

QUEERSPACE collective launches mentorship program for Minnesota LGBTQ+ youth to feel empowered to be their true selves

LGBTQ+ MENTOR OPPORTUNITY!

LGBTQ+ YOUTH WHO HAVE A MENTOR
ARE 3 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO
GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL



WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

QUEERSPACECOLLECTIVE.ORG

Minnesota, Minneapolis, Jun 4, 2021 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Newly formed [QUEERSPACE collective](https://queerspacecollective.org) proudly announces the launch of its exciting new initiative, **QUEERSPACE hangouts**, an intergenerational mentorship program creating safe, inclusive space to support LGBTQ+ youth. The 2021 pilot program represents the organization's first step to fulfill its vision for all LGBTQ+ youth to have a supportive community to help them develop a strong sense of pride in who they are, where they come from and where they want to go.

In the United States, LGBTQ+ youth represent some of the most vulnerable and underserved people in our country. Nearly 85% of LGBTQ+ youth encounter harassment in their school and they are five times more likely to attempt suicide than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. In addition, LGBTQ+ youth are in greater

danger of being homeless, representing approximately 40% of the homeless youth population.

Studies show that having one supportive adult in the life of an LGBTQ+ youth can reduce the risk of suicide by 40%. Many LGBTQ+ youth feel isolated and, for a variety of reasons, the support they need may not be accessible. Given such a landscape, there is a need for caring adults, advocates, and mentors now more than ever. Mentorship, a proven model to improve outcomes in at-risk youth, can serve as an effective means to fill this gap.

“As a young person, I was fortunate to be surrounded by many LGBTQ+ adults, which provided an amazing foundation of support when I came out in my early 20s. When I started looking into resources available today for LGBTQ+ youth, I was surprised to find that of 5,000 youth mentorship programs across our nation, fewer than 1%, offer any formal programming for LGBTQ+ youth,” said Nicki Hangsleben, founder and executive director of QUEERSPACE collective. “When we saw the statistics around the challenges facing youth in our community and the limited resources, we knew that not only was this an issue of justice but that we have a responsibility to respond.”

The new youth-centric intergenerational mentorship program from QUEERSPACE collective, QUEERSPACE hangouts will match LGBTQ+ youth with LGBTQ+ adults for one-on-one mentorship. Youth and mentors will meet weekly to build a relationship, set and accomplish goals and have some fun. Monthly mentoring events from QUEERSPACE will provide both mentors and mentees with a broader sense of community and feelings of inclusivity and pride.

“Our programs will support youth from a diversity of social, economic and racial backgrounds, and we are especially committed to helping the youth of color who also identify as LGBTQ+,” continued Hangsleben. “LGBTQ+ youth of color sits at the intersection of multiple identities and face additional challenges that we want to support through QUEERSPACE hangouts.”

The **QUEERSPACE hangouts** pilot program will leverage local partnerships to reach youth in the Twin Cities with expansion to greater Minnesota in 2022. QUEERSPACE collective is seeking mentor volunteers as well as donations to support its programs. To learn more about program requirements, including training and background checks, visit queerspacecollective.org.

ABOUT QUEERSPACE COLLECTIVE

QUEERSPACE collective is a non-profit organization committed to creating space for LGBTQ+ youth to feel safe and empowered to be their true selves. QUEERSPACE collective provides mentorship and resources to help guide and empower LGBTQ+ youth on their journey to adulthood.
queerspacecollective.org

The Executive Director of **QUEERSPACE collective**, Nicki Hangsleben, is available for interviews about all aspects of the organization and the LGBTQ+ youth community it serves.

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References:

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Source : Queerspace Collective

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