hope, equity, power!

FOR LGBTQ+ YOUTH
Hello Friend,

Outright was founded in response to young LGBTQ+ folks dying because it was unbearable to navigate the world. Your candor and compassion kept us moving through the hardest days, so we're grateful for the support you showed us how profoundly you understood the needs of LGBTQ+ youth during the pandemic. Your kindness and compassion kept us moving forward.

2020 showed us that we can't keep moving in the same way we need to move differently. At our roots, we know how to be responsive. Our mission is to be a home base that propels ourselves forward. This is individual and personal to a lot of people, too.

The difference? They aren't widely available. Why not? That’s what Outright's Youth Organizers wondered — and set out to change.

Their vision is nuanced and bold. They don’t just want these resources available to youth — they want to create streamlined and steady access through schools, to ensure the need is seen, legitimized, and destigmatized. This is a strategy to increase belonging and change lives.

It’s also the essence of what your support makes possible: youth-led solutions. Transforming schools into safe and affirming spaces. Supporting families. Changing people's trajectories. Here’s more from the folks who know it best.

Charlie, Youth Organizer

I’ve been with Outright for years, first through Friday Night Group, then programs like Summit and Camp. I never missed an Outright event, which is how I learned about being a Youth Organizer.

One of my fellow organizers had the idea to distribute gender affirming resources. I’m a part of the campaign. My role is behind the scenes: making flyers, meeting with school Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs), brainstorming ideas, learning about my community and available resources.

My hope is for youth to get these items safely and without health risk, whether they have a supportive home or not, and never on their own. I had to learn so much alone, and now I can share what I know so other people won’t have to struggle.

Around 8th grade, I was feeling so isolated. I was just coming to terms with the fact that I might not be cis, and I might not be straight. I didn’t really know who to go to, and didn’t think anyone would help me. This was before I learned about Outright. I didn’t really trust my school, I’d only been there a few months. There was no support there for trans kids.

Because of all that, getting a binder was kind of a weird deal. I wasn’t able to get it as soon as I needed it. My parents weren’t willing to help. I had to do my own research. It was a big experience.

Here’s what people need to know: gender affirming resources are lifesaving. People don’t understand the intense discomfort and anguish that can come from a person not feeling right in their body. It’s a feeling that you can’t escape, because you can’t run from your own body.

It’s so important for these items to come through school. To increase youth access and reduce stigma, because other students seeing these items distributed normalizes their purpose and importance. Wearing this gear helps alleviate feelings of dysmorphia, and can even help you feel better about going to — or feel safer at — school. They may not seem connected, but they are.

Being part of this program is the coolest thing I’ve ever done. I feel like I am actually making a difference. Reading emails as students get their resources — I’m so grateful that they don’t have to struggle. It’s a really nice thing.

And I’ve gotten so much too. I’ve learned patience and effective strategies to help others, and I’ve learned a lot of compassion. Before I was kind of numb — drained and emotionally empty. But meeting new people and learning their stories has really helped me continue to understand we’ve not just got this giant societal problem. This is individual and personal to a lot of people, too. I want parents to know that you may not understand what your child is going through, but you need to look at them, really, and deeply. You don’t have to understand your child’s identity or their feelings — but supporting them doesn’t mean understanding. Support your child as a person, and their right to grow and be themselves.

I hope in the future people won’t have to suffer because they can’t get gender affirming resources. As far as I can reach I want youth to know they are supported, and valid, and their feelings are real and important. They deserve to feel ok in their body. That’s my biggest goal, for them to know that.

The youth all understood the need. It was us — here at Outright, and folks in their communities — to show up in solidarity by saying yes. When we are unflogging in support of youth self-determination, we can help them change the trajectory of their lives.

Ashlie, School Counselor, GSA Co-Advisor

I’ve been working with the Youth Organizers — we’re a pilot school for the gender affirming resources campaign. At every single meeting, they teach me so much. It’s not their job to educate me, yet they are so willing to share their perspectives.

They are so mature, knowledgeable, and helpful.

They’ve shown me that having gender affirming resources in all our schools shouldn’t be a privilege. It is very much a need. We are quite literally saving lives. The program has been so impactful.

The Youth Organizers have newfound hope. We make students feel included, accepted, known, acknowledged, and heard. To me, that’s a basic need, not an "extra," and imperative in the educational system, and society itself.

Makeover with a Mission

This revolution of hope, equity, and power creates room for all our glorious sizes, colors, and shapes. It honors the both/and strong and gentle, whimsical and sturdy, inside and outside.

Welcome to this newest iteration of Outright today: full of confidence, forward motion, and always vibrant, queer joy. We pave our way forward, with you always, by our sides.

Heck Yeah!

WHAT IT COST BY AREA OF WORK

- Strengthening Families: $33,670.59
- Discovering Self: $255,975

WHAT YOU RAISED

- Contributions: $374,830
- Government: $222,957
- Private Grants: $457,362
- Earned: $22,464

Total: $1,077,613

A Home(Base) of Our Own

Our origin story is one of collective action, calculated responsiveness, and a firm belief in a radically different, just future. In 1989, our founders each chipped in $100 to pay the rent to ensure a year of having our own space. In 2020, we made that stability happen again, this time, in epic proportions.

We embraced our call, showing up powerfully and profoundly to help purchase and transform our home base. This is the centerpiece of our shift from defense to offense.

This is the foundation from which we’ll soar to ever greater heights, so young people have everything they need to wholly and gorgeously be their truest selves. Thank you, thank you for helping to make it so.