Between September 2003 and December 2004, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund (Lambda) organized Regional Listening Forums in 13 different cities around the country. The objective of these events was to highlight the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth in care. The CWLA/Lambda Regional Listening Forums provided an opportunity for LGBTQ youth in care, and the adults who work with and care for them, to share their experiences and to work together to identify strategies for bringing about lasting change within the child welfare system. Out of the Margins consolidates the responses of the more than 500 youth and adult participants from 22 states who attended the Forums and offered personal stories of actual experiences and concrete solutions for building the capacity of the child welfare system to better meet the needs of LGBTQ young people in care.
Between September 2003 and December 2004, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund (Lambda) organized Regional Listening Forums in 13 different cities around the country. The objective of these events was to highlight the experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth in care. The CWLA-Lambda Regional Listening Forums provided an opportunity for LGBTQ youth in care and the adults who work with and care for them to share their experiences and to work together to identify strategies for bringing about lasting change within the child welfare system.

Out of the Margins consolidates the responses of the more than 500 youth and adult participants from 22 states who attended the Forums and offered personal stories of actual experiences and concrete solutions for building the capacity of the child welfare system to better meet the needs of LGBTQ young people in care.
The Child Welfare League of America is the nation’s oldest and largest membership-based child welfare organization. We are committed to engaging people everywhere in promoting the well-being of children, youth, and their families, and protecting every child from harm. All proceeds from the sale of this book support CWLA’s programs on behalf of children and families.

Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and those with HIV through impact litigation, education, and public policy work.

© 2006 by CWLA, Inc. and Lambda Legal, Inc. All rights reserved. Neither this book nor any part may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, microfilming, and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. For information on this or other CWLA and Lambda Legal publications, contact the Publications Departments at the addresses below.

CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, INC.
HEADQUARTERS
440 First Street, NW, Third Floor, Washington, DC 20001-2085
www.cwla.org

LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND, INC.
HEADQUARTERS
120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005-3904
www.lambdalegal.org
CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ......................................................... v
A Letter of Faith.......................................................... ix
Introduction ............................................................... xi

Chapter 1: Addressing Negative Attitudes About People
Who Are LGBTQ ......................................................... 1
Chapter 2: Safe and Supportive Placements ............................. 17
Chapter 3: Homeless LGBTQ Youth .................................... 33
Chapter 4: Community Resources and Services ......................... 45
Chapter 5: Issues Facing LGBTQ Youth in Schools ..................... 53
Chapter 6: Permanency Planning ........................................ 67
Chapter 7: Transgender Youth ........................................... 79
Chapter 8: Bridging the Rural-Urban Divide .......................... 103
Chapter 9: Faith-Based Child Welfare Services ....................... 111
Chapter 10: Adults Involved with the Child Welfare System .......... 121
Chapter 11: The Utility of the Regional Listening Forums
for Policy, Practice, and Research: A Tripod
by A. Chris Downs, Ph.D. ................................................. 133
Conclusion ........................................................................ 139

Appendix A-1: Adult Invitation ........................................... 143
Appendix A-2: Youth Invitation ........................................... 146
Appendix A-3: Youth Flyer .................................................. 149
Appendix B: Assent Forms .................................................. 150
Appendix C: Listening Forums Outline ................................... 153