



April 1st, 2021

To our community,

Earlier this year, we released two statements on [January 11th](#) and [January 14th](#) in response to a situation where our work was questioned and attacked. We have recently been informed that these attacks have continued.

For 27 years, LGBT YouthLine has been a 2SLGBTQ+ youth-led organization providing peer support and leadership opportunities to youth across Ontario. Our anonymous HelpLine is the only support available to most youth – especially during this pandemic when chat, text, and phone supports are the only safe available options for many youth in Ontario. With youth leading every level of our organization, we know too well the many gaps in information and resources faced by youth when exploring their identities and relationships. We know that youth, whether they are 10 or 29, know what they need.

YouthLine’s work is guided by a set of core values that respect and affirm youth in all their experiences. We support them to make safe and healthy decisions that work for them. That is why youth, and those supporting youth, continue to trust YouthLine to provide reliable and appropriate information, including ways to navigate systems like healthcare, employment, and schools, as well as to manage peer, family, and intimate relationships.

Just this year, we have been accused of being a “smut site” and a “recruitment site” that is exploiting youth. These comments are not new - they are part of a long history of 2SLGBTQ+ people, groups, communities, and spaces being labelled as inappropriate, invalid, and even illegal. Our communities know too well there is a very real negative impact when we are verbally attacked. Each time, we see a rise in hate calls and negative attention on our lines, putting undue stress, harm, and labour on our hard-working youth volunteer and staff team, who help build community and support for thousands of 2SLGBTQ+ youth each year.

Despite and in the face of these comments, we know the work we do has meaningful impact. We stand by our work, our values, and our approach. We will continue to follow the leadership of youth and respond to their needs.

www.youthline.ca
info@youthline.ca
1-888-687-9688 / 416-962-2232

PO Box 73118, Wood Street PO
Toronto ON M4Y 2W5
Charity# 89756 4951 RR001



For the last 27 years, our supporters have helped us ensure that youth can reach us safely and anonymously to access the much-needed resources we provide. **Our community has shown up for us before, and we know you will again.** Right now, we ask our supporters and community partners to:

- Share this statement in your networks along with your support
- Share the impact YouthLine’s work has had on you or those you support
- Become a YL BFF [with a monthly donation](#), or [make a one-time donation](#) so we can feel confident in our financial resources to continue our work, while building our internal infrastructure to deal with attacks like this

Please tag us on social media @lgbtyouthline. We also encourage you to reach out to us at board@youthline.ca if you have other tangible ways to support us.

To our 2SLGBTQ+ youth community: you are loved and supported and we will continue to be here for you.

With gratitude,

Juan Luis Garrido
Youth Chair, Board of Directors
board@youthline.ca

Berkha Gupta
Executive Director
berkhag@youthline.ca

About LGBT YouthLine: LGBT YouthLine is a Queer, Trans, Two-Spirit youth-led organization that affirms and supports the experiences of youth (29 and under) across Ontario. We do this by:

- Providing anonymous peer support through our HelpLine and referrals;
- Training youth to provide support to other youth; and
- Providing resources so youth can make informed decisions.

YouthLine has been operating since 1994. Our HelpLine provides info, resources, and support through trained peer supporters ages 16-29 with a diversity of 2SLGBTQ+ identities and lived experiences.

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