


An illustration of a man with dark skin and short hair, seen from the back and side, brushing his teeth. He is wearing a light blue t-shirt. In the background, a mirror reflects his face as he brushes. The background is a light pink color with a blue curved line.

**LGBTQ+**  
**DOMESTIC**  
**ABUSE**  
**SERVICE**

The main title is set against a background of orange and pink. A large, thick, teal curved line sweeps across the middle of the page. A dark blue curved line is at the bottom. The text is in a bold, sans-serif font.

**LGBTQ+**  
**SURVIVOR**  
**CHRISTMAS**  
**GUIDE**

# LGBTQ+

# DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE

WE SEE YOU. WE HEAR YOU. WE SUPPORT YOU.

The year is drawing to a close, and we're reflecting a lot as Switchboard on the things we need for the coming months. Something that has become abundantly clear is that we need connection, community care, liberation & acts of kindness. A question we want to bring into the new year is: **what does it mean to exist radically & fully with each other?**

Christmas can be a particularly dangerous time of year of domestic abuse survivors. Many services close, meaning that people are stuck without means of support if they're in danger, or particularly struggling with something.

There are a number of reasons why this happens, including financial pressures, being stuck in a house with perpetrators over an intense period, and increased alcohol use. If you're in an abusive situation, it's really important that you know what to do to maintain your safety over the festive period.

Being around abusive family members as an LGBTQ+ person can be particularly dangerous and triggering, especially during times of year where there is an emphasis on family & togetherness. We've put some helpful affirmations & reminders in this guide if you need them, as well as safety advice and tips to identify & reduce your risk of domestic abuse. We've also included tips to help you to respond if abuse happens.

If you know anyone who would benefit from reading or having this guide, please pass it on. We're here for all LGBTQ+ domestic abuse survivors.

# TOP TEN SAFETY TIPS



## 01

**Identify the risk-** clearly identify the risks you face, so you know what to look out for.

## 02

**Identify triggers-** Are there specific triggers that have caused conflict previously over festive periods?

## 03

**Be safe when using alcohol or drugs-** Be around people who you trust, and that know you're at risk of violence. If you're using substances to cope, try to monitor how much you're taking.

## 04

**Have a practiced escape route-** If you're worried an abusive incident will happen, make sure you have a safe place you can go & that you know how to get there at all times.

## 05

**Pack an emergency bag-** If you think you may need to make an escape at short notice, make sure you have a bag somewhere private & easy to access containing medications, money, ID, documents & sentimental things.





# TOP TEN SAFETY TIPS

**06**

**Tell someone who you trust-** Whether this is a neighbour, a friend, a colleague or family member, make sure there's someone is aware of your wellbeing over this period.

**07**

**Agree a safety word-** Have a phrase or word you can use with your support network that will tell them you're not safe- this should be a word that doesn't alert the abuser.

**08**

**Use the 999 silent solution-** You may need to call emergency services for help when it isn't safe to speak. If the call handler can't decide if an emergency service is needed, you will hear an automated message which asks you to press 55 to be put through to the police.

**09**

**Register to text emergency services-**Text register to 999 now & follow the instructions sent. You can't use this service unless you're registered, so don't wait for an emergency.

**10**

**Arrange regular check ins:** If you are going to be isolated from your support network over the festive period, arrange to have check ins at regular times and stay connected.





# HELPLINES OVER CHRISTMAS

While we're closed over the festive period, you may want to speak with a helpline who can hold space and help you get support:

## **GALOP LGBTQ+ DOMESTIC ABUSE**

**0800 9995428**

Open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm

Wednesday and Thursday 10am-8pm

## **B&H LGBT SWITCHBOARD PHONE**

**01273 204050**

Open Wednesdays and Thursdays 7pm-9:30pm

## **SAMARITANS**

**116 123**

Open 24/7

## **MENTAL HEALTH RAPID RESPONSE**

**03003040078**

Open 24/7

## **NATIONAL DA HELPLINE**

**08082000247**

Open 24/7



IT'S  
**OKAY**

IF YOU

**DON'T KNOW**  
WHAT TO DO



WE  
**SEE**  
**HEAR**  
**SUPPORT**  
YOU

**YOU  
DESERVE  
SAFE, HEALTHY,  
RESPECTFUL  
RELATIONSHIPS**



**WE BELIEVE YOU**



**LGBTQ+**  
**DOMESTIC**  
**ABUSE**  
**SERVICE**

**Switchboard**



Connecting you to LGBTQ support

**01273 359042**

**DOMESTICABUSE@SWITCHBOARD.ORG.UK**

**SWITCHBOARD.ORG.UK**