

LGBT ELDER RESOURCES

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212.741.2247
[HTTP://SAGEUSA.ORG/INDEX.CFM](http://sageusa.org/index.cfm)

AMERICAN SOCIETY ON AGING LESBIAN & GAY AGING ISSUES NETWORK (LGAIN)

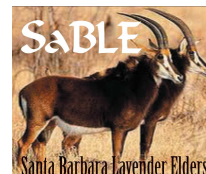
415.974.9600 1.800.537.9728
[HTTP://WWW.ASAGING.ORG/NETWORKS/INDEX.CFM?CG=LAIN](http://www.asaging.org/networks/index.cfm?CG=LAIN)

*FOR INFORMATION OR
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HUMAN SERVICES, MENTAL &
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MENTAL HEALTH & LGBT ELDERS



A RESOURCE GUIDE ON
ISSUES ENCOUNTERED BY
LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL
TRANSGENDER ELDERS



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LGBT ELDERS (55+)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Baby Boomers are considered to be the first openly-LGBT identified generation in the United States.

LGBT Elders:

- Are often a neglected group within the larger elder population, resulting in their greater invisibility.
- Encounter difficulty with issues including Financial Security, Social Support and Community Engagement, Isolation, and the Treatment of Residents in Institutionalized Settings which may lead to impacting Health and Health Care.

Many LGBT elders live in increasing isolation as a result of having been ostracized by family and friends after self-disclosing their LGBT identity. Consequently, they lose much of the support and care that heterosexual elders can access and in many cases, result in LGBT elders experiencing increased levels of anxiety or stress.

TIPS FOR INDIVIDUALS INTERACTING WITH LGBT ELDERS

- Refer to other supportive environments
- Treat with respect and validate needs
- Help build coping skills to manage stigma
- Connect to other community resources

(SEE REVERSE)

TREATMENT OF RESIDENTS IN INSTITUTIONALIZED & PUBLIC SETTINGS

As a result of discriminatory laws, LGBT elders are not always allowed access to their complete support network in nursing homes or senior centers. Partnered LGBT elders may be denied visitation rights because their same-sex unions are not recognized by the federal government.

Ageism, a form of discrimination regarding age, combined with homophobic environments and policies can lead to increased feelings of disempowerment and cause elders to be less likely to seek support when needed.

FINANCIAL SECURITY

LGBT elders may have encountered employment discrimination throughout their lives, leaving them reliant on weak financial resources once they retire or are no longer able to work.

This can affect:

- Whether they have stable housing
- How much financial support they have
- Whether they will receive social security income or be able to access their partners
- Mental and Physical Health

HEALTH & HEALTH CARE

LGBT elders can also face specific health care issues:

- LGBT elders are less likely to have health insurance coverage
- There are no known HIV prevention programs targeting this community; From 2004-2007 HIV diagnoses for those aged 50-59 increased 32% while the rate for those 50+ living with AIDS is now double than those under the age of 24
- LGBT-identified individuals are more likely to suffer from chronic stress due to institutionalized discrimination, smoking, suicide, depression, drug and alcohol use.

These factors can prevent LGBT elders from seeking support, leaving them vulnerable to physical and mental health illnesses. It is important to help address these issues through supportive and understanding environments to establish mental health wellness in the marginalized LGBT elder community.

Source: *Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults*; (SAGE Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders); <http://www.sageusa.org/specialevents/home.cfm?ID=71>