

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

time out youth



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FROM THE CEO'S DESK

I know I am not alone in saying that so many of us have been moving through the past year with a lot of fear and overwhelm. We are living through an ever-changing political and social landscape that makes it hard to feel like we're on solid ground. It's hard to prepare because we don't know what's coming, so we burn out in our hypervigilance trying to protect ourselves and our loved ones. What grounds me as a leader during these challenging times is that the young people who need our care and protection the most experience this overwhelm and hypervigilance regularly, because our systems often fail those who need it most. At Time Out Youth, we stay rooted in the truth that **until every one of our young people has access to safe and secure housing, medical and mental health support, and a community that celebrates the beauty and fullness of their humanity, we still have a lot of work to do.**

In this report, I'm proud to share our newly launched three-year strategic plan that is big, audacious and incredibly possible. This plan was informed by our young people, our donors, staff and board members, and our supporters who have the same vision for our young people that we do: **a safe and inclusive community where our young people have what they need to reach their fullest potential.**

In community,
Sarah Mikhail
Chief Executive Officer





MARCO'S STORY

Marco (he/they), age 25, first came to Time Out Youth when they were a sophomore in high school. Walking through the doors, he was shocked. **"This was a place I thought I would only see in a larger city, like in New York or California. The fact it existed in Charlotte was very exciting."** Quickly, he became a part of the Time Out Youth family, joining the Center for programs and services.

For many years, Marco received mental health counseling from TOY. In conversation, he calls our clinicians "amazing" and **"vital to people's wellbeing."** They also found support from our groups, such as Melanin & MagiQ, which offered space to connect about his experience as a Latino person, and Sober Curious, which was "very helpful in realizing how important it was to stay clean." His favorite memory of TOY? Celebrating on our float at Charlotte Pride and hearing everyone cheer.

Time Out Youth also assisted Marco with housing support, including emergency financial assistance when it was needed. Today, Marco is employed, housed, and wants to go to school to pursue social work and fine arts. Based on their experiences with TOY, Marco also applied and was selected as a **Youth Consultant for Point Source Youth's THAP-IN Program**. This program will partner with Time Out Youth in 2026 to provide $150,000 in Direct Cash Transfers to young people. "I love being on this side of it actually, because I get to see how it all happens. I really want to do this kind of work in the future...It could really become a pivotal opportunity for the people receiving the cash transfers," they said.

Reflecting on his journey just before aging out of our services, Marco stated, **"I'm so much more secure in myself. I feel like I'm my fully realized self - what I envisioned when I first walked in here."** We are incredibly proud of Marco and cannot wait to see what he accomplishes next.



WHO WE ARE

Time Out Youth is a place where you can experience a sense of belonging and community. Whether you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, a straight ally – or just don't want to be labeled, you will be welcomed here. Some of our youth are out, some are partially out, and some are not out at all. Time Out Youth offers a safe space for all and fully respects the journey of each individual. While at Time Out Youth, you are not expected to be anyone or anything except who you are.

Our Mission: To support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth by offering vital programs, fostering unconditional acceptance, and creating safe spaces for self-expression through leadership, community support and advocacy.

Our Vision: To inspire inclusive communities where all youth are equally empowered to reach their true potential.

Our Values: Youth Voice, Respect, Acceptance, Honesty, Confidentiality, Individuality

STAFF MEMBERS

Sarah Mikhail, LMSW
Chief Executive Officer

Shaq Clarke, LCSWA
Chief Program Officer

David Samson
Chief Operating Officer

Lily Asaad, LCSW
Mental Health Counselor

Ayanna Bridges
Intake Specialist

Durell Brown
Director of Housing and Supportive Services

Basia Collins
Housing Manager

Dej'a Davis, MSW
Programs Assistant

Jorge Fernandez
Staff Accountant

Elissa Miller
Communications Manager

Greg Raynor
Director of Individual and Planned Giving

Haeley Robinson, MSW
Senior Director of Strategic Engagement

Pamela Schipani-Boyce, LCMHC-A
Programs Manager

Cierra Turner, MSW, LCSWA
Director of Finance & Operations

Kailey Webb
Development Operations Manager

Danielle Willis, LCSW
Senior Director of Client Services

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeffrey Paul Wolff
Board Chair

McKinzey Sayers
Vice Chair

Asia Washington
Treasurer

Annie Burquest
Secretary

Abi Dandapani
Member-At-Large

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Angel Diaz
Jeremy Fitzgerald
Jesse Elkins
Tim Gibson
Lamont Greene
Andrew Joyner
Katie Keels
Kayla Kostarelos
Cramer McCullen, MD
Tristan Phipps
Zach Porfiris
Lee Robertson
Solita Royal
Travis Stevens
Kody Timmers

Thank you to the following people who departed our Board in 2025: Annie Burquest, Erin Barbee, Bryan Quick, and Kathy Giannuzzi. We are grateful for your hard work and support of our community!

A BOLD VISION

We spent 2025 thinking critically about the future. Where are we needed? Throughout the year, we collected feedback from our stakeholders: donors, youth. The result? A bold strategic plan for the next three years, one that our services. We are excited to embark

1. Housing Expansion

Over the past three years, Time Out Youth has helped 126 young people secure safe, stable housing – proof of both the need and what's possible. By the end of 2028, we will have the ability to house young people in our very own housing unit. We commit to spending the next three years researching housing models, property developments, and talking to our young people about what our unique housing can offer. We are excited to remove barriers and increase access so our queer and trans youth have a safe place to call home.

2. Clinical Expansion

Time Out Youth clinical services continue to grow, as do the needs of our young people. Currently, we offer no-cost mental health counseling for those who are under and uninsured. By the end of 2028, we will be home to comprehensive mental health clinic that will remain rooted in access, offering no-cost care for those who need it, alongside a fee-for-service option to help sustain and expand our impact. This "one-stop shop" for mental health will include medication management, psychiatry services, and psychological assessments.

3. Access

Time Out Youth wants to discuss who isn't making it into our doors. Over the next three years, we aim to address barriers to our services and make sure that **all** LGBTQ+ youth can access our space. By the end of 2028, we will have improved accessible spaces, expanded language access in all service areas, and will center disability justice in all areas of our work.

FOR THE FUTURE

How can more youth access our services? Is there anything we are missing? volunteers, Board members, community partners, and – most importantly – our focuses on expansion, growth, and ensuring all LGBTQ+ youth are able to utilize on this journey. Will you join with us?

4. Advocacy

Our youth said it clearly: at a time in which their rights are under attack, they want us to stand up for them. We are exploring what that means: who are our partners in this space? What issues matter most to our youth? How do we most effectively advocate for their needs? This research will guide us into the future as we navigate advocacy at Time Out Youth. Currently, advocacy is in our mission statement, as we work to create safe spaces for unconditional acceptance through leadership, community, support, and advocacy. Every day, this work teaches youth how to advocate for themselves in a hostile climate. By the end of 2028, Time Out Youth will have a sound advocacy strategy that centers the lived experiences of our queer and trans youth and works in partnership with local and state leaders to advance policies that protect and support them. In this future, our youth will be supported as they actively engage in civil advocacy for their rights.

5. Board Development

Our Board of Directors must reflect the youth that we serve every day at Time Out Youth. We are committed to continuing to build a more diverse Board, one that brings broad perspectives and a deep connection to our LGBTQ youth with a focus on our LGBTQ youth of color. Grounded in strong governance, the Board will grow its capacity and commitment as a fundraising body in direct service of the strategic plan.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

2025 was a difficult year for LGBTQ+ young people. The world around them got harsher – debating their rights, excluding them from healthcare and sports, and platforming voices that instilled fear and hate. And in the face of all of this, Time Out Youth remained a safe and affirming space. In fact, we were able to expand and set records, responding to the deeper needs of our community.

Our Clinical team provided 1,075 counseling sessions to youth, almost double the amount from 2024! We also launched a DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy) Skills Group, which gave young people helpful tools to manage emotions and reduce stress. Meanwhile, our Housing department helped 47 youth transition into housing, more than ever before. They continued to build relationships with community partners, such as Charlotte's Housing Collaborative, and responded to emergent needs by expanding food support during disruptions to SNAP.

The Programs team continued to create diverse and engaging programs for our youth, launching new Wellness activities and additional drop-ins on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Major events, like Trans Day of Visibility and Friendsgiving, helped youth find safe spaces to celebrate. Additionally, we sought to expand our young people's access to the wider community, taking youth on trips to ASPYRE leadership camp in Raleigh as well as museums, outdoor experiences, amuesment parks, and more during our summer Camp OUT program.

This was only possible due to an outpouring of support from the community around us. Eager to get involved and find ways to support LGBTQ+ young people, 87 youth-serving professionals from around the Carolinas attended our Carolina Conference on Queer Youth. We also expanded our internship program, hosting 11 interns over the course of 2025. Interns assisted with projects such as resume workshops for youth, counseling services, and program development.

Our volunteers also made a strong impact on our youth, with 189 volunteers assisting throughout the year by providing dinners, helping with programs, and representing us at outreach events. Our ASCEND Gala in October clearly demonstrated our community's commitment, as we raised $179,892 to fund our vital services. Thank you for making this work possible!

BY THE NUMBERS

2,215 visits to our drop-in space

47 youth housed

372 new youth

1,075 counseling sessions

3,277 people reached through trainings, consultations, and community events

$127,946 in financial assistance provided

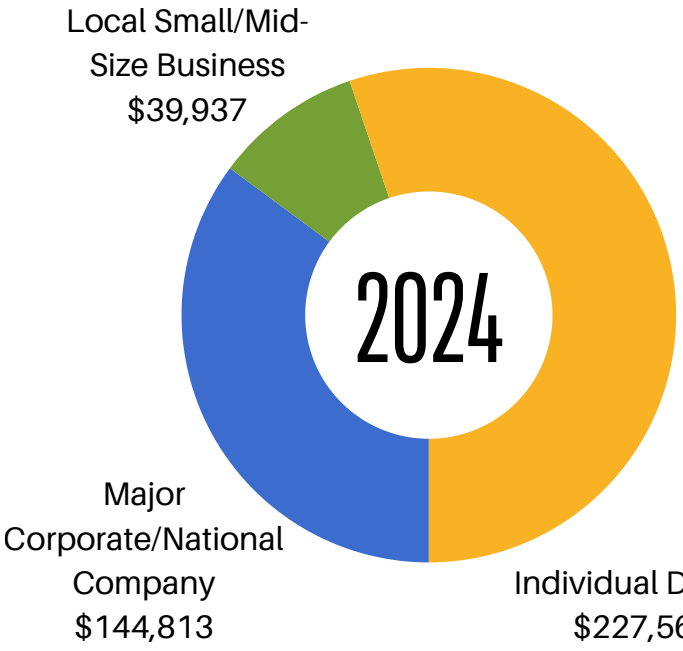
189 volunteers

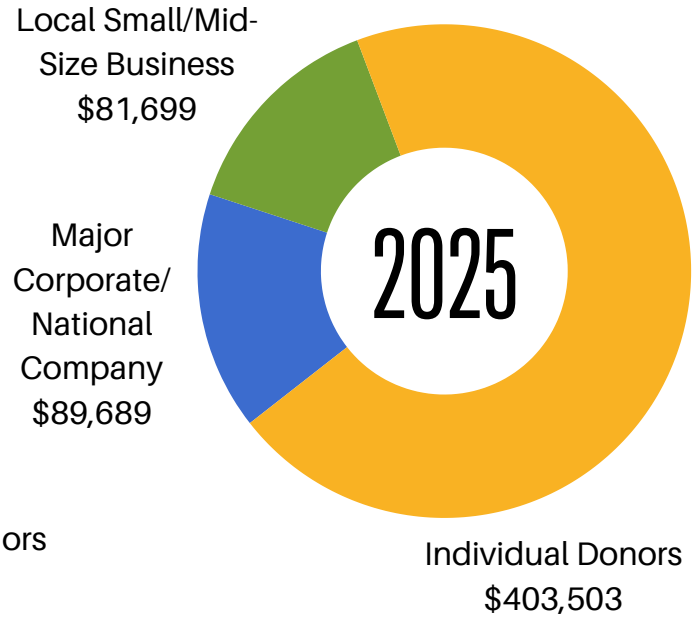
80 youth in counseling

87 attendees at Carolina Conference on Queer Youth

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Small Businesses & Individual Donors Stepped Up In 2025





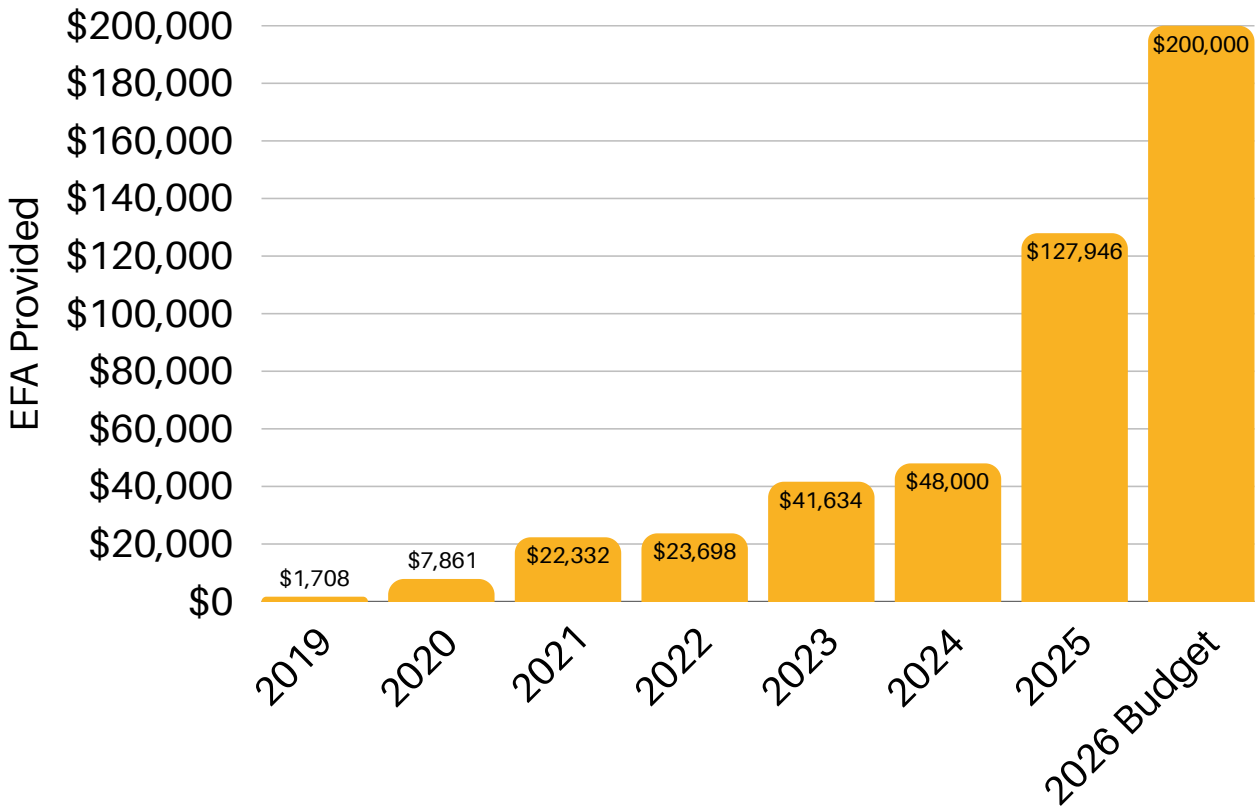
2025 was a hard year for nonprofits, especially those working on issues related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. As Time Out Youth navigated a changing philanthropic landscape, we noticed a large pullback in major corporate giving support. In 2024, this giving totaled $144,813. In 2025, that number fell dramatically to $89,689, a decrease of $55,124. For an organization providing vital assisstance to LGBTQ+ youth, this kind of shift matters. It affects not only the dollars available for programs, but also the stability nonprofits rely on to plan for the future.

The hero of this story? Our community. After Time Out Youth went public about an expected funding gap from this loss, locally-owned small and mid-size businesses stepped up to support our work. In just one year, they **more than doubled their giving**, growing from $39,937 to $81,699. We gained **21 new small & mid-size business partners** – from 33 in 2024 to 54 in 2025. We also received additional support from individual donors, helping to narrow this giving gap. **In 2025, donors gave $403,503** to support LGBTQ+ young people, an **increase of 77%** over the previous year. This outpouring of support reminded us that Time Out Youth's work has always been rooted in the people who believe deeply in this mission. We are incredibly grateful to every donor, business owner, partner, and neighbor who helped ensure LGBTQ+ youth continued to feel safe, seen, and celebrated.

Emergency Financial Assistance Grew Exponentially

Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) at Time Out Youth exists for the moments that cannot wait. A security deposit that stands between a young person and the street. A utility bill that keeps the lights on. A car repair that makes it possible to get to work, to school, and to safety. These are the moments where one bill paid or one repair covered changes what happens next. Over the past seven years, Time Out Youth has invested heavily in Emergency Financial Assistance funds, an intentional choice rooted in our youth's needs. As reflected in the chart below, both the needs of our youth and our response have grown significantly over time. From spending only $1,708 on EFA in 2019 to $127,946 in 2025, this increase reflects the hard work of our Housing & Supportive Services staff and an increased ability to help our young people with immediate support during moments where things might otherwise unravel.

In 2026, we're making our most ambitious commitment yet: a $200,000 investment in Emergency Financial Assistance. This expansion is part of a broader effort to get resources into the hands of young people faster and with fewer barriers. It allows us to respond in real time – when a situation is still solvable and a young person is still within reach of stability. We are grateful to Point Source Youth's THAP-IN Program, The Leon Levine Foundation, The City of Charlotte, and an immovably committed group of individual donors who are helping to fund this critical initiative.



Housing Commitments: A 2017 Capital Campaign Update

From 2017 - 2020, Time Out Youth ran a Capital Campaign titled "HOME: The Time is NOW!" This campaign, pitched in three phases, included the purchase of our current building (phase one) and funds to create a transitional living shelter (phases two and three). Over the years, we've been asked several questions about the outcome of this campaign. A few of the most common ones are answered below. Thank you for your dedication over the years as we continue to expand our housing capacity.

Was the 2017 - 2020 Capital Campaign successful?

The many contributions made during Phase One allowed us to move into our permanent home on Monroe Road! Every day, youth utilize the full space for therapy appointments, support groups, housing support, and more. The security and stability of owning our home is vital support for a nonprofit. Phases Two & Three were not completed in the way we originally envisioned in 2017.

What happened to the plans for a transitional living shelter?

Our feasibility study for this project revealed that, at the time, our community already had several strong partners providing housing solutions for LGBTQ+ youth. We realized that collaborating with these partners and referring youth to existing resources would be more effective than building new housing. Based on these findings, we adopted a scattered housing model in collaboration with these partners, which allowed us to provide flexible, individualized housing solutions for our youth.

Does Time Out Youth still have the funds raised for this project?

The approximately $1 million raised for Phase Two is safely held at the Foundation for the Carolinas. These funds have not been wasted and remain secure as we continue to explore the best ways to support our youth.

What is next for TOY housing in 2026?

In the near decade since our feasibility study was conducted, the needs of our youth have grown. In 2025, we housed more young people than ever before – a 27% increase from the previous year. Despite strong partnerships, we continue to see increasing discrimination against TOY youth in the housing space. As part of our new strategic plan, Time Out Youth is exploring housing models and revisiting the need for dedicated LGBTQ+ housing supports. By 2028, we plan to house young people in our very own housing unit! We are excited for this new phase of the future.

Thank you to Jerry Washington, Annie Burquest, Fenix Fotography, Dej'a Davis, and Elissa Miller for the photography included in this Annual Report.



time out youth

In a difficult time for LGBTQ+ youth, your belief in empowering queer and trans young people was more important than ever. Thank you for your support over the past year. Thank you for showing up, making a difference, and letting LGBTQ+ youth know they have someone in their corner.