

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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Jovial Johslin jumps for joy at new things, Page 5.

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Justice's hands-on approach to life, Page 11.

Fall 2016

A spotlight on children waiting for permanent & loving families



Shantaina's likes:

- Drawing and coloring pictures to give to others as gifts.
- Fantasy and make-believe.
- Dressing up by accessorizing and coordinating her outfits.
- Spending time in the kitchen baking.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Help her feel safe and protected.
- Be patient and allow Shantaina time to transition into her new home.
- Single female parent or two parents, either both females or male and female, would be appropriate.
- Give her a great deal of attention.

WELCOME TO THE Summer 2016 Recruitment Periodical, published by the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange. Over the next several pages, you will be introduced to some of the youth in Michigan who are waiting for their opportunity to have a loving, supportive and permanent family of their own through adoption.

The youth featured here are representative of hundreds of other children in the Michigan foster care system who are waiting to become part of a loving family. To view these children and to learn more information about adoption, visit www.mare.org.

On the MARE website, you will find photos, narratives and video clips of waiting children, as well as a wealth of information about adoption, including links to adoption-related resources.

If you have been thinking about adoption, we invite you to consider bringing an older child or sibling group into your life. If you have questions about adoption or are ready to begin the adoption process, simply call one of the agencies listed in the back of this periodical. MARE is available to answer your adoption-related questions, and we will do our best to get you headed in the right direction.



MICHIGAN ADOPTION DAY

Giving thanks for families

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2016

Fun 'n game

It was such a hit the last time that MARE and the Detroit Pistons are planning another Adoption Day at the Palace of Auburn Hills. The event will take place on January 21, 2017. Stay tuned to www.mare.org and follow us on Facebook to get the details.



For a list of Michigan Adoption Day celebrations, visit www.mare.org/MI-Adoption-Day. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for coverage before, during and after 2016 Adoption Day.

Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Adopting a "waiting child" from foster care is often referred to as special needs adoption. This term often makes people think of children with severe mental or physical impairments. In reality, special needs adoption means a child or children who may be difficult to place for adoption for a variety of reasons, including:

- Children school aged and above.
- Children with emotional, mental, learning or physical impairments.
- Children of minority heritage.
- Children who are part of a sibling group that must be placed together.

Many waiting children have had traumatic past experiences that may include physical, sexual or emotional abuse and/or severe neglect. Others may have been born already exposed to drugs or alcohol.

Around 93 percent of children in Michigan's foster care system are adopted by the child's current foster family or a relative (someone with whom the child has an established relationship with). The remaining children available for adoption, like those in this periodical and the MARE website, have no identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive family is, therefore, necessary. About 97 percent of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. About 79 percent of those children are between the ages of 11 and 18.

Who can adopt a waiting child?

Many people may be surprised to learn that they do not have to be married in order to adopt a child from the foster care system. Potential adoptive parents do not have to own their own home or have a lot of money. They must have enough space in their home and adequate income to support a child. It is important to know that many children waiting for adoption are eligible to receive support subsidies to help adoptive families meet their needs.

How much does it cost to adopt a child from foster care?

The only cost you should incur from adopting a child from the Michigan foster care system is court filing and birth certificate fees. Some agencies may charge a fee for the Family Assessment (also known as a Home Study). However, once you adopt a child through Michigan's foster care system, that fee is reimbursed to you. Families must be approved

through the Adoptive Family Assessment process before a child can be placed in their home for adoption. An Adoptive Family Assessment must be completed by a licensed adoption agency (which can be found in the back of this periodical and at www.mare.org). The Adoptive Family Assessment will include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Personal history
- Health statements
- Criminal background check
- Income statement
- Personal references

Once the Adoptive Family Assessment is complete, you may start submitting inquiries to MARE about children you may be interested in adopting. When you inquire about children through the MARE website, your information will be sent by MARE to the child's adoption worker for consideration. Your worker will also be notified that you have inquired about a specific child or children.

For more information about adoption and to learn about Michigan's waiting children, please visit our website at www.mare.org

Brandon's likes:

- Playing chess.
- Munching on hot dogs and ketchup to satisfy his hunger.
- Playing and watching football and basketball.

Brandon's crystal ball:

- Becoming a restaurant manager.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents or a single-male parent.
- Willing to advocate for the services he requires to excel.
- Active parents and a family who has pets.

Photo by
Brittany
Ritter



Brandon C08795

Quotable:

“I want to help around the world, help people and animals.”

Brendan’s likes:

- Going to the zoo or studying spiders, snakes and other reptiles.
- Enjoys trying exotic fruits and sampling sushi.
- Drawing and playing video and board games with friends.

Brendan’s crystal ball:

- Plans to become a scientist when he gets older.

Scholarly pursuits:

- Scientific interest extends to the ocean and its inhabitants such as octopuses that change color.
- Learning all about Greek mythology and Poseidon.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Able to provide love, support, structure and continuous supervision.
- Patient, understanding and experienced parents to help Brendan identify and utilize his coping skills when he’s having difficulty.
- A home in which Brendan is the youngest or only child.
- Strong advocates for the services Brendan requires to thrive.

*Photo by
Karen Bertram*



Did you know?

In addition to this quarterly periodical, the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange also publishes newsletters for Youth, Families and Professionals. You can find them at www.mare.org > Resources > Newsletters.





Johslin's likes:

- Styling her hair and shopping for clothes and jewelry.
- Riding bikes, going on walks, listening to music and helping with chores such as cleaning and cooking.
- Helping others and caring for the well-being of those around her.

Creative interests:

- Writing and dancing.

Intangible assets:

- Outgoing and very intelligent.
- Performs well in school and says health is her favorite subject.

Quotable:

"I am bubbly, adventurous, and I like to try new things."

Qualities of a forever family:

- Able to provide a stable and structured home with clear rules and expectations.
- Committed to meeting her emotional needs by utilizing any beneficial resource available.
- Knowledge of parenting children who have experienced trauma.
- Loving and consistent.

*Photo by
Into The Woods
Photography*



Quotable:

“What I want to do when I grow up is I want to work with kids.”

Cody’s likes:

- Playing basketball and video games.
- Making others laugh.
- Home-cooked meals.
- Spending time outdoors.
- Participating in art projects.

Creative interests:

- Dancing and listening to music.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Willing to advocate for Cody at school to help maximize his performance.
- Active listeners who’ll share his passions with him.
- Experience with parenting children who have come from difficult pasts and have trouble effectively managing their emotions.



Photos by
Brittany Ritter

Ashley's likes:

- Doing arts and crafts.
- Being outside swimming.
- Munching on macaroni and cheese, tacos, burritos and burgers and fries.
- Science and math.
- Going shopping and getting her nails done.

Ashley's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a teacher.
- Dreams of becoming part of a family so they can go to fun places together such as Disney World.
- Plans to attend Wayne State University.

Creative interests:

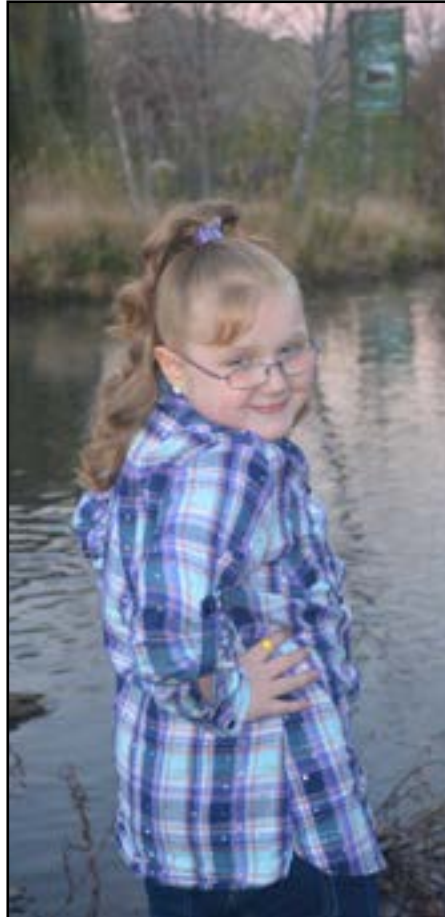
- Painting and drawing.

Quotable:

"I like holidays because you can dress up, decorate the house and spend time with family and friends."

Qualities of a forever family:

- Committed to help her achieve her goals.
- Knowledge of parenting a child with emotional and behavioral needs.
- Able to provide Ashley with a patient, loving and supportive home environment.
- Willing to seek out and continue any support services that help address Ashley's needs.



Amanda’s likes:

- Everything to do with the movie “Frozen,” which she re-enacts by pretending to be Princesses Elsa and Anna.
- Playing dress-up and riding bikes.
- Watching movies and cartoons.

Intangible assets:

- Outgoing, fun-loving, imaginative and playful.
- Entertaining, outspoken, sweet, inquisitive and affectionate.
- Cares about people and wants to be a part of a loving family.

Creative interests:

- Arts and crafts.

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two experienced parents with a least one female parent.
- A home in which she’s the only or youngest child by many years.
- Able to provide the constant attention and consistent structure that Amanda thrives on.
- Strong advocates for the services that Amanda needs now and into adulthood.
- Willing to exercise with Amanda.

Helping families stay together

MARE’s Match Support Program is a state-wide service for families who have been matched with a child from the MARE website and are in the process of moving forward with an adoption. Match support specialists deliver up to 90 days of services to families

by providing them support before and during the child’s transition into the home with referrals to support groups, educational training opportunities, and other recommendations to helpful community resources. For more information, contact MARE at 800-589-6273.



Quotable:

"I would describe myself as a smart, delicate, sensitive young man."

"I would love to have a family because they would help me experience what I haven't had in a long time."

Charles' crystal ball:

- Wants to graduate high school and attend college.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A single-male parent or two parents.
- Willing to love and support his goals.
- Able to help maintain the services that Chuck requires to succeed at home, in school and in the community.

Charles' likes:

- Being called "Chuck."
- Playing board games, watching TV, going to the recreation center and playing video games.
- Playing football, basketball and soccer.

Intangible assets:

- Loving, kind and considerate.

Creative interests:

- Drawing "fictional things like cars, space aliens."

Quotable:

"I would love to be a big brother."



Zadalynn's likes:

- Being social, hanging out with friends and having sleepovers.
- Eating tacos, pizza and pizza rolls.
- Hot pink and yellow or any type of neon color.
- Going shopping on the weekend.

Intangible assets:

- An outgoing girl who interacts well with her peers and adults.
- A fun personality and an even better sense of humor.

Creative interests:

- Loves art class in school.
- Likes singing, dancing and listening to all genres of music.

Zadalynn's crystal ball:

- Wants to be a judge when she gets older.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Able to provide a loving, accepting, nurturing, consistent and structured home.
- Sets clear and consistent expectations, rules and consequences.
- Advocates to ensure all of Zadalynn's needs are met.
- Willing to let her maintain her relationship with her siblings.
- Open to letting her participate in social and school activities.

Quotable:

"Family time is very important to me."

"I'm outgoing, and I'm funny."

Photo by
Ellen Dykstra





Photo by
Sara Taylor

Justice's likes:

- Spending time on the weekends relaxing in his room.
- Spending time outdoors.
- Playing baseball and catch with his friends.
- Munching on all foods, but especially burgers and pizza.
- Follows University of Michigan football.

Intangible assets:

- Takes pride in helping others.
- Helpful, caring and friendly young man.
- Pleasant, kind-hearted, approachable and cooperative.

Justice's crystal ball:

- Wants to build his own house.
- Dreams of watching movies and playing games together with his forever family.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parents in a home in which he's the only child.
- Patient parents able to set appropriate boundaries while providing constant supervision.
- Capable of providing consistency and structure.
- Willing to make sure Justice receives the services that will benefit his success now and into adulthood.

Quotable:

"I like to be outside, camping and all that. I like fishing. I like anything I can do with my hands."





Photo by
Allison Rittle

Jonathan's likes:

- Listening to country music.
- Petting puppies and kittens.
- Playing dodgeball.
- Being playful and joking around.
- Reading picture books together, especially "Where the Wild Things Are."
- Trying on funny hats and masks as well as making up funny faces for photos.

Intangible assets:

- Soft-spoken and silly with a great sense of humor, which he shows off by making others laugh.
- Well-behaved, mellow and very affectionate.

Quotable:

"Jonathan is such a sweet-heart!"

— *His mentor*

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents who are able to provide the supervision, consistency, direction and support Jon requires now and into adulthood.
- Fierce advocates for the services he needs to function at his best.
- A preference for a home with pets.

Serenity's likes:

- Admires animals, particularly horses, ponies and kittens.
- Has an affinity for unicorns although she admits to chuckling at the thought of them.
- Loves Valentine's Day because she enjoys exchanging well-wishes with others.
- Playing soccer, football and kickball.

Intangible assets:

- Enjoys helping others and takes pride in doing so.

Creative interests:

- Singing and dancing, which she hopes to turn into a career one day, writing and performing her own songs.

Serenity's crystal ball:

- Wants to spend time with her future forever family doing things such as going to Cedar Point or indoor waterparks.

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two female parents or a mother and a father in a home in which she is the youngest child.
- Advocates for the services that will help her process her past and thrive at home and in school.

Quotable:

"I like to eat pizza, I love to have root beer floats, and I like ice cream."

*Photo by
Kelly Marissa
Photography*



Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Fall 2016 Periodical.

Adoption Agencies in Michigan

The following is a list of adoption agencies whose primary focus is facilitating the adoption of children from the foster care system. Many of these agencies may also provide foster care services. This agency list is organized by regions of the state. Contact an agency in your area if you are interested in beginning the adoption process.

Upper Peninsula

Anishnabek Community & Family Services, Sault Ste. Marie, 906.632.5250, www.saulttribe.com
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Escanaba, 906.786.7212, www.cssup.org
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Iron Mountain, 906.774.3323, www.cssup.org
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906.227.9119, www.cssup.org
Child & Family Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906.228.4050, www.cfsup.org
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906.487.9832, www.upkids.com
Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877.994.8344, www.lsswis.org
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan, Marquette, 906.249.5437, www.teachingfamilyhomes.org
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906.273.1095, www.upfs.org

Northern & Central Lower Michigan

Adoption Option Inc., Midland, 989.839.0534, www.adoptionoptioninc.org
Bethany Christian Services, Fremont, 231.924.3390, www.bethany.org/fremont
Bethany Christian Services, Traverse City, 231.995.0870, www.bethany.org/traversecity
Catholic Family Services of the Diocese of Saginaw, Bay City, 989.892.2504, www.cfssite.org
Child & Family Services of Northeast MI, Alpena, 989.356.4567, www.cfsnemi.org
Child & Family Services of Northwest MI, Traverse City, 231.946.8975, www.cfsnwmi.org
Eagle Village, Hersey, 231.832.2234, www.eaglevillage.org
Heaven Sent Adoption, Charlevoix, 231.237.9880, www.heavensentadopt.com
Lutheran Adoption Service, Bay City, 989.686.3170, www.lasadoption.org
Lutheran Adoption Service, Clare, 989.386.2101, www.lasadoption.org
New Light Child & Family Consultants, Millington, 989.871.6695, www.newlightonline.net

Tri-County Area (Wayne, Oakland & Macomb Counties)

Adoption Options Worldwide, West Bloomfield, 248.855.2813, www.adoptionoptionsworldwide.com
Bethany Christian Services, Madison Heights, 248.414.4080, www.bethany.org/madisonheights
Catholic Social Services of Wayne County, Detroit, 313.883.2100, www.csswayne.org
Child Safe Michigan, Royal Oak, 248.353.0921, www.childsafemichigan.org/
The Children's Center of Wayne County, Detroit, 313.831.5535, www.thechildrenscenter.com
Ennis Center for Children, Detroit, 313.342.2699, www.enniscenter.org
Ennis Center for Children, Pontiac, 248.334.2715, www.enniscenter.org
Family Adoption Consultants, Utica, 586.726.2988, www.facadopt.org
Forever Families, Livonia, 734.762.0909, www.forever-families.org
Homes for Black Children, Detroit, 313.961.4777, www.homes4blackchildren.org
Judson Center, Redford, 313.794.5653, www.judsoncenter.org
Lutheran Adoption Service, Troy, 248.423.2770, www.lasadoption.org
Methodist Children's Home, Redford, 313.531.4060, www.mchsmi.org
Oakland Family Services, Pontiac, 248.858.7766, www.oaklandfamilyservices.org
Orchards Children's Services, Southfield, 248.258.0440, www.orchards.org
Spaulding for Children, Southfield, 248.443.7080, www.spaulding.org
Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248.552.8020, www.spectrumhuman.org
St. Francis Family Center/CSS of Oakland County, Southfield, 248.552.0750, www.cssoc.org
Vista Maria, Dearborn Heights, 313.271.3050, www.vistamaria.org
Wolverine Human Services, Taylor, 888.625.8669, www.wolverinehs.org

Southern Central Michigan

Adoption Specialists, Inc., Lapeer, 810.660.7590, www.adoption-specialists.org
 Bethany Christian Services, East Lansing, 517.336.0191, www.bethany.org/eastlansing
 Catholic Charities of Lenawee County, Adrian, 517.263.2191, www.catholiccharitiesjlhc.org
 Catholic Charities of Shiawassee & Genesee, Flint, 810.232.3418, www.catholiccharitiesflint.org
 Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw, Ann Arbor, 734.971.9781, www.csswashtenaw.org
 Child & Family Charities – Capital Area, Lansing, 517.882.4000, www.childandfamily.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Flint, 810.233.4031, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810.990.1424, www.enniscenter.org
 Family Counseling & Children Services of Lenawee, Adrian, 517.265.5352, www.fccsoflenawee.org
 Family Service & Children's Aid, Jackson, 517.787.7920, www.strong-families.org
 Fostering Futures, Ann Arbor, 734.481.8999, www.fostering-futures.com
 Hands Across the Water, Ann Arbor, 734.477.0135, www.hatw.org
 Livingston County Catholic Charities, Howell, 517.545.5944, www.livingstoncatholiccharities.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734.971.1944, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Jackson, 517.789.6444, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Lansing, 517.886.1380, www.lasadoption.org
 St. Vincent Catholic Charities, Lansing, 517.323.4734, www.stvcc.org

Southwest Michigan

Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids, 616.224.7550, www.bethany.org/grandrapids
 Bethany Christian Services, Holland, 616.396.0623, www.bethany.org/holland
 Bethany Christian Services, Kalamazoo, 269.372.8800, www.bethany.org/kalamazoo
 Bethany Christian Services, Muskegon, 231.733.1618, www.bethany.org/muskegon
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Grand Rapids, 616.456.1443, www.ccwestmi.org
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Muskegon, 231.726.4735, www.ccwestmi.org
 D.A. Blodgett Services, Grand Rapids, 616.451.2021, www.dablodgett.org
 Family Adoption Consultants, Kalamazoo, 269.343.3316, www.facadopt.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269.344.0202, www.fcsources.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269.965.3247, www.fcsources.org
 Greater Hopes Family Services, Grand Rapids, 616.451.0245, www.greaterhopes.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616.356.1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269.345.5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Pathways, Holland, 616.396.2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269.969.9181, www.cityinc.org

Please visit www.mare.org for a complete listing of agencies and local DHHS offices that license families for foster care, in addition to adoption homestudies, including your local county Department of Health and Human Services office.



The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is proud to offer the Adoption Navigator Program. Adoption Navigators are experienced adoptive parents who offer guidance and personal knowledge to potential adoptive families. The Adoption Navigators have many years of parenting experience, adopted a number of children, and knowledge of foster care, infant & older, and domestic and international adoption procedures.

Families who contact MARE for initial adoption information will be given the option to work with a Navigator to help guide them through the process. Having an Adoption Navigator is a free and voluntary service.

Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange
3840 Packard Rd., Suite 170
Ann Arbor, MI 48108



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HOMES
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273
www.mare.org



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