

SKYPE VIRTUAL BOOK TOUR

<u>Why Us?</u>	<u>What is Skype?</u>	<u>Virtual Packages</u>
<u>Payment Options</u>	<u>Skype Download</u>	<u>Presentation Directions</u>
<u>Sponsorships</u>	<u>Troubleshooting Tips</u>	<u>Contact Info</u>
<u>Shine-A-Light Nomination for Virtual Skype Tours</u>		

Why Us?

The journey of a family with a GLBT son or daughter can be lonely but with our book and technology such as Skype, answers that were hard to find can now be more accessible. Likewise, a group who is trying to move ahead in their understanding of GLBTQs will have our expertise to draw upon along with excellent resource recommendations we have gathered.

A student from a Wisconsin University said he wished he had read our book before he told his parents. He said he didn't take into account what they were experiencing. Another reader said that he related to so many things in our story including our sons' account of self discovery. Another reader said she had been waiting to meet us so she could look into the eyes of someone who really understands what she and her family are going through. Another reader said we changed her life and how she feels about her son. When we receive phone calls from readers, our conversations can last a couple of hours because they have so much on their minds. The connection with people is so important. It makes a difference and that is what we are all about.

When you find out your child is GLBTQ you aren't sure who you can trust with the family secret. Some families aggressively find ways to get an education on their new family paradigm while others get stuck not knowing where to turn. Our Family Package using Skype allows families anonymity and a listening ear to their feelings, fears and questions. It is intimate and will hopefully help them to turn a corner. We aren't psychologists or theologians and will never play that role. We are parents with a lot of experience having two gay sons and knowing some of what they felt at school, in the workplace and with their friends and family.

What is Skype?

Skype is a free downloadable program which allows you to connect to another computer and have an online conversation, whether it is one person or a room full of people. Oprah frequently uses Skype as a way to interact with the public on her show. Although this is not a brand new technology, we are using it in an innovative way to reach all corners of the country that otherwise may not have access to us because of expense and feasibility of a live appearance. This is how it would work. We highlight your Skype user name on our program screen and hit the call button. It would ring on your end just like a phone except it is ringing on the computer. You would answer and immediately see us on you're your computer screen. From that point, there are a lot of variables depending on your preferences and equipment. We can provide an online group presentation using PowerPoint, video and internet clips. We

will streamline our presentation depending on the group and what you would like us to cover. Our presentation would be followed by a Q/A from participants and/or a discussion around our Ready or Not...Let's Talk Cards which are designed to engage conversation on GLBT topics. We have no fees for our Skype presentation but the family or group has a minimum purchase requirement of book(s) and Let's Talk Discussion Cards. All books are autographed by us before we send them to the family or group's organizer.

We know that some authors have used Skype to talk with children in a school setting because there are some examples of that on the Skype website. We don't know of any author who is connecting with schools, churches, universities, and individual families using Skype as a means to have dialog about a book followed by information about the subject. In this case it is the GLBT journey to acceptance. To our knowledge, no one is offering free presentations for the cost of purchasing book(s). To us it makes sense that we use technology in an effort to make our message affordable for others. Our main goal is to help others at a reasonable cost for you and us. Skype seems the best way to do that. Our live appearances have the same requirements but the group, organization or school would pay our expenses.

How is the Book Tour different from the Virtual SKYPE Presentation? Or is it the same thing?

It is hard to beat a live appearance. We end up with a lot of hugs and personal stories following our appearances. Obviously you don't have the human touch through a computer so we are dependent on making a difference with our words and examples through Skype. Skype can also have its technical difficulties depending on the Internet provider, internet connection, and computer on the user's end. We have a troubleshooting section in a later section. Would we like to appear live in every corner of the US? Of course we would, however, we would not have enough time in our lifetime and certainly not the funds to be able to do so. Our presentation content is the same for both live and Skype but the personal interaction is different. We are going to offer the best opportunity we can for each of our end users.

Virtual Packages

We have live events plus our new and innovative Virtual Skype Presentation! Our Virtual Skype Book Tour entails several different packages from an intimate family talk to group presentations. Skype allows us to go anywhere in the world just by downloading SKYPE and having an Internet connection. Additional equipment would not be required but desirable and would include a data/video projector, a microphone, camera, and speakers if the computer doesn't have a built in microphone or camera. Most schools, libraries, businesses, universities, and churches have this equipment. In addition to a presentation and time for questions/answers, we have a list of resources to help participants with any issue they may need that we can't provide. We feel SKYPE offers the opportunity for us to come to any community's school, university, church, business, public library, Gay/Straight Alliance, PFLAG and book clubs. The family or group doesn't pay for the presentation; they are just required to purchase the appropriate package as described below. We don't know of any other author who is offering this unique opportunity.

Virtual Skype Family Package. For the cost of our book - Ready or Not...They're Gay, and Ready or Not...Let's Talk discussion cards, a family can have an intimate discussion with us about their experience and questions through an interactive SKYPE talk. This is a golden opportunity for a family struggling with their son or daughter's sexuality and feel they don't have someone to talk with about their feelings and questions.

Virtual Skype Small Group Package. For the cost of 10 books of Ready or Not...They're Gay and Ready or Not...Let's Talk discussion cards, a group of 25 or less will receive a presentation about our story using SKYPE followed by Q/A.

Virtual Skype Large Group Package. For the cost of 30 books of Ready or Not...They're Gay and 2 Ready or Not...Let's Talk discussion cards, a group of 50-100 will receive a presentation about our story using SKYPE followed by Q/A. For every 100 after that, they would need to purchase an additional Large Group Package.

Custom Packages are available if the family or group packages don't fit your particular audience needs. We are also doing live presentations with the same criteria as the Skype packages plus our expenses. We have presented at churches, Universities, PFLAGs, Gay/Straight Alliance Groups, Northwest Education Association Convention, Best Buy Corporate Office, Best Buy National Conference, and Target Corporation.

Because of Skype, there isn't a community we can't visit. There is no presentation or travel expenses for the group which enables a cost effective opportunity for universities, churches, schools, Gay/Straight Alliances, PFLAGs and families.

What do you include in your presentation?

We basically have three parts to our presentation. After viewing our book launch video, we provide a short narrated story of our ten year journey using PowerPoint. The second part contains tips for parents, GLBTs, schools and workplaces. The last part is interactive with our family or group members using Ready or Not...Let's Talk Discussion cards along with Q/A. At the very end we share additional resources. If we present to a school, we will add more slides on school issues; if a business, we have slides just for them. In other words, our presentation varies according to the audience.

Do I understand correctly that if I wanted the large group package, I would pay the price of 30 books (and would I receive that number in actual books?) and be able to have 50 to 100 people attend? How would you know I was telling you the truth and not having 150 people?

We would request payment for 30 books and 2 Let's Talk Discussion card sets for a group of 50 to 100 people. The books and card sets would be sent ahead of our presentation because some may want to read the book before our Skype presentation. We would recommend pre-orders, if possible, in case there are more people who may want to attend and purchase a book.

We trust the organizer will give us their best estimate. It could happen that more people show up than expected in which case we would send the appropriate number of books to them following the presentation. They could collect the money from the buyers and then send us a check for the books and cards plus mailing costs. Our reward is knowing we have helped someone and perhaps they will be at ease about their own questions or they will learn something that will help our GLBTs. Making money is not our goal but breaking even is!

What if I had a group of 150 who all wanted a copy of *Ready or Not* to take home with them?

That would certainly be a nice problem to have. If we knew ahead of time, we would gladly send them 150 books. If it was a surprise, all we could do at that point would be to send additional books to the organizer to distribute at a later date or individually to those who wouldn't be able to connect with the organizer.

Payment Options

Participants may use PayPal, check or money order. PayPal is available through our webpage. If you prefer check or money order, we will provide a mailing address via email.

Skype Download

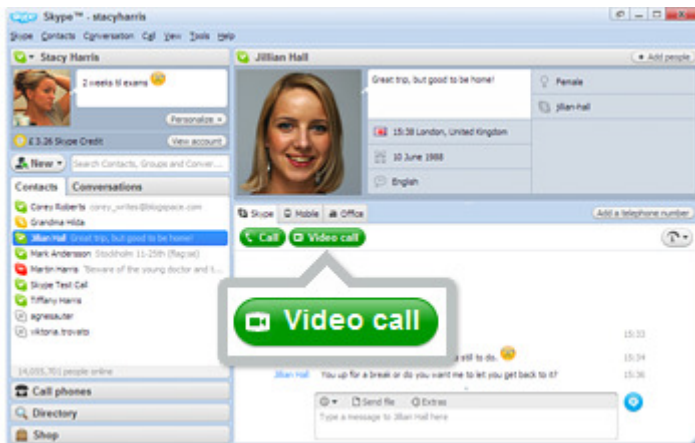
Go to the website www.skype.com.
Download their free version of Skype.

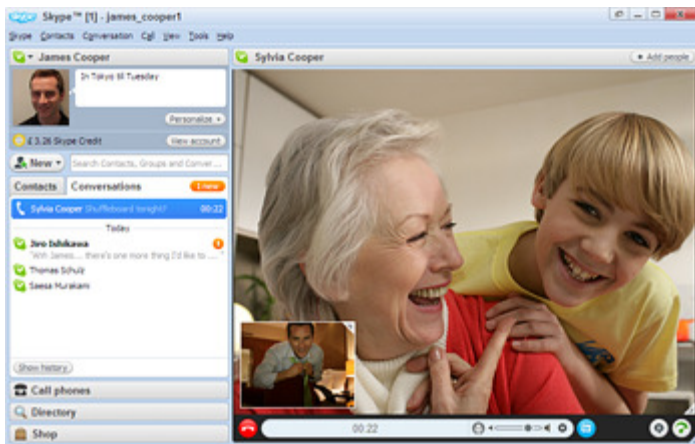
If you choose to be seen by us, make sure you've got a webcam either in your computer screen or as a separate attachment. If it is a separate attachment, check:

- it's plugged into your computer
- you've installed the software that came with it
- it's switched on.

In your Contact list, find the person you want to talk to. Our Skype name is:
readyornotstories

In the main window, click the green Video call button.





Useful things you can do on a video call:

- **Resize the screen** – click and drag the corner of the video screen to make it bigger or smaller.
- **Move it around** – click and drag the video of yourself around your screen.

Directions for Skype Presentation: If it's your first time opening Skype:

Open Skype on your computer.

That means double-clicking this icon on your desktop or choosing it from the Windows > Start menu. This will open a start-up screen.

Click Don't have a Skype Name?

This opens a Create account window.

Type in your name, and then create a Skype username (called a Skype Name) and a password.

- Pick ones you can remember so you can sign in next time.
- Follow the directions from there and click Sign in.

If you've opened Skype before:

Open Skype from your desktop or Windows > Start menu.

In the start-up screen, click in the box under Skype Name and type it in. Then do the same for your password. (If you forget your password, click the Forgot your password? link and follow the directions from there.)

This will sign you in to Skype, ready for you to use.

Trouble Shooting Tips: <http://www.skype.com/help/guides/>

Tips you will find on Skype for Windows

- To start Skype
- Call someone who's on Skype
- Call someone on their phone or mobile
- Adding a contact
- Call someone on video
- Send instant messages (IMs)
- Change view

Skype for Mac OS X

- Getting started
- Skype features
- Tips and Tricks
- How to use Skype
- Upgrading and uninstalling

Sponsors

We are looking for some sponsors for our Virtual and Live Book Tour for updated equipment and some travel expenses for live presentations. We will advertise at the beginning of our presentation any sponsor who has provided us assistance with our new and exciting Virtual Tour or live presentation. If sponsors are interested, contact us at readyornotstories@gmail.com.

All sponsors would receive a PowerPoint slide designed by them which will be shown at the beginning of each presentation. The appeal for a sponsor is that this is a new concept and it plays favorably to potential customers who value the sponsor's support of GLBTs. That will also be a factor in the marketplace when they support your business.

Contact Us

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Shine-A-Light Nomination for Skype Encounters

SHINEALIGHT Nomination: Our nominator is one of our pen pals since reading our book. We write on a regular basis. He is a gift to us and we are so sorry his mom and dad have not yet realized what they are missing by not accepting this wonderful young man. This is his narrative for the nomination to ShineALight. We qualified for the second round by having more than 50 people support our nomination but were not part of the final three.

On my commute to work this morning, I noticed a banner displayed on the side of a building which read, "Be careful who you hate...it could be someone you love." The phrase was used in this instance in conjunction with a PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) advertisement. The phrase runs deep, challenging its reader to engage in self-reflection.

In an effort to help my own family members come to terms with my recent announcement of telling them I am gay, I set out looking for a book to share with them. That was no easy task! It had to be something lenient yet straightforward, educational yet not too preachy, and most importantly, it had to convey empathy.

By happenstance, I stumbled upon the collaborative work of Hjordy and Paul Wagner expressed in their book entitled: *Ready or Not; They're Gay: Stories from a Midwestern Family*. The book was completely mesmerizing and surpassed all my expectations. It is very well-written. The reader is instantly drawn into this family of four in which you learn that both of the Wagner's sons, Brad and Andrew, are gay. The pages progress thoughtfully from the family background to the coming out of their sons, through the process of initial shock to complete acceptance with helpful hints and education interspersed throughout. An unexpected surprise for me was that I was able to identify with Brad and Andrew on so many levels which validated many of my own experiences as normal.

As stated in the book's Preface, Hjordy and Paul's mission is to better equip parents, relatives, and friends of GLBT persons to cope when they find out someone they care about is gay – a mission of love they hope will improve the relationships and lives of families and friends. This mission is both evident and reflected in and shared by their boys, and goes far beyond the book itself. Education is paramount and is a natural extension of their careers in public education held before their respective retirements in the field.

In addition to a busy schedule traveling to various cities and making appearances in different venues sharing their inspiring story, the Wagner's have made a concerted effort to connect on a more personal level. They utilize Skype for their Virtual Book Tour and live presentations to facilitate meaningful dialogue wherever they are needed, whether it is in someone's home, a church, a school or university, or business setting. Plans are underway for a follow-up book consisting of contributed stories from the GLBT community and their families about their coming-out experiences. Moreover, Paul and Hjordy are constantly looking for new and different ways to connect and share their story in an effort to be most effective and helpful to others.

I am one of many who have been inspired by the selflessness, empathy, and genuine care and concern displayed by the entire Wagner family. So that many others may share in this inspiration, and that their mission may be expanded and enhanced, I respectfully nominate PH Wagner LLC for the SHINEALIGHT award. Meet the Wagner's: www.ReadyOrNotStories.com.