



Not-So-Random Acts of Kindness. The ways you show up for LGBTQ+ youth aren't random at all: it takes lots of care and intention to make this much magic. So here's to you: the facilitators, space holders, listeners & confidantes, advisors & experts, donors, sponsors, fundraiser coordinators, organizers of protests & lawn flamingos, cooks & bakers, taste-testers & meal-sharers, fire truck pullers, flag wavers, hug-sharers, interior & exterior decorators, gardeners, givers & sorters of binders, supplies, queer lit & fashion, playlist makers, loving families, event planners, D&D players, committee & board members, signal boosters, merch-flaunters & cheerleaders, teachers, networkers, healthcare connectors & providers, cleanup fairies, knitters & bidders of hats & mittens, visitors & callers, heck-yeah makers, & helpers of all kinds. May all the magic you make return to you, with interest. Thank you!

hope,
equity,
power!

OUTRIGHT
VERMONT



Make it Like Outright.

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to this snapshot of 2021 in the world of Outright — a testament to who we were and what we accomplished together last year. It's a glimpse into the butterfly effect you set in motion when you show up alongside LGBTQ+ youth. After all, your steady support sets the foundation from which all else blossoms. Together we move forward, through the chaos and the calm.

When youth experience the power of joyful, loving community, they replicate that very thing. When we share creative, expansive, and liberated ways of being, tomorrow becomes possible. We all need to see possibilities for our futures. Freedom is irresistible once you catch a glimpse of it.

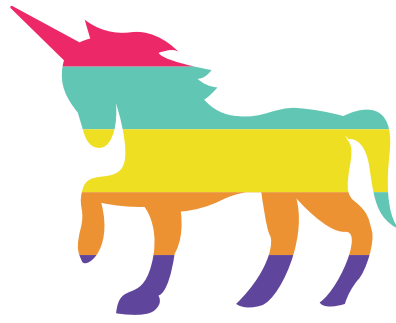
Friends, we have a long way to go. **Joy is not a platitude or pat on the back — it's a rallying cry.** It's a strategy. LGBTQ+ youth deserve hope, equity, and power — here, there, and everywhere. Small moments lead to big change. Take a look back, and get ready for what's coming next.

Dana

— Dana Kaplan, he/him, Executive Director



Multiplying the Magic



So, what does it mean to “make it like Outright?” It's a former camper replicating Camp Outright in their backyard. It's showing up in Rutland with all our flags flying for Not Summit. It's ensuring there are platforms in all the places youth move for them to make their voices heard, and to be embraced as their full selves. And it's a better world for all of us when we harness the joy, creativity, and industriousness of youth. Here are just a few stories of making it like Outright from the past year.

A FRESH COAT OF PAINT

Chloe wants youth to hear, “you're inherently valuable.” But as the advisor of the SAGAA GSA at Mount Anthony Union High School in Bennington, Chloe knows the messages members hear in their school and community can often lead them to feel invisible and rejected instead.

Chloe knows that to counter these messages, SAGAA youth need to find a greater sense of belonging. With the GSA Network in their corner and Outright's GSA conference as a yearly tradition, they're not alone. **The creativity of youth across the state provides SAGAA members with connection to community and a much-needed infusion of hope.** Chloe finds inspiration and validation in other advisors' experiences.

These moments in community translate to action at home. SAGAA makes and distributes Safe Space signs, Coming Out Day pins, and Protect Trans Kids buttons. This past fall, they even designed and painted a mural — a mountainous landscape composed of pride flags that screams, “you belong.” Students, staff, and guests pass it regularly and are reminded of the values it represents.

One action at a time, and through seemingly small campaigns of visibility and joy, these youth are claiming their power to transform their community.

WHEN BELONGING CHANGES EVERYTHING

Twelve students from Champlain Valley High School's GSA in Hinesburg are gathered around a table. When asked what it would be like to live in a world run by the CVU GSA, their answers are rapid, unabashed, and enthusiastic: “Gay.” “GAY!” “...Utter chaos.” **Their final conclusion is as simple as it is expansive: no more fear or -isms, no more danger, and everyone welcome as they are.**

With over 100 regulars, that vision isn't hard to imagine. Youth come together to build belonging, togetherness, authenticity, and joy. And the youth who have joined us today share what that means in tangible terms.



Storey explains: “Being in a GSA and when I went to Camp Outright, you feel like you're not being compromised.” Andrew speaks up: “I feel more safe and secure than I have ever in my life. I truly know who I am now.”

In daily meetings, youth find the support and community they deeply need. “If I'm going through something I can always come here and there's a teacher from GSA who I can talk to and just have a safe space,” says Alex. “I didn't know any of the GSA advisors before I started coming to GSA so I didn't know that there were adults to go to,” adds Roman.

Alaina remembers, “Before I joined I was just trying to find myself. It was kind of an isolating time.”

“Last year I didn't have many friends,” says Andrew. “I started going to GSA and I've made so many friends so far.”

The GSA has not only changed members' lives, it's shaped the whole school. When Storey wanted trans-affirming athletics, advisors and GSA members quickly mobilized alongside them. The GSA is also behind the abundance of pride flags decorating the walls of the school. Indeed, the halls of CVU are plastered with rainbows and statements of support and belonging: an unmistakable statement that LGBTQ+ youth are welcome here. Ace says that this visibility — of the GSA, and of LGBTQ+ and allied peers and adults — makes everyone feel “more open to being themselves.” —>

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

When your 4-year-old child comes out as transgender in Texas, you start considering all of your options. And sometimes those lead you, virtually and literally, to Vermont and Outright.

Vera and Jeremiah were living in Austin when their child, Elli, came out as transgender. “We hadn't run into hostility or bigotry in our community, but inside the capitol building, it was a horror show.” With anti-trans legislation threatening to tear their family apart, they knew something had to change.

“When I overlaid a climate projection map over states where our children are considered normal, all that's left is New England.” This got the family looking at Vermont. It was then they discovered TransParent Group and began attending the virtual meetings. **The accepting community and safe landing place they found at Outright ultimately tipped the scales.**

“We've only visited Vermont once, but we already feel incredibly welcome.” At the ready with realtor connections and hiking trail recommendations, fellow TransParent Group members helped the family envision their future here. When they came for their visit, the families organized a creemee outing where Elli and sibling Otto connected with other kids.

“They've asked several times since then if they'll get to hang out with their new friends again,” says Vera. And each time, she tells them: “Absolutely, you will. They're waiting for you up there.”



Youth everywhere deserve this kind of close, supportive community, and this GSA is doing their part to share the love. Roman urges, “You can say that you're supportive, but that's only one step. You have to take action.” The group has tapped into the statewide GSA Network to send care packages to youth from across Vermont. They've even branched out to support youth in Texas and Florida. Alex wants recipients to “remember that you're not alone.” “If you feel like you don't belong, you belong somewhere,” adds Alaina.

Ace puts it plainly, and powerfully:

“We're here, so you can be here too.”

The Joy You Spark

How do you measure belonging? It's a novel voice filling the open mic stage, a first-year camper heading home with the email addresses of new friends, and a classroom wall plastered with messages of support. And it's a little tally too — so that's what you find here. **We hope you see your glittery fingerprints all over it — from the gatherings you made possible to the gifts you gave, and all the smiles and rainbows in between.**



BY THE NUMBERS

1,029

Youth

51

Families

14

Youth Organizers

104

Parents

78

GSAs

3,137

Youth-Serving Professionals

2,200

Heck Yeah's shared

147

Lawn flamingos at outdoor meetups

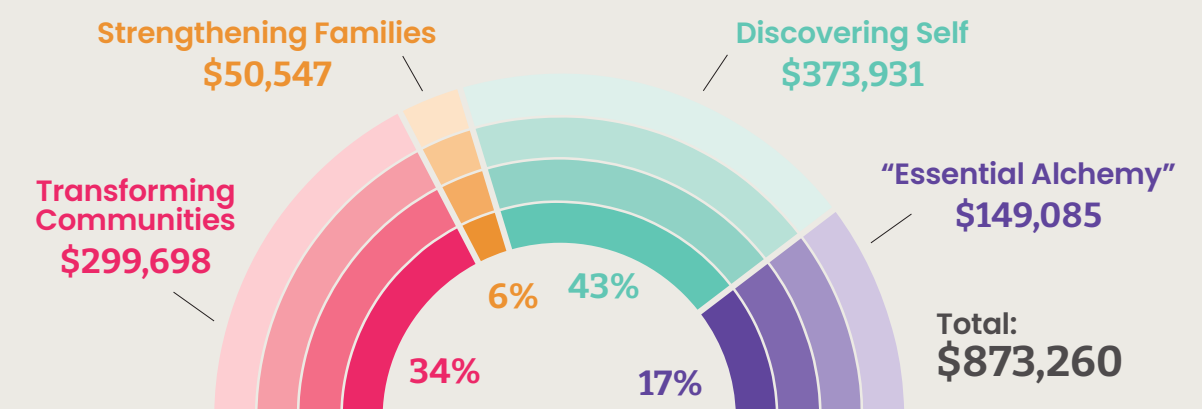
268

Marshmallows toasted

Top 3 Requested Songs:

- “Bohemian Rhapsody” by Queen
- “Mr. Brightside” by The Killers
- “I Wanna Dance With Somebody” by Whitney Houston

WHAT IT COST BY AREA OF WORK



WHAT YOU RAISED

