

MICHIGAN
**ADOPTION
RESOURCE
EXCHANGE**



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Spring 2019

**A spotlight on children
waiting for permanent
and loving families**

Bradley C07513

“He enjoys interacting with others, whether it’s peers or adults, it doesn’t matter.”

Bradley’s worker

*Photo by
Michelle Cross Photography*



Bradley’s likes:

- Swimming and camping.
- Playing video games.

Intangible assets:

- Could teach his new family about computers, which are sort of a hobby for Bradley.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents.
- Patient and able to meet his needs.
- Fierce advocates for the services he needs to function at his best.

Welcome to the Spring 2019 Recruitment Periodical, published by the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE). Over the next several pages, you will be introduced to some of the youth in Michigan who are waiting to have a loving, supportive and permanent family of their own through adoption. The children featured here represent hundreds of other children in the Michigan foster care system who are waiting to become part of a loving family through adoption. To learn more about these children and adoption, visit www.mare.org.

On the MARE website, you will find photos, narratives and video clips of children waiting to be adopted, 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 or contact an adoption navigator at 800-589-6273. MARE is available to answer your adoption-related questions, and we will do our best to get you headed in the right direction.



The 2019 Michigan Heart Gallery will travel throughout the state to help raise awareness of children who continue to wait for their forever families. Visit www.miheart.org for upcoming exhibit locations and events or contact the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange at 800-589-6273.

Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Adopting a child from foster care is often referred to as “special needs” adoption. Common traits of children waiting to be adopted from foster care include:

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

Many of these children have had traumatic past experiences that may include physical, sexual or emotional abuse and/or severe neglect. Others may have been born drug or alcohol exposed.

Around 93 percent of children in Michigan’s foster care system are adopted by their current foster family or a relative (someone with whom the child has an established relationship). The remaining children available for adoption, like those in this periodical and on the MARE website, don’t have an identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive family is, therefore, necessary.

Typically, more than 98 percent of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. Typically, more than 75 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 adoption assistance, which is intended to assist adoptive families in meeting the children’s needs.

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

The only costs you should incur from adopting a child from Michigan’s foster care system are court filing and birth certificate fees. Some agencies may charge a fee for the Adoptive 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.

What is the adoption process?

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 on www.mare.org) and can take an average of six months to complete. The Adoptive Family Assessment includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Personal history.
- Health statements.
- Criminal background checks.
- 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.

Crystalee’s likes:

- Going on outings.
- Watching music videos while having a dance party.
- Managing her hair.

Intangible assets:

- Always smiling.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents in a home in which she is the only child.
- Strong advocates for her needs.

Crystalee C09658

Photo by
Corinne Toussaint



“I’m usually happy. I’m willing to go out of my way for other people to help them.”

Katlynn’s likes:

- Being outside and going bass fishing.
- Swimming.
- Cheerleading and gymnastics.
- Playing basketball, soccer and football.
- Math class because she enjoys solving problems.

Katlynn’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a veterinarian.

Creative interests:

- Singing, dancing and coloring.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parents.
- Advocates for the services that will help her thrive.
- Open to letting Katlynn maintain contact with her sister.

Save the date!

The 29th Annual Adoption and Family Fun Day is at Veteran’s Memorial Park in St. Clair Shores on Aug. 7. There will be opportunities to meet youth awaiting adoption, view the 2019 Michigan Heart Gallery and talk to adoption professionals. This event is free and open to the public. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more details including the time.



"I am a nice and friendly kid."

*Photo by
Derek Cookson*

Jesse's likes:

- Working with his hands and completing tasks because it gives him a sense of accomplishment.
- Playing basketball and riding his bike and Ripstik.
- Spending time outdoors.
- Watching movies, playing computer games and listening to music.

Creative interests:

- Wants to become a comedian when he gets older.

Animal admiration:

- The black panther.

Intangible assets:

- Very helpful and caring toward others.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad or a single parent with a strong support network.
- A strong male role model.
- Able to devote the time needed to help Jesse thrive.

Jeremiah's likes:

- Making others laugh by using his great sense of humor.
- Running, playing basketball, riding his bike and being outside.
- Interacting with peers.
- Math class because he's good at it.

Intangible assets:

- Sweet and adventurous personality.
- Gets along well with others and has lots of friends.

Jeremiah's crystal ball:

- Wants to attend Michigan State and become a doctor.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A fun and active forever family.
- One or two experienced parents
- Able to provide appropriate attention.
- Youngest or only child.
- Prefers a family who lives on a farm and owns horses.

"Jeremiah is an outgoing and fun-loving child."

Jeremiah's worker



*Photo by
Stephen
Van DeSteele*

Aerial's likes:

- Playing the game Speed.
- Drawing, watching movies and spending time with friends at the park.

Aerial's crystal ball:

- Wants to travel to Paris because "it's the 'city of love.'"
- Dreams of becoming a lawyer or a veterinarian, which seems appropriate because she loves animals.

Intangible assets:

- Kind and caring girl with a cheery personality.

Animal admiration:

- Likes the world's largest rodent, the capybara.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents or a single parent with strong supports.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Aerial thrive.
- Open to letting Aerial maintain her sibling relationships.

"Aerial has a unique sense of humor and likes to make others laugh."

Aerial's worker

"I'm compassionate, loving, caring and weird."

Photo by Mandy DeVries





"I want to go
wherever God
takes me."

Areonna's likes:

- Coloring, writing and reading.
- Going skating and swimming.
- Playing outdoors, especially at the park.
- Science class.

Intangible assets:

- A knack for comforting others.

Areonna's crystal ball:

- Dreams of traveling to Hollywood to see stars and Paris to sample a croissant.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced and patient parents who can provide structure, support and positive reinforcement.
- Willing to ensure that Areonna receives the services to help her thrive.
- Open to letting her maintain the relationships that are important to her, including her younger brother.

Stephen's likes:

- Playing football and basketball.
- Outdoor activities such as riding his bike.
- Reading comic books.
- Playing video games.
- Tackling the challenges of his biology class.

Stephen's crystal ball:

- Wants to work for the FBI.
- Hopes to travel to the Gulf Coast of Alabama just for the fun of it.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Open to many types of forever families.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Stephen thrive.
- Pets please!

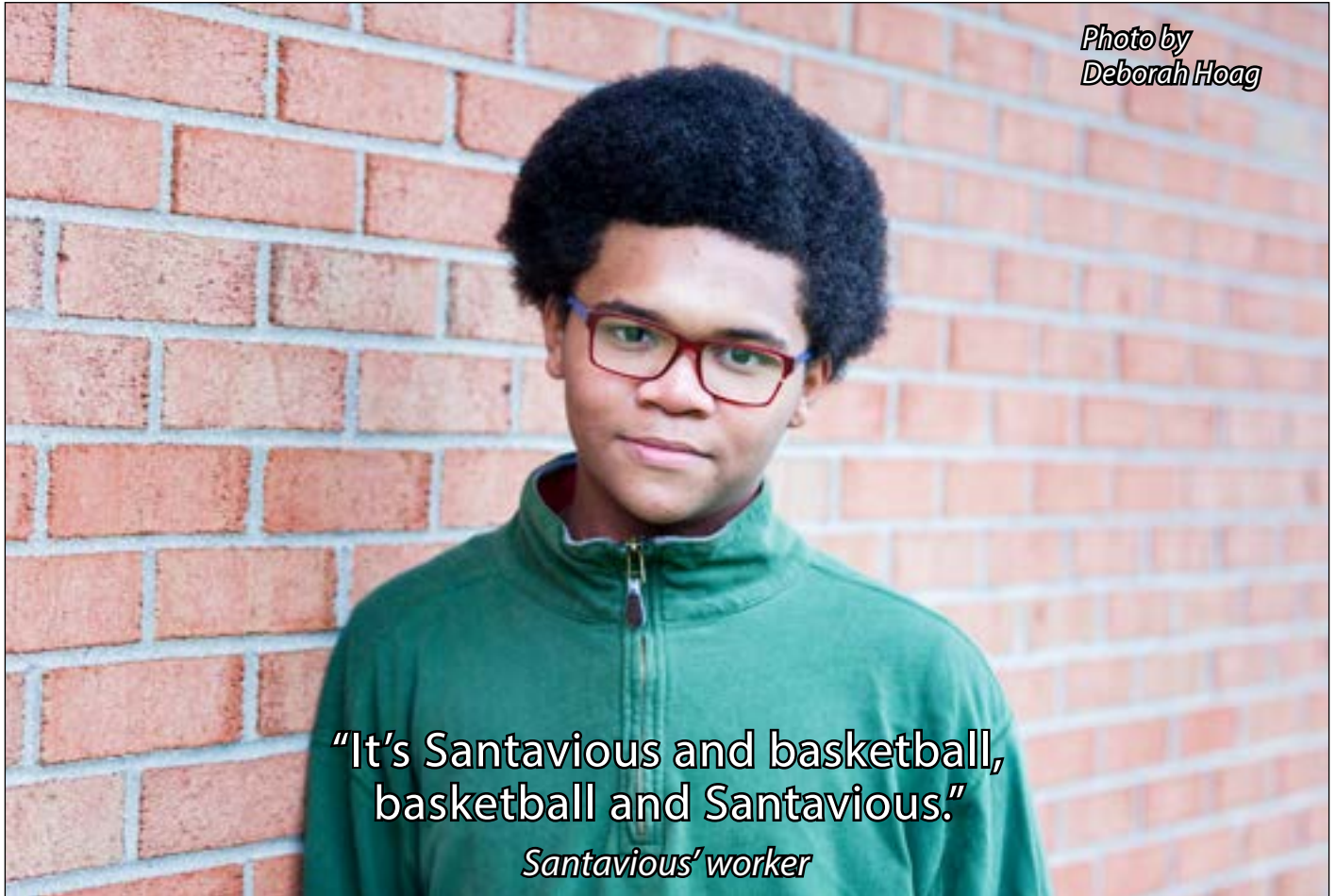
“Stephen has a caring and compassionate heart. He states he would like to help homeless people.”

Stephen's worker



*Photo by
Melanie Strobel*

Photo by
Deborah Hoag



**"It's Santavious and basketball,
basketball and Santavious."**

Santavious' worker

Santavious' likes:

- Basketball and football.
- Riding the bus around town.

Santavious' crystal ball:

- Wants to attend the University of Michigan or Mississippi State and play sports for his future alma mater.
- Hopes to go into sports management.
- Dreams of going "on cool trips" with his future forever family.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two-parent forever family who can provide the attention and supervision he thrives on.
- A positive male role model.
- The youngest or only child in the home.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Santavious excel.
- Patient and able to provide a consistent and structured home environment.

"His dreams are to make a lot of money someday and own a car."

Santavious' worker

"I'm very independent,
and I have a unique personality."



Cheyanne's likes:

- Listening to rap music, especially Cardi B and Tee Grizzley.
- English and science class.
- Playing tag, taking walks and spending time with friends.

Intangible assets:

- Admits her foibles and spends time trying to improve.
- An independent girl who cares about others and is eager to help them.

Cheyanne's crystal ball:

- Looks forward to spending time with her forever family chilling, camping, going on vacations and supporting each other.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Fierce advocates for the services that Cheyanne needs to thrive.
- A single mom or a mom and dad who are experienced.
- Willing to let Cheyanne maintain her sibling relationships.



*Photos by
Rebekah Dietsche*

Shenella’s likes:

- Reading, coloring and drawing.
- Chicken sandwiches and mac ‘n cheese.
- Dogs, especially dobermans.
- Engaging with others.

Intangible assets:

- Takes pride in “getting to the stage I’m at. I’ve come a long way.”
- Wise beyond her age.
- A smart girl with a good memory.

Shenella’s crystal ball:

- Dreams of “giving children a life I didn’t have.”
- Wants to become a foster parent because “I can care for children of all ages.”

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents, but a single parent with a strong support network would be considered.



- Experienced parent or parents.
- Youngest or only child in the home.
- Patient and supportive.
- Strong advocates for the services Shenella needs to thrive.

Ryan's likes:

- Swimming and riding his bike.
- Playing board and video games.
- Watching Ninja Warriors movies.

Intangible assets:

- Empathetic and often lifts the spirits of others.

Ryan's crystal ball:

- Plans to be rich soon and says he's getting there with the allowance he receives.
- Wishes for a forever family who'll care about him.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad in a forever family with other children.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Ryan thrive.
- Open to letting Ryan maintain his sibling relationships.

"I am very fun because I like to make jokes. I like to be funny everyday."



*Photo by
Melanie Strobel*

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Spring 2019 Periodical.

Visit www.mare.org for a complete listing of agencies who license families for foster care, in addition to adoption homestudies, including your Michigan Department of Health and Human Services county office.

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. Please contact an agency in your area if you are interested in beginning the adoption process. For an interactive map of statewide licensed agencies, visit: <http://www.mare.org/For-Families/New-to-Adoption/Find-a-Licensed-Agency>

Upper Peninsula

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
Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877-994-8344, www.lsswis.org
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, www.saulttribe.com
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan, Marquette, 906-249-5437, www.teachingfamilyhomes.org
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, www.upfs.org
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, www.upkids.com

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, 989-797-6638, 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
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 Institute, Millington, 989-871-6695, www.newlightonline.net

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

Bethany Christian Services, Madison Heights, 248-414-4080, www.bethany.org/madisonheights
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, www.ccsem.org
Community 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 & Community Services, Inc., 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
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, 248-443-0300, www.spaulding.org
Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248-552-8020, www.spectrumhuman.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 and Foster Care 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 Jackson, Lenawee and Hillsdale counties, Adrian, 517-263-2191, www.catholiccharitiesjllhc.org
 Catholic Charities of Shiawassee & Genesee, Flint, 810-232-9950, 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 Service & Children's Aid, Jackson, 517-787-7920, www.strong-families.org
 Fostering Futures, Ann Arbor, 734-481-8999, www.fostering-futures.com
 Fostering Solutions, Adrian, 517-263-0020, www.fosteringsolutions.org
 Growing Hope Through Love, Howell, 517-798-4020
 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
 Open Door Adoption Services, Jackson, 517-936-7713, www.opendooradoptionsservices.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.dabsj.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269-344-0202, www.fcsource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcsource.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.citylinc.org



MARE 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 have knowledge of foster care, infant and 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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