

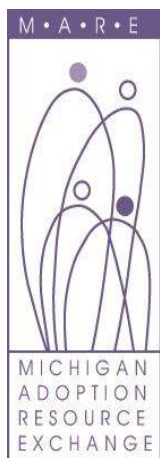
# RECRUITMENT NEWS

For Michigan Adoption Professionals

## Inside this issue:

Project Family Ties...	2
Recruitment Video Information...	3
Featured Child Summer 2010...	4
2011 Heart Gallery...	4

Published quarterly by the  
Michigan Adoption Resource  
Exchange  
PO Box 980789  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
800-589-MARE [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org)



MARE is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Human Services.

## Six Month Hold Reports—What Are They?

Six month hold reports are a requirement for youth who have an identified adoptive family. They are intended to provide an explanation as to why a child remains on “hold” status with MARE for six months past the date of termination of parental rights.

The six month hold report must include:

- An explanation of the reasons for the continuation of the “hold” status
- The plan for adoption placement
- The projected timeline

Hold reports are required for all youth who are on Foster Parent, Relative or Recruited Family Hold six months after termination of parental rights. Reports should be submitted to MARE within 15 days of the six month date from termination.

Hold reports may be submitted on your own agency or office created form, in email, memo or letter format, or you can use the [MARE created form](#) located on our website under **Forms-Six Month Hold Report**.

More information can be found in [section 710 of the Adoption Services Manual](#) or on page 8 of the Private Agency Adoption Contract. Contact Heidi Raubenolt, MARE Program Manager at (734) 528-1692, x23256 or [heidi\\_raubenolt@judsoncenter.org](mailto:heidi_raubenolt@judsoncenter.org) with any questions regarding six month holds.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- August 14—Match Party, Hersey, MI
- August 25—Community Recruitment Event, Cheboygan, MI
- August 26—Community Recruitment Event, Traverse City, MI
- September 8—Match Party, Allegan County, MI
- September 25—Kinship Adoption Festival, Detroit, MI
- September 30—Community Recruitment Event, Marquette, MI

To register a child or family for a match party, or to partner with MARE on any upcoming events, please contact Sheila Boardman at (734) 528-1692 x23257 or [Sheila\\_boardman@judsoncenter.org](mailto:Sheila_boardman@judsoncenter.org).

Don't see an event near you? Contact us! We would love to partner with you on a match party or recruitment event.

## Homes for Black Children concludes Project Family Ties; Shares Results of Initiative

Over the past five years, Homes for Black Children in Detroit has been facilitating Project Family Ties, an initiative aimed at helping older youth maintain family relationships after adoption. Through the Adoption Opportunities Grant, Homes for Black Children has gained valuable insight into best practices and shares it with Michigan's adoption community.

By: Linda Lipscomb, Director of Placement Services, Homes for Black Children

Project Family Ties has the expressed purpose of increasing the opportunity for permanency through openness in adoption. The Project has a target of 150 foster children from the Detroit metropolitan area to participate in open adoptions. The project specifically targeted children 11 years of age and older, as well as sibling groups regardless of age.

The Project's core strategies are: recruitment, training, life enrichment, team approach, youth mentorship/leadership and adoption placement.

Recruitment consisting of a three pronged approach has been successful in maintaining a consistent increase in foster and adoptive homes over the life of the Project for our targeted population. This approach includes maintaining a reciprocal relationship with faith based organizations; participation in established community activities providing information about the program; and child specific recruitment efforts for children who do not have an identified permanency plan.

Training is designed to provide detailed and specific information about adoption, openness, and the characteristics of the youth involved in the Project. By design, training is delivered in a group format. The types of groups are informational or didactic, and support groups. This component has yielded an increase of families willing to explore placement of older youth. We include an evaluation component after each training session to determine the needs of the participants. This is a very important element to include in programming in that information presented will accommodate the need of the participants. Support groups create a sense of community and shared experiences.

The Structured Decision Making approach, in conjunction with the child adoption assessment, explores permanency plans and openness options for youth referred to the Project.

The centerpiece of the Project is the youth. It is important to provide an environment which promotes a positive sense of self. This is accomplished through encouraging youth to participate in decision making regarding their adoption preference. Youth leaders, known as Youth Ambassadors, have actively participated through presentations in community recruitment and training events. Twelve Youth Ambassadors have been developed. One youth serves on the Michigan Youth Advisory Board for Adoption.

Adoption placement has continued to be the major accomplishment to date. One hundred sixty-five youth have been referred and 108 youth have been placed through the Project's efforts. The Project's outcomes are as follows: 57% relative adoptions, 32% foster parent adoptions, and 11% were recruited families. Additionally, 51 youth were between 15 and 20 years of age and 38 youth were between the ages of 10 and 14. More males were served than females (53% were males and 47% were females). Thirty-one sibling groups were served, with one group consisting of 13 members. There have been 72 recruitment activities with 1,523 participants, 135 trainings with 1,389 participants and 134 Structured Decision Making Meetings. Further there were 219 contacts with Youth Ambassadors, 69 Life-Enrichment activities, with 219 participants and 108 Openness Contracts were signed. As a result of a children's rights lawsuit settlement, the State of Michigan has implemented policy changes, which has resulted in an increase in referrals to the Project.

Lessons Learned/Recommendations: (1) Reciprocity and establishing a relationship is the best means of partnering with the faith-based community (2) utilizing a multifaceted recruitment approach will reach the largest possible audience interested in open adoption and sib-group adoption (3) providing training on a number of fronts will increase the likelihood of permanency for the children in the Project (4) training prospective adoption families as well as professionals such as social workers, court officials is needed to reinforce and support the goals of openness in adoption (5) preparing youth through mentorship and leadership development will enhance their understanding of open adoption (6) budget development should include allocations for transportation, recruitment, retention activities as well as post adoption services that may be needed to support the adoption.

## WAITING CHILD VIDEO CLIPS

**MARE produces digital video clips of children who have been photolisted for over six months. These videos accompany the child's photolisting on the MARE website, are featured on the [MARE YouTube Channel](#) and may be used at recruitment events across the state. Video clips provide prospective families another look at each child from a more personal perspective. Workers play a vital role in making recruitment videos successful. Here are some helpful tips for when MARE contacts you to set up a video shoot!**



© Julie Martin

### Recruitment Video Tips for Workers

1. Openly speak to the child prior to the video shoot about what the video is for, what will happen during the shoot, and what will happen after the completion of the video.
2. Video is easy to edit so please encourage kids to be themselves and not to worry about "messing up."
3. Inform the youth that videos are another way prospective parents can get to know them and their bright, shining personalities.
4. Workers should request from the caregiver that the child's appearance be clean and presentable but also represent the child's personality.
5. Workers should review the [Recruitment Video Worksheet](#) with the child to prepare them for the questions that will be asked. We encourage the children to talk about anything they would like to so they feel comfortable.
6. Workers may want to remind the children that having a recruitment video will increase their online visibility to potential families but does not guarantee a match.
7. If at any point during the video shoot, a child decides that they are not comfortable having a video done, the shoot can be rescheduled or cancelled.
8. For children who may have different needs, an interview-style video can be altered to better suit his or her abilities. MARE staff is more than happy to address any questions or concerns workers may have.

MARE staff are accommodating as possible to help the children feel at ease in front of the camera. Please contact [Loren Sanders](#) or [Brandon Monzon](#) at the MARE office to schedule a video shoot for a child on your caseload or to organize an agency-wide video shoot for multiple children. As a reminder, videos are required by MARE contract for children who have been photolisted for more than six months and are optional for youth who may need more intensive recruitment efforts.

## MEET JAMES!

### Summer 2010's Featured Child



12 year-old James is a sweet and loving child who thrives on hugs and affection from caregivers. He enjoys drawing, riding his bike, and going on trips, large or small. James also likes to go shopping for toys!

James is developing confidence and a positive self-image. He has been gradually opening up to others and demonstrating a willingness to ask questions and listen to answers. He enjoys going to school and tries his best to reach his full potential. James has some medical issues including an ulcer and is diagnosed with mild asthma. He has made great progress in learning healthy eating habits and this will need to be monitored and encouraged in the future.

James needs a loving and patient family who can provide a stable and supportive environment. Though James tends to gravitate toward female caregivers, he would benefit from having a father or other positive male role model in his life. A family for James should have knowledge of behavioral and developmental issues exhibited by children in foster care. The family should be strong advocates for appropriate support services at school and in the community, and be willing to participate as necessary. It would also be beneficial for James to maintain contact with siblings and past and current caregivers.

To learn more about James, C05996, contact the MARE office at (800) 589-MARE or visit [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).



### 2011 Heart Gallery registration has begun!

We are looking for youth to be featured as well as families who have adopted through the foster care system who would like to share their story. Visit the [MARE website](http://www.mare.org) for registration information.

The 2010 Heart Gallery is currently touring the state. Want a Heart Gallery Banner Stand for an upcoming event? Contact [Jamee Zielke](mailto:jamee.zielke@mare.org) at MARE to reserve one (or more) today!