framing happens when facilitators teach group members how to learn about differences. Facilitators discussed how people learn, their comfort zones, and how people react to new information or situations. In addition, facilitators shared information on how trauma can impact the brain and our connections with other people. Through discussions that normalized learning new information, finding resources, and exploring discomfort, facilitators were able to support groups in building connections with each other and in addressing topics that may be new to some members—such as those related to gender or race.

### Coping with conflict

Many of the strategies that facilitators use to address other types of conflicts in support groups can be applied to gender-related conflicts. Gender conflicts may look like derogatory comments, hurtful questions, using the wrong language, or tension or conflict between participants related to gendered beliefs (for example, one person thinking another person shouldn’t express their emotions a certain way or that the violence they experienced wasn’t “that bad.”)

When addressing hurtful comments, particularly seemingly unintentional ones, facilitators often try to balance a quick response that doesn’t feel punishing. This can be done by:

- Addressing the issue with the group as a whole

- Providing a moment of education
- Sharing how the facilitator learned about the issue
- Asking a question to encourage more thinking about a topic
- Inviting other group members to share opinions

Facilitators shared that stereotypes and misinformation come up frequently in groups because of how pervasive it is in society. When facilitators encouraged ongoing dialogue about where group members were learning information, how misinformation is spread, and how stereotypes show up in pop culture, groups are often able to apply those discussions when a stereotype comes up in a different setting. Facilitators shared strategies of asking people where they had learned specific information, sharing correct information, and encouraging the whole group to discuss how to root out myths. This was something facilitators discussed needing to do whether a group was gender-integrated or not.

Another strategy was discussing how stereotypes and misinformation impacted other people. By learning how a statement can be hurtful, group members were able to gain a deeper understanding of the problems with stereotypes. Sometimes this work was done by group members and sometimes by the facilitator.

### Addressing conflicts as the facilitator

A common way that stereotypes and conflicts are addressed in support groups is that the facilitator tackles the issue head-on. A few facilitators provided examples of what they say in these situations:

- “I respect that there’s something coming up for you that would make you say that or make you feel that or think that. But let’s look at this so that we can model being respectful while disagreeing.”
- “I hear some things coming up that could be upsetting, so I want to stop you there. How can you make a statement about how you feel without putting somebody else down or making somebody else feel like they’re an ‘other’?”
- “I know you might feel like that, but let’s not generalize.”

### Supporting group members to address conflicts

Sometimes members themselves will address a problematic statement. Facilitators can help to hold a space for group members to speak with and to each other and share conflicting opinions. This can be a useful tool because it supports the connection and communication between group members, a critical part of the healing work of groups. Facilitators should be thoughtful and not single out or require a specific group member to always respond. For example, if a group has just one woman in it, it should not be her responsibility alone to counter any misinformation about women.

One facilitator shared:

**“If they started to generalize about men and say, ‘All men are this way’ or ‘All men do this,’ I know some of the other group members will say, ‘Well, no, because my best friend is a guy and he’s not like that.’ So I don’t always have to jump in.”**

### Offering counter-examples

One of the benefits of gender-integrated groups is that they can make it easier to counter stereotypes about sexual assault, trans/nonbinary people, men, and women. The facilitators and group members provide counter-examples to stereotypes through their lives and stories. For example, one facilitator shared that participants found the way the male facilitator modeled healthy communication was useful in changing their assumptions that all men were abusive. Myths about who experienced abuse were easily countered just by the existence of the diversity of group members.

**“The biggest thing I think has come up is the myth that all victims are women, or female-identified, and all perpetrators are male-identified or men. We would see that come up in a variety of ways. Everything from people sharing their stories and not ever even thinking that they could have been victimized because they were male or because their perpetrator was not male, through just the micro-aggressive language. People kind of perpetuating those thoughts, even if it’s maybe not necessarily what they**

**were intending to convey. It was actually always a really good conversation that would stem from that, particularly with the teens. They would catch themselves doing it and they would talk about why they were talking in certain ways or why they thought that. They were able to process those stereotypes and maybe why those are harmful and why they exist as part of their group a little bit more and probably better than the adults could.”**

If myths came up in a harmful way, group members and facilitators can counter them. Facilitators reported that being able to process stereotypes and where they come from in groups was helpful to unlearning them. Facilitators also shared anonymous stories of other survivors.

### Modeling and coaching

Frequently, group members will have their first experiences with trans or nonbinary people in a gender-integrated support group. Facilitators may take a variety of approaches to what comes up when this is the case. Underpinning all of the approaches, however, is the practice of assuming goodwill when other group members may have questions or uncertainty.

Facilitators shared stories of helping group members ask questions in respectful ways, move through discomfort with their own unfamiliarity, and help other people embrace uncertainty.



Facilitators can help by providing concrete suggestions when challenges arise:

**“We had an individual in the group that did not identify with any specific gender, did not want gendered language used. And we had somebody in the group that made a comment that was offensive because they did not know how to refer to that individual . . . they said something quite insensitive, like, ‘Well, he/she....’ So I said, ‘Okay, I’m going to stop you right there. We all know each others’ name in the group. We can refer to one another by their name. We don’t need to try to figure anything out. If someone introduces themselves as, let’s say, Jenna, then we’re going to call that person Jenna, and that’s all that needs to happen.”**

Facilitators can model respectful language and help to correct language—such as misgendering or other harmful words.

### **Educating group members**

Many facilitators felt that part of their role was to educate group members about different experiences and identities. One put it this way:

**“Sometimes [when something upsetting was said], people would feel intimidated, and they wouldn’t say anything. That’s where I think we as facilitators would take it upon ourselves to say, ‘Here’s some information about what you just said.’ Depending on the situation, sometimes that would be done in the group room, in the context so everybody could hear and know it was being addressed. Sometimes, if it was more appropriate, we might talk to the client outside of the group so it wasn’t shaming or embarrassing.”**

### **Other techniques**

Experienced facilitators draw from a wide range of options when conflict and difference surface in their groups. These include:

- Redirection
- Taking breaks
- Providing time and space to think about an issue before coming back to it
- Recognizing what problems may be bigger than the group and not solvable

### What facilitators said: challenging stereotypes

"She had a significant abuse history. She reported that it was nice to see men in a vulnerable setting, because she'd never experienced that; she'd never experienced being safe with a man. She was very open about whatever struggle she was going through. I think that that was a surprise to her: that she would feel that she could open up, that she could feel safe, in a setting that was half men and half women."

"The things that really, I think, create the conditions for openness is we talk about having an anti-oppression framework for group, and that there are identities that hold more privilege and other identities that don't. They're more targets. This is a space to challenge those privileges when they come up. And that's okay. The facilitators are there to support those conversations. It's a skill to have healthy conflict, and so we talk about how that is welcome, that the group is a place to safely and respectfully be challenged. It's a learning opportunity while practicing with new skills."

"All-gender groups are much more effective in getting past gender-based stereotypes about power and control to looking at issues of consent and personal power. We discussed gender stereotypes regularly, but in a way that examined them rather than reinforcing them as much. For example, in single-sex groups it was often much more work for the facilitator to challenge "men are..." or "women are..." statements. In mixed-gender groups, those challenges came from the participants more regularly. In single-gender groups, the discussion of patriarchy often ended as "men win, women lose," but with mixed genders there was a much richer discussion of "traditional masculinity does not allow a man to be a full person either" and "even if we expand the definition of the traditional boxes, we are still boxing people in." By challenging the gender binary, we not only empower non-gender-conforming people, we more fully empower gender-conforming people to have a broader level of acceptance too."

“Say someone brings up physical attributes about women like, “Women want to look good,” or “Women want to do this,” or “Women love their hair.” Some of these very stereotypical things would absolutely be challenged when we had women in the group who identified as women but who didn’t fit that stereotype, or people who the world identified as women but who didn’t identify that way themselves. They were very vocal and said things like, “Well, wait a minute! Where does that put me? Maybe I love my hair, but I want a fade and a buzz cut rather than long curls.” So it just sort of widens the conversation that people had.”



Photo by Mx. Bex

# 08 In summation

This Guide is so packed with ideas it is possible to begin feeling overwhelmed. To help you remember what is most important, we offer some last words directly from the individuals who have experience in facilitating gender-integrated support groups:

**“The healing process needs to recognize our equalities, not our differences.”**



**“We just have to walk our talk. I would encourage people to be brave and reach out for support. Call people who are already doing it. . . . I’ll remind you that the sky won’t fall. . . . If we can lead confidently, I think our clients will just feel like, ‘oh, this is how we heal. This is what we do.’”**



**“My only advice is just get on board, people. It’s so much easier!”**



**“More spaces need to exist for people to access feeling safe while also getting support.”**

“We have different stories, but we have a similar goal, and that’s healing. We’re all here to help encourage each other and help each other walk through this.”

# Appendix A: role plays



## Role-play scenarios and worksheet

In FORGE's experience, the feeling behind most facilitators' negative responses to the idea of gender-integrated groups is quite simple: fear. Fear that survivors might be triggered or harmed; fear that group members might insult or upset one another; fear that the facilitator might not know how to handle a conflict; fear of doing something one has never done before—all of these fears and many more were expressed by the facilitators who participated in FORGE's online survey.

Most of these fears can be vanquished with a little experience, which is what this guide is designed to share with readers. But nothing beats personal experience! With that in mind, FORGE offers the following exercise. New facilitators or facilitators who are new to gender-integrated groups are invited to use the mini-role-play scenarios to identify and analyze possible responses to conflicts that might come up around gender, gender identity, sex, and sexual orientation. Ideally, facilitators should role-play the scenarios with work colleagues, to ensure that multiple perspectives are considered and to raise the whole

staff's confidence that they know how to effectively and sensitively deal with some of the situations included in this tool.

When FORGE has used this exercise in workshops, we place participants into small groups and give each group one scenario. They then use the accompanying worksheet to brainstorm possible responses and identify pros and cons for each response. The small groups are then invited to role-play at least one of the responses, welcoming feedback from other workshop attendees witnessing the role-play.

Feel free to follow that model or design a different way to use these materials. We encourage you to challenge yourself to choose scenarios that feel difficult: those are the ones that will likely benefit you and your clients the most. Coming up with multiple possible responses and looking at the pros and cons of each will help you practice ways to respond that meet the needs of both group members and you, and that fit the values you and your agency espouse.

## Role-play scenarios

1. A female participant says to a male participant: “I just can’t understand what happened to you. Why couldn’t you have fought off your attacker?”
2. A female participant says to a male participant: “It’s just different for us. You can go anywhere you want to go. We women have to always be afraid and limit where we go.”
3. A cisgender (non-transgender) participant says to a trans participant: “Is being sexually assaulted the reason trans people are trans?”
4. Trans participant says to cisgender (non-transgender) participant: “You wouldn’t understand. No one who isn’t trans could ever understand.”
5. A non-LGBT participant says to an LGBT participant: “We don’t have people like you in my religion. You’re against God’s will.”
6. A non-LGBT participant says to a man assaulted by his gay partner: “So did he give you AIDS?”
7. One participant says to another, “I just don’t understand how a woman could sexually assault someone. Could you explain more about what happened?”
8. One participant says about a nonbinary participant: “I disagree with what he/she/it just said.”
9. One participant asks a nonbinary participant: “Do you think being a he-she is why you were assaulted?”
10. One participant to another: “We all know women have less privilege than men.”
11. Trans woman of color to Black cisgender (non-transgender) man: “Trans women of color are being killed all the time—higher than any other group—what do you know about being afraid of walking down the street?”

12. A sole man in a group of women: "It's ok, I don't need to share. It's important to make room for women—men take up too much space already."
13. Co-facilitator to the full group: "We welcome all people in our group, including transgender people like Janice."
14. One participant to a trans man: "How would you know anything about the fear of getting pregnant?"
15. One participant to another: "We've been vulnerable and sharing every week for two months. You deceived us. You should have told everyone the first session."
16. Woman to man: "Does this mean you're gay?"
17. Trans person to group: "I have every right to be angry anytime and anywhere I want. I have been discriminated against my whole life."
18. Participant to trans woman: "If you have a penis there is no way I can call you 'she.' Men are men. Women are women. It's just basic biology."
19. Woman to a man: "I thought men always wanted sex."
20. One person to a straight cisgender (non-trans) man: "Sexual assault is caused by oppression. How can you, as a straight man, claim you were sexually assaulted or that you feel oppressed?"
21. Trans person to nonbinary person: "I suffered a lifetime for an identity you view as irrelevant."
22. Nonbinary person to other participant: "Why does it bother you so much if people say you're not 'man enough' or 'woman enough'? Why are those roles so important to your identity?"



## Small group roleplays

**Directions:**

- 1. Form groups of 4-5
- 2. Choose a scenario
- 3. Brainstorm at least 5 possible responses (could be by facilitator or someone else)
- 4. Identify pros/cons of each response
- 5. Choose and practice (role-play) one response (can be elaborate or simple)
- 6. If desired, modify and practice again

**Scenario:**

---

POSSIBLE RESPONSE	RESPONSE PROS	RESPONSE CONS
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

# Appendix B: about this project

# B

## About this project and its respondents

Between September and November 2016, FORGE invited facilitators of sexual assault support groups to take a short online survey that asked whether they had facilitated gender-integrated groups and, if not, what concerns kept them from hosting such groups (see [Appendix D](#) for survey instrument). Respondents were also asked if they would be willing to be interviewed for the purposes of creating this Guide.

Ninety-seven facilitators completed the online survey. Most had not facilitated such groups. FORGE followed up with all respondents who indicated they had facilitated gender-integrated groups and were willing to be interviewed. A total of 18 were interviewed between November 2016 and January 2017 by Dr. Brice Smith, who has a rich background in oral history research. He asked some standard questions of all the interviewees, augmented with some unique follow-up questions based on that individual's survey responses. All interviews were taped and professionally transcribed.

The project attracted a far more diverse selection of support group types than FORGE expected. In addition to traditional gender-integrated sexual assault support groups, we also interviewed facilitators of groups that combined intimate partner violence and sexual assault survivors, groups for children, groups for youth, groups for incarcerated youth, groups for LGBTQ individuals, groups for college students, groups for parents of children who have been sexually assaulted, and groups for survivors and their partners. There were rural groups as well as groups in more populated areas.

The length of time the groups our interviewees facilitated varied from weekly for 6 weeks to once per month for 6 months to "people can enroll and stay in it forever." Most seemed to run from 8 to 12 weeks. Some groups ran with just two survivors, while the largest hosted between 10 and 12 survivors. "Optimal" numbers were named as a group of five to eight members.

# Appendix C: survey instrument

## Survey of facilitators of support groups for sexual assault survivors

### About this survey

With support from Raliance, FORGE—a national training and technical assistance provider focusing on the intersections of transgender populations and victimization—is conducting a survey of facilitators who host support groups for sexual assault survivors.

We are seeking responses from a wide range of agencies who provide support group services for sexual assault survivors. The purpose of this assessment is to explore how support groups are serving the diverse populations of survivors who are seeking services, including survivors who are transgender, gender non-conforming, nonbinary, or male (non-transgender).

This survey is the first component of many steps to help determine the challenges and best practices of creating gender-inclusive support groups for sexual assault survivors. The end products of this process will include an extensive guide and accompanying webinar for support group staff on how to create and facilitate gender-inclusive support groups for survivors.

We welcome multiple responses from individual agencies, recognizing that individuals may have unique perspectives,

roles and knowledge. We also encourage you to forward this survey to other professionals or agencies who provide support groups for sexual assault survivors.

All data analyses and results will be reported in the aggregate, and will not disclose any individual or agency's name, or denote any identifying information about an individual or agency respondent. Results will highlight trends, needs, recommendations, and directions for further examination.

### Survey deadline

The survey will close on November 1, 2016.

### About FORGE

FORGE is a national transgender anti-violence organization, founded in 1994. Since 2009, we have been federally funded to provide direct services to transgender, gender non-conforming and gender nonbinary survivors of sexual assault.

Since 2011, FORGE has served as the only transgender-focused organization federally funded to provide training and technical assistance to providers across the country who work with transgender survivors of sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and stalking. Our role as a technical assistance provider has allowed us to directly see key continued and emerging challenges many agencies are experiencing in serving sexual assault survivors of all genders.

We have a long history of crafting dynamic in-person, remote-access, and print-based training materials in ways that are highly accessible to many types of victim service providers, as well as to many learning levels and styles.

Thank you for participating in this survey!  
Loree Cook-Daniels, Policy and Program Director and  
michael munson, Executive Director

### For more information.

Please contact FORGE with any questions or comments at:

FORGE

PO Box 1272

Milwaukee, WI 53201

414-559-2123

Email: <http://forge-forward.org/about/contact-us/>

Website: [www.forge-forward.org](http://www.forge-forward.org)

*This survey was supported by a grant from Raliance, a collaborative initiative to end sexual violence in one generation, made possible through a commitment from the National Football League (NFL). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the NFL.*

1. Have you ever facilitated one or more support groups for survivors of sexual assault?

Yes

No

Other (please specify)

---

2. What types of support groups for sexual assault survivors have you facilitated (related to gender)? (check all that apply)

All genders welcome

Women only

Men only

Transgender only

Other (please specify)

---

3. Mark the gender of survivors who have been in any of the groups you have facilitated. (check all that apply)
- Women (non-transgender)
  - Women (transgender)
  - Men (non-transgender)
  - Men (transgender)
  - Gender non-conforming/nonbinary
  - Other (please describe)
- 
4. If you have not offered support groups for sexual assault survivors that include **MEN** (transgender or non-transgender), what concerns or barriers do you believe stops you?
5. If you have not offered support groups for sexual assault survivors that include **TRANSGENDER/GENDER NON-CONFORMING/NONBINARY SURVIVORS**, what concerns or barriers do you believe stops you?
6. If you have facilitated **ALL-GENDER** support groups for sexual assault survivors, what challenges, if any, have you had related to the group's gender make-up?
7. If you have facilitated **ALL-GENDER** support groups for sexual assault survivors, what successes, if any, have you had related to the group's gender make-up?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share?

## Would you like to be interviewed?

FORGE staff will be interviewing people who have facilitated all-gender support groups for sexual assault survivors. If you are interested in participating and sharing your experiences, please add your contact information below.

9. Would you be willing to be interviewed about your experiences as a sexual assault support group facilitator?

- Yes  
 No  
 Maybe, I'd like to learn more

## 10. Contact Information

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Agency/Organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
 State/Province

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number

11. Best time to reach you

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Best method to reach you

\_\_\_\_\_

## Thank you!

Thank you for your participation! Your responses are valuable in creating a new guide for support group facilitators of sexual assault survivors, which will be published in Spring 2017. If you would like to be notified of its release (and the accompanying webinar), please sign up for our low-volume mailing list at: <http://forge-forward.org/about/subscribe/>

If you have questions or comments, please reach out to us at <http://forge-forward.org/about/contact-us/> or by calling 414.559.2123.

# Appendix D: interview questions



1. How often do gendered myths and stereotypes come up within the all-gender groups you've run? How have you handled them? Did you feel things got resolved, or did problems or differences remain?
2. What kind of techniques have you used to connect group members with each other? Were some techniques more successful or unsuccessful than others?
3. One of the most common barriers support group facilitators reported encountering was that few, if any, men and/or trans people asked to be in a support group. What kinds of outreach have you found is effective in reaching men/trans/nonbinary victims?
4. What techniques have you used to make your group feel safe for all genders and identities?
5. Some facilitators believe that gender-inclusive SA groups aren't possible because members would be triggered in a group with someone of the same gender as their perpetrator. Have you had survivors refuse to be in your group for this reason? What other reasons have survivors given for NOT wanting to be in a gender-inclusive group?
6. What kind of issues have come up in your group(s) related to having multiple gender identities present? How were these incident/s resolved? In retrospect, could anything have been done differently to head off the problem?
7. Do you screen participants beforehand? If so, what kind of questions do you ask specifically related to the group being all-gender?
8. Can you talk a little about the benefits you have seen coming from all-gender support groups?

9. In this next question, I'm going to list some common barriers or challenges support group facilitators told us kept them from sponsoring all-gender groups. Can you tell me what your experience has been related to these barriers?
- To be successful, all-gender groups need male/female co-facilitators.
  - To be successful, facilitators need specific cultural competency training (presumably about male and/or trans victims).
  - Men and women aren't comfortable sharing feelings or being vulnerable in mixed-gender groups.
  - Men and women experience trauma and healing differently, so they should be in different groups.
  - Men are only comfortable in mixed-gender groups if they are not the only man present.
10. As you know, the purpose of this project is to create a guide that will encourage and support more all-gender SA support groups. Given that goal, is there anything else you'd like to make sure we know? Any advice you have for others?



# Appendix E: activities and topics for groups

There have to be limits to any research effort, and one of this project's limitations is that we focused far more on the impact of having multiple gender identities and experiences present in a sexual assault support group than we did on what each group covered from meeting to meeting. Many support group curricula and guides exist (check out resources throughout this document and in [Appendix F](#)), and they can be invaluable to new facilitators.

Although FORGE did not explicitly focus on identifying what sort of activities experienced facilitators found most effective in gender-integrated groups, many of the people we interviewed mentioned activities, topics, and discussion strategies worth sharing in this Guide. We offer this quick summary in the hope that it will spark some new ideas for readers to pursue elsewhere.

## Hands-on activities

Multiple interviewees noted in passing that they promote hands-on activities during group time. One puts out paper and crayons, "because some people like to do visual stuff while they're listening and participating." Others have built whole support group series around activities. One explained:

**"Activity-based groups really do make it more general so everybody gets something out of it. Also, you get fewer people falling into their own stuff."**

One facilitator has overseen several types of projects:

**"Our conversations would often be paired with some kind of hands-on activity."**

**In one group while we were talking we did some beading and built this kind of shiny sun catcher thing that just hung in the window of the room where we met. We worked on pieces of that together throughout what I think was a 12-week session. That was one of our longer ones."**

Another facilitator was in the midst of changing group formats to make things more comfortable for participants:

**"We're transitioning into an art group format because we found out that the talk group format we were doing was a little bit off-putting or scary to anybody new coming into it."**

## Art, poetry, and quotations

Several facilitators regularly bring in art or poetry to share with their support group members. One said their group found art and poetry “really helpful,” while another endorsed art because “it seems to be a good method of expression.” Several facilitators emphasized taking care to make sure that what is brought in is wide-ranging and inclusive:

**“[For me], June Jordan’s work has been so helpful to my healing. That’s just one example. I know there are other artists and poets doing amazing work. . . . Some groups bring in stuff that’s only written by people of particular identities. I think having art and poetry from queer and trans folks of color would be really beautiful. . . . It would be really cool to have representation in those ways.”**



**“When we did our art groups we would make sure to use art from a lot of different regions of the world.”**

One facilitator described how they incorporated quotes into their support group:

**“Sometimes I’ll get a quote or something for them. We’ll read it out loud, and I’ll have it printed off and handed out. . . . Recently I used one that was basically about changing your thinking, like a ‘stop beating yourself up’ kind of thing. Then we just had silence for a while. Usually somebody jumps in and just starts**

**talking about how it made them feel, or what it made them think of, or how that connected to something that they’d been thinking about. I try to give a lot of silence because a lot of my participants need to know that it’s okay for them to speak, but they also need the time to think.”**

## Resource packets

Several facilitators mentioned giving their group members packets of resources. One focuses on local resources, including a list of all the local LGBTQ-friendly therapists they had interviewed and vetted. This packet also includes the local hotline for emergency access to advocates, along with some grounding techniques. Another group distributes a similar resource folder that included “LGBTQ-specific resources as well as male survivors resources,” since those are not commonly available or easy for people to find.

A well-established program offers a whole “toolkit” they give to group members:

**“Inside that toolkit are things that have been developed. Inner child stuff, talk about how to reverse cutting and burning . . . a whole structure. A scream box you can make. You can scream into that tube at the top of your lungs, and all people hear on the outside is a hum.”**

This facilitator noted that they had found the scream box was particularly helpful to male survivors who “oftentimes have to have action to process their feelings.”

## Mindfulness

One group opens not with a check-in, but with a mindfulness practice:

**“I start with a mindfulness activity, whether it’s guided imagery or a deep breathing kind of exercise. We do that for maybe the first couple of minutes, just to get people present and settled down.”**

Another facilitator teaches mindfulness throughout:

**“I really work at developing an emotional vocabulary. Lots of SA survivors, myself included at times, we’re just numbed out. Like, ‘I don’t know how I feel.’ Like, ‘Am I in a body? I don’t know.’ Like, ‘My head is full, but I don’t even know if I can feel my body.’ We do mindfulness stuff in my groups. I have a Tibetan singing bowl. We talk about being still. Or I say, ‘Mindfulness is paying attention on purpose. Let’s just commit to paying attention on purpose for 60 minutes together.’”**

## Affirmations

One group engages in an affirmations activity:

**“[Each participant] would get a card for each [other group member]. Every person in the group would write a sentence or a memory of that person; what they really appreciated about them from the group. Then they all got to read their cards and share back and forth how it made them feel. That was really powerful. We saw people that, coming into the group, we thought, ‘Oh, how are we ever going to find common ground?’ really appreciate each other. It felt pretty magical.”**

## Working in pairs

Two facilitators mentioned having their support group members frequently work in pairs:

**“Usually we will give a conversation prompt. Then they’ll work in pairs and talk about whatever that prompt is. Then we will share in a larger group. What insights do they have? What was that like to talk about those things with another person? We do that because a lot of times people say they don’t have anyone in their lives to talk with.”**



**“We did a lot of activities that required you to find a partner. That allowed them to get to know each other and create a bond.”**

## Gallery walk

One facilitator does an activity they call a “gallery walk”: They tape up flipcharts or large sheets of paper on the walls or set out papers around the room, and each paper has a prompt on it. Then, group members walk around the room in silence and share their thoughts on each paper.

## Circle up

One interviewee shared that they always have a ball of yarn with them so they can offer the following activity:

“One of my favorite activities is to circle up. I’ll start with one end of it, and I’ll hold my piece and then toss the rest of the string to someone else, like across the circle. Then they’ll hold their piece and toss the ball to someone else.

So as everyone gets to touch it, we create a web in the middle. It’s a great metaphor for a million things. We could talk about all the places where the yarn intersects: intersectionality. Or talk about community: I’ll move my little piece of

the web, and the whole thing moves. I’ll say, ‘Look, when I’m upset over here, is it affecting everybody? Yeah, kind of. If one person in your family has a drug addiction, does it affect everybody? Yeah, it kind of does. When one person is angry and raging around the house, does it affect everyone? Yeah, it really does.’ You can use it as a metaphor for support. We’ve tossed a paper plate on top. ‘Will it hold up a paper plate? Yeah, it’ll hold a paper plate. But will it hold something smaller and heavier? Oh, no. That fell through the cracks. Who are the people that fall through the cracks of our support system?’ You can use it to talk about a whole lot of things.”

# Appendix F: continuing education resources

FORGE is available to provide trainings for organizations that are working to create gender-integrated services for sexual assault survivors. We have also compiled many resources that have proved helpful to providers looking to increase their staff's cultural competency.

Since 2009, FORGE has been steadily building an online resource center for service providers working with trans and

nonbinary victims of crime. At press time, we have more than 80 hours of training available for free on our website ([www.forge-forward.org](http://www.forge-forward.org)), along with more than 60 publications.

To learn more about training and technical assistance that FORGE can provide, visit <https://forge-forward.org/training/> to view some options for support.

---

## Transgender/nonbinary survivors of sexual assault

### Trans 101

- Self-Assessment Tool: "Is Your Agency Ready to Serve Transgender and Nonbinary Clients?" (assessment tool) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/self-assessment-tool/>
- FAQ: Pronouns and Trans Individuals (fact sheet) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/faq-pronouns/>
- Becoming a Trans-Welcoming Agency in 10 Easy (and Free!) Steps: What Every Agency Can Do (webinar) <https://youtu.be/z4UOKIW--fM>
- Dismantling the Gates: Informed Consent Models of Care. (webinar) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b0Bu9aNt\\_w&t=393s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b0Bu9aNt_w&t=393s)
- Trans-Specific Barriers to Accessing Health Care (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/healthcare-barriers/>
- Supporting Trans Mental Health: Uncovering Barriers and Building Solutions. (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/supporting-trans-mental-health-uncovering-barriers-and-building-solutions/>

## Trans-focused sexual assault and trauma-focused resources

### Basics

- Standard and Trans-specific ACEs: Shifting the Course of Trauma to Create Healthier Trans Adults. (webinar) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOcHK-Fi7hM>
- Part of the Solution: Gender-Integrated Sexual Assault Support Groups. (webinar) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-0QDKDwvOo>
- Serving Trans Survivors: A 101 for Advocates. (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/webinar-101-for-sa-advocates-x2/>
- Becoming a Trans-Welcoming Agency in 10 Easy (and Free!) Steps: What Every Agency Can Do. (webinar) <https://youtu.be/z4UOKIW--fM>
- Safety Planning: A Guide for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Individuals who are experiencing intimate partner violence. (guide) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/safety-planning-tool/>
- Know and Tell Why. (tip sheet) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/know-and-tell-why/>
- Intro to mental health support for trans/nonbinary survivors: a webinar for advocates. (webinar) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC9y7Z75-oo&t=4111s>
- Trans-Specific Power and Control Tactics. (tipsheet) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/power-and-control-tactics/>

### Intermediate

- Trans/Nonbinary Individuals and Intimate Partner Violence: A brief overview. (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/trans-non-binary-individuals-and-intimate-partner-violence-a-brief-overview/> (2020)
- Transgender survivors: A roadmap through the triple pandemic to improved, culturally-responsive services. (Jewish Women International: National Alliance to End Domestic Abuse) (webinar) <https://www.jwi.org/calendar/transgender-survivor-webinar>
- Person-Centered, Trauma-informed Care of Transgender Older Adults (SAGE: National Resource Center on LGBTQ+ Aging) (Guide) <https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resource.cfm?r=2142>
- Violence and Trauma in the Lives of Transgender Older Adults (webinar): <https://forge-forward.org/resource/trauma-and-aging/>

- Beliefs, Bias, and Bumpers: Implicit and Explicit Roadblocks to Trans and LGBTQ+ Welcoming Services. (webinar) <https://youtu.be/IVgo08A68oc>

### A little more advanced

- Medical and Forensic Considerations in Caring for Transgender Sexual Assault Survivors (webinar): <http://forge-forward.org/event/forensic-exams>
- Care, Compassion, and Creativity: Trans Survivors and Forensic Exams (webinar) <https://youtu.be/ZyGuDBxcgnU>
- How Can We Do This Better? Caring for Transgender Survivors. (EVAWI) (webinar) <https://evawintl.org/courses/how-can-we-do-this-better-caring-for-transgender-survivors/>

### Intersectional issues

#### Hate-violence & current cultural issues

- State-Sanctioned Hate: The Impacts of the “Culture Wars” on Trans Lives. (webinar) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsKvWkmc0S8>
- Responses to (anti-trans) Hate. (toolkit) <https://forge-forward.org/responses-to-hate/>
- Weathering the Storm: Safety Planning for Natural Disasters with Trans/Nonbinary Survivors. (webinar) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGeJzv4nUPI&t=537s>

#### Youth

- Mandatory Support: Harm Reduction for Mandatory Reporting. (webinar) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyYs2Pn-5JY&t=454s>
- Stopping It Where it Starts: Disrupting the Trans/Nonbinary Polyvictimization Pathway in Childhood (webinar) <https://youtu.be/20WLNAXpnNI>
- Trans Youth Sexual Assault Survivors: Skills for Advocates (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/trans-youth-sexual-assault-survivors-skills-for-advocates-wcsap/>

#### Stalking and harassment

- Supporting LGBTQ+ Stalking Victims: A Guide for Victim Advocates. (guide) (with SPARC, the Stalking Prevention, Awareness, and Resource Center) <https://www.stalkingawareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SPARC-Supporting-LGBTQ-Stalking-Victims.pdf>

- Supporting LGBTQ+ Stalking Victims. (webinar) (with SPARC, the Stalking Prevention, Awareness, and Resource Center) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVzADclLLMI&feature=youtu.be>
- Workplace Harassment & Trans/Nonbinary Employees: Resources. (Tipsheets) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/workplace-harassment-trans-non-binary-employees-resources/>
- Trans and Nonbinary Employees and Workplace Harassment: Legal Rights and Options. (webinar) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4UruLiAsDo&t=3354s>

### Other intersectional topics

- Bathrooms, Bullies, and Bystanders: Supporting Transgender Survivors (webinar) <https://youtu.be/fUh32du8-rA>
- Transgender Sexuality and Trauma (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/transgender-sexuality-and-trauma/>
- Working With Rural Trans Survivors (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/rural-survivors/>
- Disability and Transgender Survivors (webinar) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/vera-disability-and-transgender-survivors-webinar/>

### Videos, stories, and podcasts

- Voices of Healing: Trans & Nonbinary Survivors SPEAK OUT. (FORGE) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpqnT14FZtU&t=203s>
- Texas Men's Story Project: From Trauma to Triumph (with Rocky Lane) (Texas Association Against Sexual Assault) <https://youtu.be/lTxdgElfvxk?si=7SHFRttoi4B6eZnW>
- How Sexual Assault Impacts Transgender Men - Part 1. (NSVRC – National Sexual Violence Resource Center) <https://www.nsvrc.org/resource/2505/working-male-survivors-how-sexual-assault-impacts-transgender-men-part-1>
- How Sexual Assault Impacts Transgender Men - Part 2 (NSVRC – National Sexual Violence Resource Center) <https://www.nsvrc.org/resource/2505/working-male-survivors-how-sexual-assault-impacts-transgender-men-part-2>
- Making the Invisible Visible: Language and Legislation Through a Queer and Trans Lens (with Emil Rudicell) (MenHealing JustHealing podcast series) [https://youtu.be/Bs0eL4\\_\\_UUc?si=tdU4rb8qF2yfPD4S](https://youtu.be/Bs0eL4__UUc?si=tdU4rb8qF2yfPD4S)



## Direct support for trans/nonbinary survivors, loved ones, and communities

- Trans Survivors Blog. <https://www.trans-survivors.com>
- A Self Help Guide for Healing and Understanding. (guide) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/self-help-guide-for-trans-survivors/>
- A Guide for Partners and Loved Ones of Transgender Sexual Violence Survivors. (guide) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-partner-guide/>
- Let's Talk About It! A Transgender Survivor's Guide to Accessing Therapy. (guide) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/lets-talk-about-it-a-transgender-survivors-guide-to-accessing-therapy/>
- A Guide for Facilitators of Transgender Community Groups: Supporting Sexual Violence Survivors (guide) (specifically pages 26–46) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-facilitator-guide/>
- Safe Dating Tips: A Guide for Trans, Gender Non-Conforming, and Nonbinary People. <https://forge-forward.org/resource/safe-dating-tips/> (tipsheet) [Many sexual violence survivors are reluctant to date. Transgender and nonbinary survivors have even more specific questions and concerns to consider. This document includes both generic and specific advice for increasing safety when dating.]
- Keeping Yourself Safe: Anti-Trans Violence Awareness and Prevention. (tipsheet) <https://forge-forward.org/resource/keeping-yourself-safe/>
- Trans self-defense and empowerment for all bodies. (webinar/practical skills) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQEI-VdLJ10&t=14s>

## Male survivors of sexual assault

For many years, FORGE has collaborated with [MenHealing](#) and several other organizations (including [Male Survivor](#), [1in6](#), [NSVRC](#)) who focus on men who were sexually victimized as boys or men. All have substantial resources on their websites with beneficial information for providers, male survivors, and love ones.

The specific resources below are recommendations of where to start.

### Male survivors 101

- Working with Male Survivors of Sexual Violence. (resource list) (NSVRC) <https://www.nsvrc.org/working-male-survivors-sexual-violence>

- FAQ About Male Sexual Victimization. (FAQ) <https://menhealing.org/resources-for-survivors/faq-about-sexual-victimization/>
- Myths & Facts About Male Sexual Abuse & Assault. (tipsheet) <https://1in6.org/get-information/myths>
- Sexual Abuse of Boys. (resource list) <https://www.jimhopper.com/child-abuse/sexual-abuse-of-boys>
- Sexual Abuse of Men: Bringing the Issue to Times Square. (PSA on male survivors) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-JEzdow-zl>

### Books and resources for service providers

- MenHealing's collection of publications, journal articles, and books. <https://menhealing.org/publications/>
- 1in6's recommended reading list <https://1in6.org/books-films/>

### Male survivor stories and portraits

- Beyond Survival: Voices of Healing. (video survivor stories) (MenHealing) <https://menhealing.org/alumni-projects/male-survivor-stories/>
- Texas Men's Story Project. (video survivor stories) (TAASA – Texas Association Against Sexual Assault) [https://www.youtube.mplaylist?list=PL2QbF7tGSsqRzqUaquB3UhJ4CdvLzUEa\\_](https://www.youtube.mplaylist?list=PL2QbF7tGSsqRzqUaquB3UhJ4CdvLzUEa_)
- The Bristlecone Project: Portraits and Biographies of Male Survivors. (1in6) <https://bristleconeproject.org>
- Kilimanjaro Expedition Challenge. (video survivor story) (MenHealing) <https://menhealing.org/alumni-projects/kilimanjaro-expedition-challenge/>
- Boys and Men Healing from Child Sexual Abuse. (film) [https://films.com/id/29190/Boys\\_and\\_Men\\_Healing\\_from\\_Child\\_Sexual\\_Abuse.htm](https://films.com/id/29190/Boys_and_Men_Healing_from_Child_Sexual_Abuse.htm)

### Podcasts

Podcasts series: Working with Male Survivors (NSVRC) – including some of the following subjects <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1DG5t10FwROeVKwpBNjlt0>

- Understanding Expressions of Trauma for Men
- When Reaching Male Survivors, Consider your Program's Name

- Economic Barriers Behind Bars
- Accessing Support After Incarceration
- How Sexual Assault Impacts Transgender Men - parts 1 and 2
- Using an Empowerment Model in Detention
- What Support do Advocates Need?
- Reaching Male Survivors Through Storytelling
- Healing at Sexual Assault Centers and Beyond
- Talking to Men with Disabilities about Sexual Assault

Podcast (video and audio) series with MenHealing: Just Healing (some topics listed below)  
<https://open.spotify.com/show/5ymUmTDF36KCTThJcMKM13>

- Making the Invisible Visible: Language and Legislation Through a Queer and Trans Lens (Emil Rudicell)
- Start by Believing: Inside the World of Forensic Nursing (Karen Carroll)
- Cultural Compassion: A Deeper Look at Trauma Taboos and the Latinx Experience (Crystal Flores)
- Healing from High Control: Survivor Insights on Cult Dynamics of How to Break Free from Them (Ashley Easter)

### Direct support for male survivors

- RAINN's hotline and chatline (staff who are specifically trained to support male survivors). <https://www.rainn.org/resources>
- Online support groups (co-led by male peer survivors and clinicians) (MenHealing) <https://menhealing.org/resources-for-survivors/peer-support-groups/>

### General support group resource

For more on the importance of social support and support groups, see "The Power of Social Connection: Developing and Coordinating Sustainable Support Group Programs for Survivors of Sexual Violence" (pp. 7–9), by Laurie Graham, Rob Powell, and Anna Karam: <http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/the-power-of-social-connection.pdf>

There are many additions or alternatives to support groups for sexual assault survivors seeking help. See "Options for Healing" in "A Guide for Facilitators of Transgender Community Groups: Supporting Sexual Violence Survivors" (pp. 47–71), by michael munson and Loree Cook-Daniels: <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-facilitator-guide/>

For a summary of what we now know about how trauma affects survivors, see “Trauma and Its Aftermaths” in “A Guide for Facilitators of Transgender Community Groups: Supporting Sexual Violence Survivors” (pp. 6–24), by michael munson and Loree Cook-Daniels: <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-facilitator-guide/>

“Alternative Healing Modalities” in “The Power of Social Connection: Developing and Coordinating Sustainable Support Group Programs for Survivors of Sexual Violence” (p. 100), by Laurie Graham, Rob Powell, and Anna Karam: <http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/the-power-of-social-connection.pdf>

### Meeting planning and preparation ideas

- Looking for opening and closing activities for your meetings? Check out Appendices A and B in *Warrior Renew: Healing From Military Sexual Trauma* (pp. 205–224), by Lori S. Katz (New York, NY: Springer, 2015).
- “Meeting Planning and Preparation” and “Meeting Skills and Strategies” in “A Guide for Facilitators of Transgender Community Groups: Supporting Sexual Violence Survivors” (pp. 72–79; 80–94), by michael munson and Loree Cook-Daniels: <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-facilitator-guide/>
- “[Pre-Group Planning Checklist: Logistics](http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/the-power-of-social-connection.pdf)” in “The Power of Social Connection: Developing and Coordinating Sustainable Support Group Programs for Survivors of Sexual Violence” (p. 23), by Laurie Graham, Rob Powell, and Anna Karam: <http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/the-power-of-social-connection.pdf>

### Activities and topics

Many survivors want support increasing emotional regulation skills. For a good discussion of the relationships between thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and experiences, see “Coping With Feelings” in *Warrior Renew: Healing from Military Sexual Trauma* (pp. 15–30), by Lori S. Katz (New York, NY: Springer, 2015).

For suggested session content and handouts on setting healthy boundaries in relationships, see “Setting Boundaries in Relationships” in *Seeking Safety: A Treatment Manual for PTSD and Substance Abuse* (pp. 265–281), by Lisa M. Najavits (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2002).

Looking for coping topics, tools, and/or worksheets? Take a look at the resource-rich manual *Growing Beyond Survival: A Self-Help Toolkit for Managing Traumatic Stress* (2nd ed.), by Elizabeth G. Vermilyea (Baltimore, MD: Sidran Press, 2013). Of particular interest:

- “Traumatic Stress Inventory” (pp. 8–18)
- “The Toolbox” (pp. 21–100)
- “Tool: Boundaries” (pp. 117–126)
- “Regulation of Impulses” (pp. 164–172)

Mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and dialectical behavior therapy are the topics covered in the richly useful self-help workbook *The Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Workbook: Practical DBT Exercises for Learning Mindfulness, Interpersonal Effectiveness, Emotion Regulation and Distress Tolerance*, by Matthew McKay, Jeffrey C. Wood, and Jeffrey Brantley (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger, 2007).

Looking for some survivor-friendly worksheets? See *Trauma Competency: A Clinician’s Guide*, by Linda A. Curran (Eau Claire, WI: PESI, 2010) for some great worksheets on:

- Coping behaviors screening (pp. 41–45)
- Self-injury (pp. 81–91)
- Emotion recognition—sadness, anger, fear (pp. 101–106)
- Dissociation and grounding (pp. 113–130)
- Breathing packet (pp. 159–166)
- Emotional freedom technique (pp. 169–171)

See also *101 Trauma-Informed Interventions: Activities, Exercises and Assignments to Move the Client and Therapy Forward*, by Linda A. Curran (Eau Claire: WI: PESI, 2013), for:

- A writing exercise for dialogue with a child (pp. 15–16)
- Imagery scripts for containment, comfortable place, care and nurture, and longings/cravings (pp. 22–37)
- Exercises for checking in with the body and mapping emotions in the body (pp. 80–98)
- Exercises for regulating a dysregulated autonomic nervous system (pp. 133–150)
- Emotions list and profile questionnaire (pp. 201–203)

Looking for more specific guidance on developing a curriculum? Check out:

- The scripted curricula in “Courage Group: Treating Sexual Trauma Among Veterans in Outpatient Group Psychotherapy” by Dana D. Foley: [https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/docs/Courage\\_Group\\_Manual.pdf](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/docs/Courage_Group_Manual.pdf)
- “Development of a Curriculum” and “Practical Application” in “Circle of Hope: A Guide for Conducting Psychoeducational Support Groups” (pp. 67–76), from Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs: [http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working\\_with\\_survivors/support\\_groups/Circle\\_of\\_Hope\\_2014.pdf](http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working_with_survivors/support_groups/Circle_of_Hope_2014.pdf)

Want to learn more about affirmations and digging out unconscious limiting thoughts? See *Love Yourself, Heal Your Life Workbook*, by Louise L. Hay (Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, 1990).

Emergency standard operating procedures—such as checklists and forms for recording plans—can help survivors keep themselves safer during difficult periods. Check out “Emergency Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)” in “A Self-Help Guide for Healing and Understanding” (pp. 72–75), by Michael Munson and Loree Cook-Daniels: <https://forge-forward.org/resource/self-help-guide-for-trans-survivors/>

## Screening

For more advice and checklists related to screening potential support group members, see:

- “Screening Participants” in “The Power of Social Connection: Developing and Coordinating Sustainable Support Group Programs for Survivors of Sexual Violence” (pp. 32–54), by Laurie Graham, Rob Powell, and Anna Karam: <http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/the-power-of-social-connection.pdf>
- “Prescreening” in “Circle of Hope: A Guide for Conducting Psychoeducational Support Groups” (pp. 60–66), from Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs: [http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working\\_with\\_survivors/support\\_groups/Circle\\_of\\_Hope\\_2014.pdf](http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working_with_survivors/support_groups/Circle_of_Hope_2014.pdf)

## Evaluating groups

For examples of support group evaluations, see:

- Post-group evaluation form in “The Power of Social Connection: Developing and Coordinating Sustainable Support Group Programs for Survivors of Sexual Violence” (pp. 91–93), by Laurie Graham, Rob Powell, and Anna Karam: <http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/the-power-of-social-connection.pdf>
- Pre-test and post-test forms, end-of-group evaluation form, and “Measuring Outcomes in Psychoeducational Support Groups” in “Circle of Hope: A Guide for Conducting Psychoeducational Support Groups” (pp. 55–59; 100–105), from Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs: [http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working\\_with\\_survivors/support\\_groups/Circle\\_of\\_Hope\\_2014.pdf](http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working_with_survivors/support_groups/Circle_of_Hope_2014.pdf)

# Appendix G: bibliography

Bein, K., munson, m., & Cook-Daniels, L. (2013). *Working with rural trans survivors* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/rural-survivors/>

Bland, P. J., & Edmund, D. (2008). *Getting safe and sober: Real tools you can use: An advocacy teaching kit for working with women coping with substance abuse, interpersonal violence and trauma* (2nd ed.). Juneau: Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Retrieved from [https://2bsisters.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/getting-safe-and-sober\\_real-tools-you-can-use.pdf](https://2bsisters.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/getting-safe-and-sober_real-tools-you-can-use.pdf)

Boys and men healing from child sexual abuse. (2011). [https://films.com/id/29190/Boys\\_and\\_Men\\_Healing\\_from\\_Child\\_Sexual\\_Abuse.htm](https://films.com/id/29190/Boys_and_Men_Healing_from_Child_Sexual_Abuse.htm)

Brown, A. (2022, June 7). *About 5% of young adults in the U.S. say their gender is different from their sex assigned at birth*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/06/07/about-5-of-young-adults-in-the-u-s-say-their-gender-is-different-from-their-sex-assigned-at-birth/>

Cook-Daniels, L. (2008). *Seeing past the "L": Addressing anti-male bias in sexual assault services for the LGBT community*. Milwaukee, WI: FORGE. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/seeing-past-the-l-addressing-anti-male-bias/>

Cook-Daniels, L., & munson, m. (2013). *Creating a trans-welcoming environment* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/trans-welcoming-environment-webinar-2013/>

Cook-Daniels, L., & munson, m. (2013). *Safety planning with transgender clients* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/safety-planning-tool/>

Cook-Daniels, L., & munson, m. (2014). *Violence and trauma in the lives of transgender older adults* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/trauma-and-aging/>

Cook-Daniels, L., & munson, m. (2016). *First do no harm: 8 tips for addressing violence against transgender and nonbinary individuals*. Milwaukee, WI: FORGE. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/first-do-no-harm-8-tips-for-addressing-violence/>

- Cook-Daniels, L., munson, m. (2019). *Stopping it where it starts: Disrupting the LGBTQ polyvictimization pathway in childhood* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/lgbtq-polyvictimization-pathway-in-childhood/>
- Curran, L. A. (2010). *Trauma competency: A clinician's guide*. Eu Claire, WI: PESI.
- Curran, L. A. (2013). *101 trauma-informed interventions: Activities, exercises and assignments to move the client and therapy forward*. Eu Claire, WI: PESI.
- Day, K., Stiles, E., & munson, m. (2014). *Medical and forensic considerations in caring for transgender sexual assault survivors* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/forensic-exams/>
- EVAWI. (2023, November 2). "How can we do this better?" *Caring for transgender survivors*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://evawintl.org/courses/how-can-we-do-this-better-caring-for-transgender-survivors/>
- Foley, D. D. (n.d.). *Courage group: Treating sexual trauma among veterans in outpatient group psychotherapy*. North Little Rock, AR: VA South Central Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center. Retrieved from [https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/docs/Courage\\_Group\\_Manual.pdf](https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn16/docs/Courage_Group_Manual.pdf)
- FORGE. (n.d.). Espavo Project. Retrieved from <https://forge.zenfolio.com/>
- FORGE. (n.d.). *Gender-neutral pronouns* [fact sheet]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/faq-pronouns/>
- FORGE. (n.d.). *Keeping yourself safe: Anti-trans violence awareness and prevention*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/keeping-yourself-safe/>
- FORGE. (n.d.). *Safe dating tips: A guide for trans, gender non-conforming, and nonbinary people*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/safe-dating-tips/>
- FORGE. (n.d.). *Safety planning: A guide for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals who are experiencing intimate partner violence*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/safety-planning-tool/>
- FORGE. (2012). *Know and tell why: Victim service providers' fact sheet #4*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/know-and-tell-why/>
- FORGE. (2012). *Master status: Victim service providers' fact sheet #3*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/master-status/>



FORGE. (2013). *Trans-specific power and control tactics*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/power-and-control-tactics/>

FORGE & the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. (2014). *An overview of the sexual orientation and gender-identity non-discrimination conditions in the reauthorized VAWA*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/vawa-non-discrimination-conditions-webinar/>

FORGE. (2015). *Disability and transgender survivors*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/vera-disability-and-transgender-survivors-webinar/>

FORGE. (2015). *Know your rights! Trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence*. [Fact Sheet] Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/know-your-rights-vawa/>

FORGE. (2016). *Serving trans survivors: A 101 for advocates*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/webinar-101-for-sa-advocates-x2/>

FORGE. (2017). *Part of the solution: gender-integrated sexual assault support groups*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-0QDKDwwOo>

FORGE. (2019). *Frequently Asked Questions about sexual harassment of transgender and nonbinary individuals in the workplace*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/faq-sexual-harassment/>

FORGE. (2019). *Trans and nonbinary employees and workplace harassment: Legal rights and options*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4UruLiAsDo&t=3354s>

FORGE. (2019). *Workplace harassment & trans/nonbinary employees: Resources* [Collection of resources]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/workplace-harassment-trans-non-binary-employees-resources/>

FORGE. (2019). *Frequently Asked Questions about workplace retaliation against transgender and nonbinary employees*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/faq-retaliation-sexual-harassment-2/>

FORGE. (2019). *Self-assessment tool: "Is your agency ready to serve transgender and nonbinary clients?"* Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/self-assessment-tool/>

FORGE. (2020). *Care, compassion, and creativity: Trans survivors and forensic exams*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/ZyGuDBxcgnU>

FORGE. (2020). *Stopping it where it starts: Disrupting the trans/nonbinary polyvictimization pathway in childhood*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/20WLNAXpnNI>

FORGE. (2020). *Trans/nonbinary individuals and intimate partner violence: A brief overview*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/trans-non-binary-individuals-and-intimate-partner-violence-a-brief-overview/>

FORGE. (2020). *Trans survivors: A blog and resources for trans survivors and loved ones*. [Blog]. Retrieved from <https://trans-survivors.com/>

FORGE. (2020). *Becoming a Trans-welcoming agency in 10 easy (and free!) steps: What every agency can do*. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/z4UOKIW--fM>

FORGE. (2020). *Medical and forensic considerations in caring for transgender sexual assault survivors*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <http://forge-forward.org/event/forensic-exams>

FORGE. (2020). *Bathrooms, bullies, and bystanders: Supporting transgender survivors*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/fUh32du8-rA>

FORGE. (2022). *Standard and trans-specific ACEs: Shifting the course of trauma to create healthier trans adults*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOCHK-Fi7hM>

FORGE. (2023). *Dismantling the gates: Informed consent models of care*. [Webinar] Retrieved from [https://youtu.be/5b0Bu9aNt\\_w?si=\\_7LhhkXdn06s14RU](https://youtu.be/5b0Bu9aNt_w?si=_7LhhkXdn06s14RU)

FORGE. (2023). *Intro to mental health support for trans/nonbinary survivors: a webinar for advocates*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC9y7Z75-oo&t=4111s>

FORGE. (2023). *Responses to (anti-trans) hate*. [Toolkit] <https://forge-forward.org/responses-to-hate/>

FORGE. (2023). *State-sanctioned hate: The impacts of the “culture wars” on trans lives*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSkvWkmcOS8>

FORGE. (2023). *Supporting trans mental health: Uncovering barriers and building solutions*. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/supporting-trans-mental-health-uncovering-barriers-and-building-solutions/>

FORGE. (2023). *Trans self-defense and empowerment for all bodies*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQEi-VdLJ10&t=14s>

- FORGE. (2023). *Weathering the storm: Safety planning for natural disasters with trans/nonbinary survivors*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGeJzv4nUPI&t=537s>
- FORGE. (2024). *Mandatory support: Harm reduction for mandatory reporting*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyYs2Pn-5JY&t=454s>
- FORGE & MenHealing. (2022). *Voices of Healing: Trans & nonbinary survivors SPEAK OUT*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xpqnT14FZtU&t=203s>
- Fradkin, H. (2012). *Joining forces: Empowering male survivors to thrive*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House.
- Friedman, S. A. (2013). *And boys too: An ECPAT-USA discussion paper about the lack of recognition of the commercial sexual exploitation of boys in the United States*. Retrieved from <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/resources/and-boys-too>
- Graham, L., Powell, R., & Karam, A. (2013). *The power of social connection: Developing and coordinating sustainable support group programs for survivors of sexual violence*. Chapel Hill, NC: Orange County Rape Crisis Center; Raleigh: North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Retrieved from <http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/the-power-of-social-connection.pdf>
- Gregory, S. (2019). *Trans & nonbinary employees and workplace harassment: Legal rights & options* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/workplace-harassment-1/>
- Hay, L. L. (1990). *Love yourself, heal your life workbook*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House.
- Hopper, J. (n.d.). *Sexual abuse of boys* [Web series]. Retrieved from <https://www.jimhopper.com/child-abuse/sexual-abuse-of-boys>
- Human Rights Campaign. (2016, July 20). *Dads for transgender equality* [Video file]. Retrieved from [https://youtu.be/rl7RLbt\\_OOE](https://youtu.be/rl7RLbt_OOE)
- James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). *The report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality. Retrieved from <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>
- JWI. (2021, June). *National Alliance Webinar: Transgender survivors: A roadmap through the triple pandemic to improved, culturally-responsive services*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.jwi.org/calendar/transgender-survivor-webinar>

- Kagan, R. (2017). *Real life heroes: Life storybook* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Katz, L. S. (2015). *Warrior renew: Healing from military sexual trauma*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Lew, M. (2004). *Victims no longer: The classic guide for men recovering from sexual child abuse* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- LGBT Aging Center (SAGE). (2023, January). *Person-centered, trauma-informed care of transgender older adults*. <https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resource.cfm?r=2142>
- Living Well. (n.d.). Stories of men's experience. Retrieved from <https://www.livingwell.org.au/from-men/stories-of-mens-experience>
- McKay, M., Wood, J. C., & Brantley, J. (2007). *The dialectical behavior therapy skills workbook: Practical DBT exercises for learning mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotion regulation and distress tolerance*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.
- MenHealing (n.d.). FAQ about male sexual victimization. Retrieved from <https://menhealing.org/resources-for-survivors/faq-about-sexual-victimization/>
- MenHealing. (n.d.). *Just healing*. Spotify. <https://open.spotify.com/show/5ymUmTDF36KCTThJcMKM13>
- MenHealing (n.d.). YouTube channel, available at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq-5kpg1yli-LDSJmhyqG4A/>
- MenHealing. (2020). Beyond Survival: Voices of Healing video series. <https://menhealing.org/alumni-projects/male-survivor-stories/>
- MenHealing. (2020, July 2). *Kilimanjaro Expedition Challenge*. <https://menhealing.org/alumni-projects/kilimanjaro-expedition-challenge/>
- MenHealing. (2022, December 6). *Peer support groups*. <https://menhealing.org/resources-for-survivors/peer-support-groups/>
- MenHealing. (2024). *Making the invisible visible: Language and legislation through a queer and trans lens*. [https://youtu.be/Bs0eL4\\_\\_UUC?si=tdU4rb8qF2yfPD4S](https://youtu.be/Bs0eL4__UUC?si=tdU4rb8qF2yfPD4S)
- Movement Advancement Project. (n.d.). Videos: Talking about LGBT people & issues. Retrieved from <http://www.lgbtmap.org/video>

Movement Advancement Project. (2016, July 10). *Nationwide transgender equality campaign debuts on FOX News during Republican Convention* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/YNwVrWGQneg>

munson, m., & Cook-Daniels, L. (2013). *Trans-specific barriers to accessing health care* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/healthcare-barriers/>

munson, m., & Green, E. R. (2014). *Transgender sexuality and trauma: A context of care for service providers* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/transgender-sexuality-and-trauma/>

munson, m. (2015). *Disability and transgender survivors: Empowering providers who work with multiply-marginalized populations* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/vera-disability-and-transgender-survivors-webinar>

munson, m., & Cook-Daniels, L. (2015). *Let's talk about it! A transgender survivor's guide to accessing therapy*. Milwaukee, WI: FORGE. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/lets-talk-about-it-a-transgender-survivors-guide-to-accessing-therapy/>

munson, m., & Cook-Daniels, L. (2015). *A self-help guide for healing and understanding*. Milwaukee, WI: FORGE. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/self-help-guide-for-trans-survivors/>

munson, m., & Cook-Daniels, L. (2016). *A guide for facilitators of transgender community groups: Supporting sexual violence survivors*. Milwaukee, WI: FORGE. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-facilitator-guide/>

munson, m., & Cook-Daniels, L. (2016). *A guide for partners and friends of transgender sexual violence survivors*. Milwaukee, WI: FORGE. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/sv-partner-guide/>

munson, m., Cook-Daniels, L., & Taylor, K. (2016). *Trans youth sexual assault survivors: Skills for advocates* [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/trans-youth-sexual-assault-survivors-skills-for-advocates-wcsap/>

munson, m. (2020). *Beliefs, bias, and bumpers: Implicit and explicit roadblocks to trans and LGBTQ+ welcoming services*. [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://forge-forward.org/resource/implicit-and-explicit-bias/>

munson, m. (2020). *Trans/nonbinary individuals and intimate partner violence: A brief overview*. [Webinar]. Retrieved from: <https://youtu.be/WxaAFrcDrYI>

Najavits, L. M. (2002). *Seeking safety: A treatment manual for PTSD and substance abuse*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

NSVRC. (n.d.). *Working with male survivors*. Spotify. <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1DG5t10FwROeVKwpBNjlt0>

NSVRC. (n.d.). *Working with male survivors of sexual violence*. <https://www.nsvrc.org/working-male-survivors-sexual-violence>

NSVRC. (2021). *How sexual assault impacts transgender men - Part 1*. <https://www.nsvrc.org/resource/2505/working-male-survivors-how-sexual-assault-impacts-transgender-men-part-1>

NSVRC. (2021). *How sexual assault impacts transgender men - Part 2*. <https://www.nsvrc.org/resource/2505/working-male-survivors-how-sexual-assault-impacts-transgender-men-part-2>

Spangler, D., & Brandl, B. (2003). *Golden voices: Support groups for older abused women*. Madison, WI: National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.308.1545&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

SPARC & FORGE. (2023). *Supporting LGBTQ+ stalking victims*. <https://www.stalkingawareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/SPARC-Supporting-LGBTQ-Stalking-Victims.pdf>

SPARC & FORGE. (2023). *Supporting LGBTQ+ stalking victims*. [Webinar] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVzADclLLMI&feature=youtu.be>

Stemple, L., & Meyer, I. H. (2014). The sexual victimization of men in America: New data challenge old assumptions. *American Journal of Public Health, 104*(6), e19–e26. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4062022>

Stemple, L., Flores, A., & Meyer, I. (2017). Sexual victimization perpetrated by women: Federal data reveal surprising prevalence. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 34*, 302–311. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2016.09.007>

Struve, J., & Colrain, J. (2020). Clinical perspectives about male sexual victimization: The cultural and historical context of gender. *Handbook of Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Across the Lifespan*. [https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-319-62122-7\\_309-1](https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-319-62122-7_309-1)

- Straus, M. A. (2010). Thirty years of denying the evidence on gender symmetry in partner violence: Implications for prevention and treatment. *Partner Abuse*, 1(3), 332–362. <https://doi.org/10.1891/1946-6560.1.3.332>
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault. (n.d.). *Texas Men’s Story Project*. [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2QbF7tGSsqRzqUaquB3UhJ4CdvIzUEa\\_](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2QbF7tGSsqRzqUaquB3UhJ4CdvIzUEa_)
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault. (2021, April 6). “From trauma to triumph” - Rocky Lane, *Texas Men’s Story Project*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lTxdgElfvxk>
- Trans United Fund. (2016, May 5). *Meet my child: Parents of transgender kids speak out* [Video file]. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\\_lGK7d5HbA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_lGK7d5HbA)
- US Census Bureau. (2021, July) *Household Pulse Survey*. <http://usafacts.org/articles/what-percentage-of-the-us-population-is-transgender/>
- U.S. Department of Education. (2010). *Ed/OCR: Notice of non-discrimination*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/nondisc.html>
- U.S. Department of Justice. (2014). *Frequently asked questions: Nondiscrimination grant condition in the Violence Against Women Act of 2013*. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/ovw/legacy/2014/06/20/faqs-ngc-vawa.pdf>
- Vermilyea, E. G. (2013). *Growing beyond survival: A self-help toolkit for managing traumatic stress* (2nd ed.). Baltimore, MD: Sidran Press.
- 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. Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_sofindings.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_sofindings.pdf)
- Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. (2014). *Circle of hope: A guide for conducting psychoeducational support groups* (2nd ed.). Olympia, WA: Author. Retrieved from [http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working\\_with\\_survivors/support\\_groups/Circle\\_of\\_Hope\\_2014.pdf](http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/working_with_survivors/support_groups/Circle_of_Hope_2014.pdf)
- 1in6. (n.d.). Male survivor stories – the Bristlecone Project. Retrieved from <https://bristleconeproject.org>
- 1in6. (n.d.). Myths & facts about male sexual abuse & assault. Retrieved from <https://1in6.org/get-information/myths>
- 1in6. (2023). *Recommended books and films*. <https://1in6.org/books-films/>



[forge-forward.org](http://forge-forward.org) ● [trans-survivors.com](http://trans-survivors.com)

