



# OutCasting public radio's nationally-distributed LGBTQ youth programs and podcasts

## Uniting LGBTQ youth, straight allies, and the power of public radio in advocacy for a less unjust world

Media for the Public Good, Inc., is a Westchester-based nonprofit public media organization that produces OutCasting and OutCasting Overtime, which collectively reach listeners online and on more than 200 public radio stations.

Young people, mainly of high school age but also including middle school and college-age people, gather at OutCasting's southern Westchester studio every week to create cutting edge issue-based LGBTQ programming.

**Along the way, they learn important skills in journalism, researching, writing and speaking for broadcast, professional communication, studio operations, digital editing and production, and more.**

OutCasting is a resource for educators who know students who

- may be interested in or struggling with possible LGBTQ identities and could benefit by connecting with the LGBTQ community
- might be interested for other reasons (journalism, podcasting, audio production, interviewing, etc.)

**We welcome youth participants who are LGBTQ (closeted or out) and straight allies.**

It is extremely rare that people of this age have the opportunity to work substantively on nationally distributed public radio programs, so participation at OutCasting is a **rare distinction on job and college applications.**



## Being LGBTQ

The LGBTQ experience in the United States presents stark, polarizing contrasts: growing public acceptance of LGBTQ people, yet a continuing epidemic of bullying and youth suicide; nationwide marriage equality, yet anti-LGBTQ “religious liberty” bills that would allow businesses to discriminate against LGBTQ people in ways that would be impermissible for any other minority.

The statistics for LGBTQ youth are staggering. Huge percentages hear negative comments from their families, are threatened verbally, or are bullied. They can become homeless and susceptible to violence and suicide.

## OutCasting’s Response

OutCasting gives our LGBTQ participants a way to connect with other young people who may be facing some of the same issues they are. We help build confidence and self esteem. Our non-LGBTQ participants, passive supporters at the start, become active, informed allies. We all talk about issues important to LGBTQ people, from bullying and youth suicide prevention to marriage equality and activism. OutCasters connect with the world of LGBTQ people and ideas, interviewing such well-known authorities as Evan Wolfson, the civil rights lawyer and key architect of the marriage equality movement, and Gilbert Baker, the legendary activist who created the rainbow flag.

Out of all of this comes high quality public radio programming **from** the fresh perspectives of LGBTQ youth and straight allies, **for** a general public radio audience that’s open to LGBTQ issues but may not know much about them. In-depth explorations of these issues from the rarely-heard young voices that OutCasting presents can affect people differently – and perhaps more effectively – than mainstream media, helping to create an environment for better public policy on LGBTQ issues.



**“In-depth, well researched, and punchy in the right ways... NPR-level production values.... What makes all this remarkable is that most of the people working on the show... are barely old enough to drive.”**

**– The Advocate**

### **How you can help your students get involved:**

- **Gather** a group of potentially interested students – perhaps members of your school’s GSA, A/V clubs, etc. – and **invite** OutCasting producer Marc Sophos to visit your school and talk with them about the program. This produces the best results and is our preferred method, if you can manage it.
- If you know of students who might benefit, please **put them in touch with us** via the contact page at our web site, <https://mfpg.org>
- Get **more info** at <https://mfpg.org/join>

“At a time when my son was bullied and believed himself to be an outsider, OutCasting encouraged him to see the world as a welcoming and kind place.” – Josefa