**Supporting LGBTQ+ Victim-Survivors: A Practical Guide**

Creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment is essential when supporting LGBTQ+ victim-survivors. This guide outlines practical ways to ensure your approach is affirming, trauma-informed, and inclusive.

**Inclusive Communication**

1. Share and Ask Pronouns

* When introducing yourself, share your pronouns and ask how the person would like to be addressed.
* This helps normalise the conversation around gender identity and makes it easier for victim-survivors to share their own pronouns.

2. Learn and Respect Pronouns

* Familiarise yourself with a range of pronouns, including those you may not have encountered before.
* If you're unsure of someone's pronouns, use they/them until told otherwise.
* It’s okay to ask someone their pronouns respectfully.

3. Mistakes Happen

* If you use the wrong pronoun, correct yourself, briefly apologise, and move on. Over-apologising can shift focus away from the person you're supporting.

4. Additional questions to consider to guide your conversation

* How old are you? How old is the perpetrator?  
  Age can influence how someone experiences and internalises abuse. Older individuals may not be “out” to family or community due to historical criminalisation of LGBTQ+ identities.
* Do you or the perpetrator have a strong faith?  
  Consider how religious beliefs may shape their experiences or internalised messages about identity and abuse.
* Is this your first LGBTQ+ relationship since identifying as LGBTQ+?  
  A lack of experience may lead to normalising abusive behaviours or misunderstanding what healthy LGBTQ+ relationships look like.
* Has the perpetrator threatened to out you or actually outed you?  
  Outing can involve sexuality, gender identity, or HIV status, and may occur in personal, professional, or community settings. This is a serious form of control and abuse.
* Does the perpetrator have a history of hate crimes, harassment, or discriminatory views?  
  If the victim-survivor is unsure, suggest a Clare’s Law application

**Visibility and representation matters**

* Services should visibly and consistently show they are inclusive of LGBTQ+ people.
* This means more than just a rainbow logo during Pride Month—include inclusive symbols and language on your website and materials year-round.