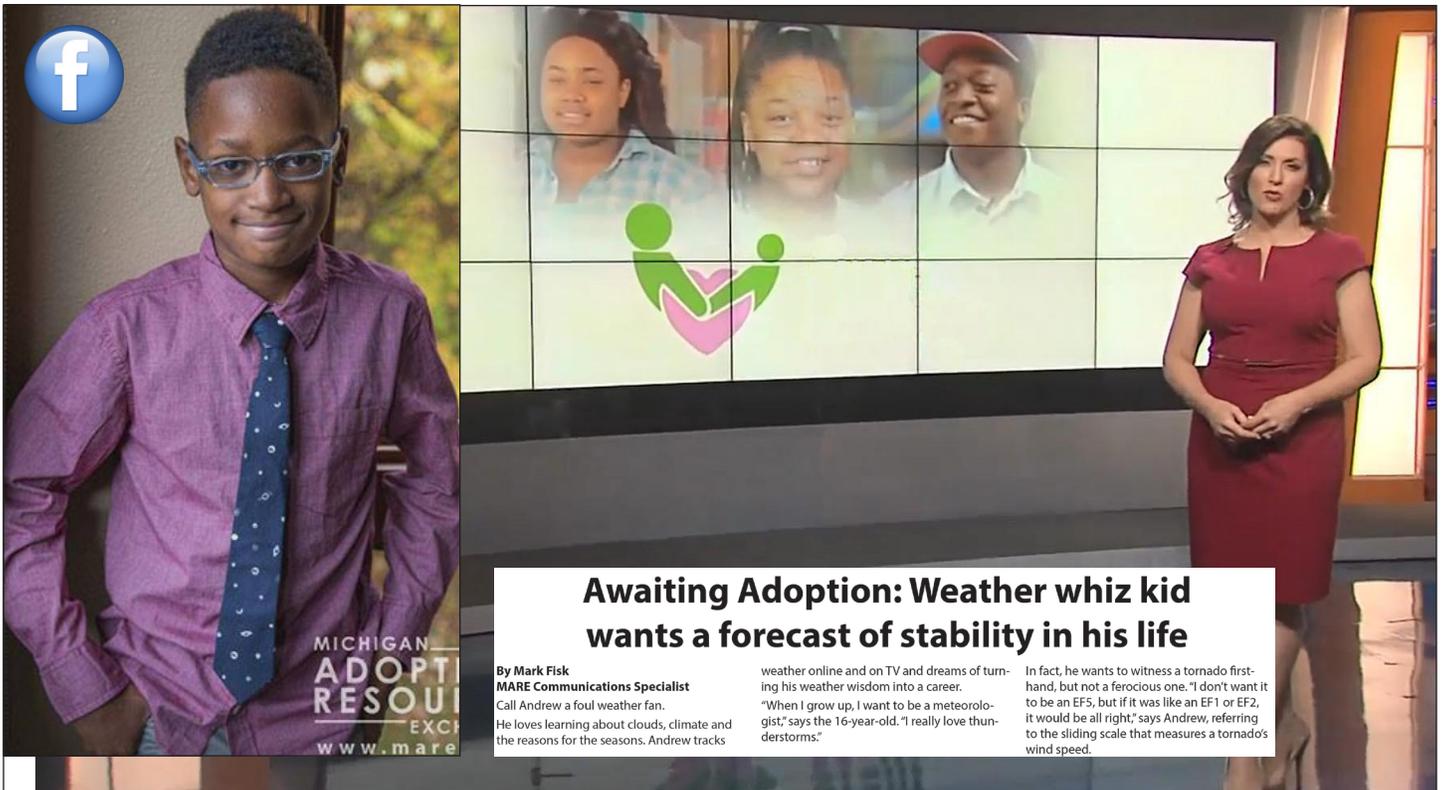


The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. To learn about foster care adoption and view photolisting and videos of waiting children, visit our website at www.mare.org.



Awaiting Adoption: Weather whiz kid wants a forecast of stability in his life

By Mark Fisk
MARE Communications Specialist
Call Andrew a foul weather fan. He loves learning about clouds, climate and the reasons for the seasons. Andrew tracks

weather online and on TV and dreams of turning his weather wisdom into a career. "When I grow up, I want to be a meteorologist," says the 16-year-old. "I really love thunderstorms."

In fact, he wants to witness a tornado firsthand, but not a ferocious one. "I don't want it to be an EF5, but if it was like an EF1 or EF2, it would be all right," says Andrew, referring to the sliding scale that measures a tornado's wind speed.

Making the most of inquiries after a media feature

STORY BY **MARGARET WHITE, MARE SUPERVISOR**

MARE does what it can to make sure potential adoptive families see the state's wonderful waiting youth. Sometimes youth need a little extra push for recruitment, so MARE tries to do that with TV spots, features in newspapers and posts on social media.

After a media feature, you'll receive inquiries from potential adoptive families. For those families who don't have an approved home study, you should still contact them and talk about

the adoption process and where they may be on their journey.

You can do a lot to move things along once your youth has been featured. One of the first things you'll want to do is conduct an initial screening to determine if the family may be a suitable match for the child. Because the privacy of the child is of the utmost importance, the initial screening should be done in generalities without divulging identifying or diagnostic

information about the child.

Examples of appropriate topics to cover include:

- The family's trauma training.
- Whether they have a flexible schedule to meet the child's needs.
- Experience with children who have special needs.
- Comfort with the child's functioning levels as outlined on mare.org.

See [Inquiries](#) on page 2

Meet MARE's new supervisor

If Margaret White is a stranger to you, rest assured that you'll get to know her soon as a leader who wants to help you.

With a background in communications and social work, Maggie, as she's affectionately known, typifies the diversity of the youth, families and workers she aims to serve as MARE's new supervisor. She comes to the job after serving as a MARE adoption navigator for six years.

Tell us about your professional background

I started out studying journalism and worked in the software industry. Then I worked as a freelance writer until I adopted my son, Alex, who had special needs and endured a great deal of trauma. That kind of changed the trajectory of my career. I went back to school and graduated in May 2017 with a bachelor's degree in social work.

What drew you into child welfare?

After adopting Alex I felt really alone. Then I learned about MARE's adoption navigator program and was advised to apply for an open position. It was a wonderful opportunity to be able to work with other families who were going through the process. I had walked that mile in their shoes and I could let them know they're not alone.

So, what's your message for workers?

I want them to know that we are here to support them in any way that we can. It's been really fun to get to know the workers in a different way. I didn't get that opportunity as much as an adoption navigator, so I'm enjoying



Margaret White

working with them on a different level now. It's been a pleasure getting to know all of them and seeing how hard they work.

Even though it's been a short time, what satisfies you most about your job?

The team that I work with. We have a group of people with very different talents who work together, help each other and step up to make sure everyone is supported. These are people I've known for years, yet I'm getting to see how they have these strong talents and see how they're always willing to help each other to complete tasks at the best of their ability. It's been really inspiring.

Inquiries, continued from page 1

If the family may be a potential match, you may begin to explore and study that family for adoption purposes. It is wise to caution the family that they are just being assessed at this time – a match with that particular child is not guaranteed.

If the family is not a potential match, you should inform them of that but encourage them to still pursue adoption as there may be another child who is a better fit. You may refer the family to your agency to be studied or back to MARE to search for another agency to work with them.

Remember to inform MARE of the

status of each inquiry (exploring a possible match, family not appropriate, etc.).

If you have questions or need guidance, remember MARE is here to help! Contact Jennifer Brooks, MARE Youth Specialist at 800-589-6273 or by email at Jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org.

28th Annual Adoption Festival and Family Fun Day

Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2018, 5:30 p.m.
Veterans Memorial Park, St. Clair Shores



The Burgher family.

- Free and open to the public
- Meet youth awaiting adoption • Visit the Michigan Heart Gallery • Speak with adoption professionals
- Food and attractions and activities for all ages

Music On The Lake, featuring Air Margaritaville, a Jimmy Buffet tribute band, immediately follows the festival

Hosted by the Tri-County Kinship Coalition, which consists of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb county adoption agencies and support organizations who work together to provide homes for children and teens in foster care who are available for adoption.

800-589-6273 • www.mare.org



Photo courtesy of Radisson

Big turnout for recent worker conference

The Children’s Services Agency (CSA) sponsored a two-day statewide Adoption, Licensing and Foster Care Worker Conference.

Around 650 people attended the conference, which was intended for adoption workers, adoption supervisors, purchase of service (POS) monitors, licensing workers, licensing supervisors, recruitment coordinators, foster care workers, foster care supervisors, permanency resource monitors, placement staff, post adoption resource center staff, adoption navigators, foster care navigators and adoption resource consultants.

The conference took place on July 10 and 11 at the Kalamazoo Radisson Hotel, 100 W. Michigan Ave, Kalamazoo, MI, 49007.

Reviews aim to shed light on lack of permanency

In partnership with the Casey Family Programs, the Adoption Program Office conducted Rapid Permanency Reviews (RPR) at the beginning of February.

The reviews looked at children who are available for adoption and have been on “hold” with an identified family for greater than 12 months without achieving permanency.

The February reviews looked at approximately 155 cases of children who have commitment in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, Monroe and St. Clair counties.

The purpose of the review was to look at systematic barriers and bottlenecks during the adoption process. The Adoption Program Office will be sharing the results of the reviews with agencies.

Initial RPR data snapshot

- 155 children and youth were reviewed in February.
- 53 had their adoptions finalized by the review date.
- 102 are awaiting permanency.

Calendar of Events

ATTENTION, WORKERS, TELL YOUR FAMILIES ABOUT THIS UPCOMING MEET & GREET

September 15
MARE Meet & Greet, Midland
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

August 8
Kinship Adoption Festival,
The festival begins at 5:30 p.m., at
Veterans Memorial Park, 32400
Jefferson Ave., St. Clair Shores.

*For more information
regarding these events
contact Jessica Thompson,
MARE recruitment
specialist: jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org*

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