JQY supports and empowers LGBTQ youth in the Jewish community, with a special focus on teens and young adults from Orthodox, Chasidic, and Sephardic/Mizrahi homes.
OUR MISSION

JQY (Jewish Queer Youth) is a nonprofit organization that supports and empowers LGBTQ youth in the Jewish community, with a special focus on teens and young adults from Orthodox, Chasidic, and Sephardic/Mizrahi homes.

JQY IS THERE

In 2021 JQY has stepped up to meet this need by providing targeted support resources in nearly every aspect of our teens' lives. Whether at home or on-the-go, in person or online, in school or during holidays, JQY is there. This report highlights the multi-faceted approach JQY has taken in 2021 to offer comprehensive and culturally competent clinical support to Jewish queer youth.

JQY IS TRULY EVERYWHERE

Thanks to Paul Austin and Dalip Girdhar, we end this year with a $1 million gift to help JQY expand our services to Jewish communities all over the country. If you are an LGBTQ young person growing up in an Orthodox home you are not alone. JQY is here for you.

Even in the best of times, LGBTQ youth from Orthodox backgrounds are extremely vulnerable. Our drop-in intake interviews reveal that over 70% of our participants have reported suicidality in their past. While the 2021 mental health crisis is certainly widespread and deeply impacts youth from every corner of the Jewish community, we know from the recent community impact study commissioned by UJA-Federation of New York that LGBTQ young people were of the populations most hard hit in terms of mental health over the last year.

JQY IS HERE,
JQY IS THERE,
JQY IS TRULY EVERYWHERE!
JQY IS...

1. IN YOUR POCKET
2. AT HOME & IN PERSON
3. IN HIGH SCHOOLS & IN ISRAEL
4. IN COLLEGE
5. ON YOUR FEED
6. CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS
7. IN ORTHODOXY & IN YOUR FUTURE
8. HERE IN YOUR TIME OF NEED & JQY IS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY
**THE JQY APP**  
(Ages 17+)

An interactive virtual resource connecting you to the global Jewish queer community with multiple groups for youth, parents, educators and mental health professionals.

**THE QUEER SHMEAR**  
(Ages 13-17)

A lively interactive moderated WhatsApp group where teens can meet, support each other, and share their daily adventures, both good and bad.
VIRTUAL DROP-IN CENTER

We believe that once we offer a resource for our teens, we cannot take it away. So in 2021, we committed to making the Virtual Drop-in Center part of our permanent programs. Each week, Jewish queer youth from all over the world virtually drop-in to this comprehensive support space, meet friends, access social workers, and build collective self-esteem.

CLOSEUP CONVERSATIONS

Guided closed small group discussions over the course of eight weeks on issues relevant to growing up queer in Orthodox families. Topics have included “talking with your parents about gender,” “being Orthodox and asexual,” “healthy relationships,” and “dealing with both antisemitism and queerphobia.”

FIRESIDE CHATS

Think of it as “office hours meets zoom & shmooze!” Come with questions for JQY staff (or come with answers!), hear what’s coming up, update us on your life, chill with new and old friends, or just pop in and say hey.

NEW IN-PERSON DROP-IN CENTER

In Fall 2021, we reopened our weekly in-person Drop-in Center in a brand new Manhattan location. We now offer free transportation for teens from around New York. Equipped with a game room, quiet room, private intake/check-in rooms, and kosher pizza, the new Drop-in Center is a one-of-a-kind experience.
SUPPORTING GSA’S
(official & unofficial)

Teens are heroically starting successful GSA’s at their yeshiva high schools and JQY is there to help with funding, resources, guidance, mental health support and advocacy. Currently, we support four unofficial GSA’s at Orthodox high schools in New York.

HIGH SCHOOL PODCAST

"The Your Life Sucks Podcast" is a teen mental health podcast created by our JQY high school intern, Ben Small, featuring the stories of queer teens in Orthodox high schools.

JQY IN HIGH SCHOOLS

HIGH SCHOOL PODCAST

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JQY IN ISRAEL

YIP
(Yeshiva Inclusion Project)

Helping queer teens find LGBTQ friendly gap year yeshiva programs in Israel.

Supporting queer students currently in their gap year programs through online group forums, zoom get-togethers, and in-person dinners.

ANYQUEER IN ISRAEL

Connecting queer gap year yeshiva students in Israel to queer friendly shabbos hosts in Israel.

VOLUNTEERS APPLIED WITHIN 48 HOURS TO HOST STUDENTS FOR SHABBAT

4
UNOFFICIAL GSA’S AT ORTHODOX HIGH SCHOOLS IN NY WERE SUPPORTED BY JQY IN 2021

79
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UNOFFICIAL GSA’S AT ORTHODOX HIGH SCHOOLS IN NY WERE SUPPORTED BY JQY IN 2021

VOLUNTEERS APPLIED WITHIN 48 HOURS TO HOST STUDENTS FOR SHABBAT
JQYU

JQYU (JQY University) is a cross-campus network for LGBTQ Jewish college students. JQYU serves as an umbrella community for queer Jewish campus organizations as well as queer Jewish individual students.

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

SUPPORTING THE YU PRIDE ALLIANCE

YESHIVA UNIVERSITY

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

GESHER

The Gesher Fellowship is one year fellowship for a select group of queer Jewish college leaders, empowering them to build bridges between their campus communities.
1.3 MILLION VIEWS ON IG REELS & TIKTOK

REELS & TIKTOK
We have gone viral with incredible new content, featuring Chana, Linda the Librarian, Shemmy & Pumpkin (dogs of JQY), and the JQY staff.

MORE THAN

THE LGBT LOGS
Ezra, Daphna, Daniel, Noa, Gittel, and Judah; Six individuals share their stories of queer awakenings, navigating queer and Jewish identities, the intersectionality of queerness and mental health, and queer joy. Tune in to the JQY app weekly to read a new chapter.
JQY ON THE HOLIDAYS

JQY PURIM
JQY hosted a virtual community megilla reading and dance party with special guests, queer Israeli pop star, Ivri Lider, and the JQY Muppets.

JQY PRIDE
This year we celebrated Pride online at our Jew York Pride celebration, on our rooftop Pride-Nachas event, and on the streets, where JQY lead the only Jewish queer marching group in New York’s Queer Liberation March.

JQY CHANUKAH CONCERT STARRING SHLOCK ROCK
Shtultz is a JQY program that focuses on outreach and support for Yiddish speaking teens from Chassidic and Yeshivish backgrounds.

10 THINGS NOT TO SAY WHEN SOMEONE COMES OUT IN YOUR ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

10 THINGS NOT TO SAY WHEN SOMEONE COMES OUT IN YOUR ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

WHY PRIDE? FEATURING PINKY AND GRANDMA CIRCLEBURG

OHR TORAH STONE PANEL

Executive Director, Rachael Fried, presented on a panel for Ohr Torah Stone, ‘LGBTQ Jews and the Orthodox Community: Where Things Stand and Where They’re Going.’

CHOSEN FAMILY PROJECT

Helping young Jewish queer people envision a future where family building is possible. In 2021, JQY organized a “Queer Jews Having Babies” panel. This groundbreaking event featured experts on surrogacy, fertility, and adoption and covered some legal and halachic ways in which LGBTQ Jews can build families of their own.
When in need of support, JQYers can always call or text our warmline to speak with a JQY social worker.

(551)JQY-HOPE
(551-579-4673)

337 INDIVIDUAL CALLS & TEXTS

19% INCREASE IN CRISIS CALLS AND TEXTS *COMARED TO 2020

JQY received a $1M donation to expand nationally and open up Drop-in programming in Chicago, Baltimore, Teaneck, & Southern Florida.
THE JQY TEAM

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

OPERATIONAL STAFF
RACHAEL FRIED  
Executive Director

CHANA WEISS  
Operations Associate

DENAH EMERSON  
Designer & Drop-in Center Admin

GILA ROMANOFF  
Drop-in Admin & Culinary Programming

ARI WEITZ  
Teen Outreach Coordinator

SHAYNA HERSZAGE  
Gesher Fellowship Coordinator

CLINICAL STAFF
MORDECHAI LEVOVITZ  
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TALI BENKOE  
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DR. SARA GLASS  
Clinical Supervisor

DANI WEISS  
Clinical Intern

YOSEF RIVKIN  
Clinical Intern

THANK YOU to all who have supported JQY throughout this extremely unpredictable year. We are incredibly blessed to have foundational funding and the support of many, many individuals and alumni who make this work possible. 26% of our 2021 $563,000 budget comes from personal donations under $5,000, with an average gift of $110.88. We invite you to join us and support the continuity of this life-saving work by making a donation at jqy.org/donate. We are forever grateful for the generosity of our community.

JQY FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORTERS
Aviv Foundation  
The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation  
Hesed Foundation  
Natan Fund  
Neshamot  
The P. Austin Family Foundation  
Polis-Schutz Family Fund  
Project Accelerate  
ROI Community  
UJA-Federation of NY  
UpStart  
Slingshot’s 2021 10 to Watch List

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