

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



***Inside:***  
*A bit of sweetness fully satiates this young man, Page 6.*

***Happiness? It's gotta be Bieber, biking and beauty! Page 8.***

***Learn why she's determined to become a lawyer, Page 12.***

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

## ***Summer 2017***

## Christopher C08321

### Christopher's likes:

- Playing basketball and soccer and riding his bike.
- Watching cartoons.
- Playing video games and anything to do with Ninja Turtles.

### Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents or a single parent with strong support.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child's behavior and development.

**"Christopher is a happy, energetic and affectionate young boy."**

Photo by  
Mike Lazetta

*Christopher's worker*



Welcome to the Summer 2017 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 represent 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 about adoption, visit [www.mare.org](http://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 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.

**MARE's Match Support Program** is 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 can give families up to 90 days of services such as referrals to support groups, community resources and educational training opportunities. To learn more, visit [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) or call 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. This term often makes people think of children with severe mental or physical impairments. In reality, special needs adoption means:

- 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 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 the child's 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.

More than 98 percent of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. 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 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.

## 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 a year to complete. 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.

Learn more about adoption and Michigan's waiting children at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).



**Zandra C09013**

*Photo by  
Melissa  
Covell*

**Zandra's likes:**

- Dancing and playing basketball.
- Participating in her church's youth group and singing with the choir.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single mom or a mom and dad who are experienced parents.
- Willing to make sure Zandra receives the services she needs to thrive.

Photo by  
Hannah Dunne



### Latasha's likes:

- Horses, dogs, snakes and rhinos.
- Reading (always has a book in her hands).
- Sleeping on the weekends and attending church on Sundays.
- Drawing and listening to music.
- Watching "Supernatural" on television.
- Following Michigan State football.

### Latasha's crystal ball:

- Dreams of visiting Florida to see dolphins.
- Wants to become involved with school sports and a church community.
- Having fun nights with a future forever family.

### Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced, flexible, supportive and patient parents.
- Able to help her daily with her homework and talk to her about school, friends and her interests.
- Committed to making sure Latasha receives continued services to function at her best.

"I like going to school."

"I like to throw a football around."

### Did you know?

MARE offers online resources for people who are new to the adoption process. Subjects covered include the first step in the process, costs, type of home needed by an adoptive family and the different types of adoption. Check it out at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) and click on For Families > New to Adoption.



**Jevon's likes:**

- Playing basketball and football.
- Fishing and enjoying the outdoors.
- Being the center of attention around those he cares about.
- Helping other children and adults he trusts.
- Listening to music, especially rap and R&B.
- Visiting the library.

**Intangible assets:**

- Talented and compassionate.
- Polite and well-mannered.

**Creative interests:**

- Baking and drawing.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- An experienced single parent.
- The youngest child in the home.
- Able to provide structure and discipline.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Jevon.
- Willing to let Jevon maintain contact with his older brother.



“Jevon is very loyal and protective of those he trusts.”

*Jevon's worker*



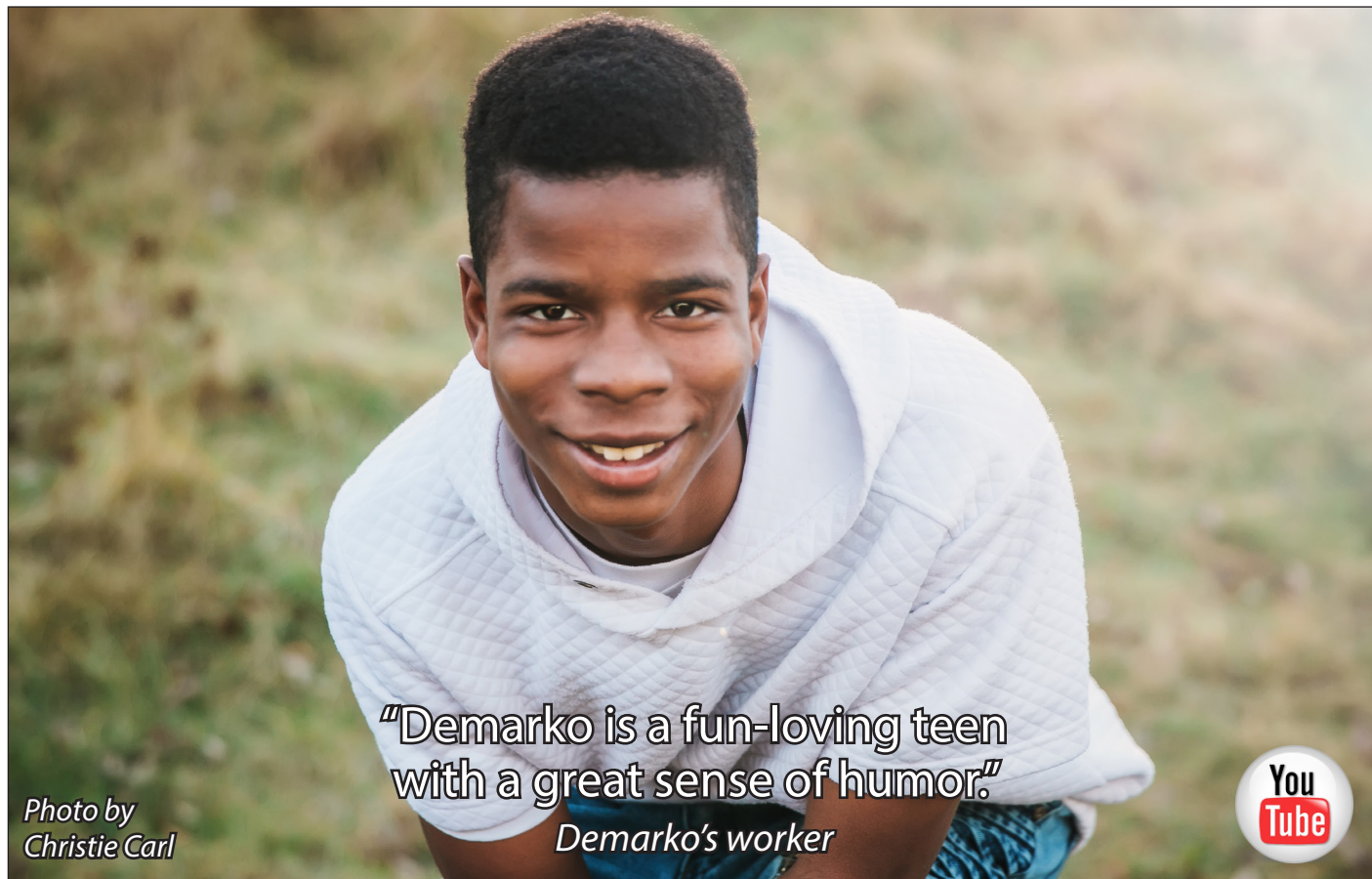


Photo by  
Christie Carl

“Demarko is a fun-loving teen  
with a great sense of humor.”

*Demarko's worker*



### **Demarko's likes:**

- Playing football, listening to music and going to the movies.
- Eating pizza then satisfying his sweet tooth with a piece of Sour Patch Kids candy.
- Playing video games and going to the arcade on weekends.

### **Demarko's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of seeing the Green Packers at Lambeau Field.
- Wants to become a veterinary technician.

### **Creative interests:**

- Eager to learn about theater and acting.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Experienced parent or parents and a home in which he's the youngest child.
- Patient as Demarko transitions into his new home.
- Able to help Demarko achieve his dream of attending college.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Demarko function at his best now and into adulthood.

“Some of my favorite holidays are my birthday, Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Easter. I like those holidays because I can dress up, decorate the house and spend time with family and friends.”

### **Ashley’s likes:**

- Being outdoors and swimming.
- The color pink.
- Eating macaroni and cheese.
- Studying science and math.

### **Creative interests:**

- Doing arts and crafts and writing about her feelings in a journal.

### **Ashley’s crystal ball:**

- Dreams of going to Disney World “because it looks like fun.”
- Wants to become a teacher.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Committed to help Ashley achieve her goals.
- Able to provide Ashley with a patient, loving and supportive home.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child’s behavior and development.
- Able to be strong advocates for the services that will help Ashley thrive now and into adulthood.
- Willing to let Ashley maintain ties with appropriate relatives.

“I would like to learn to cook with my family.”



Photo by  
Brittany Ritter



Photo by  
Lillian Schull

"I like  
to help  
people."

### **Mary's likes:**

- Being outdoors, particularly camping and swimming.
- Shopping for clothes.
- Gym class because of all the activities such as bowling and badminton.
- Listening to music, especially Justin Bieber and One Direction.
- Biking and playing games.

### **Mary's crystal ball:**

- Following her older sister's career path into nursing.
- Doing outdoor activities such as camping or working on artistic projects with a future forever family.

### **Creative interests:**

- Experiments with hair and makeup styles.
- Enjoys coloring and cutting shapes out of paper.
- Writing about movies or something she's done in the past.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

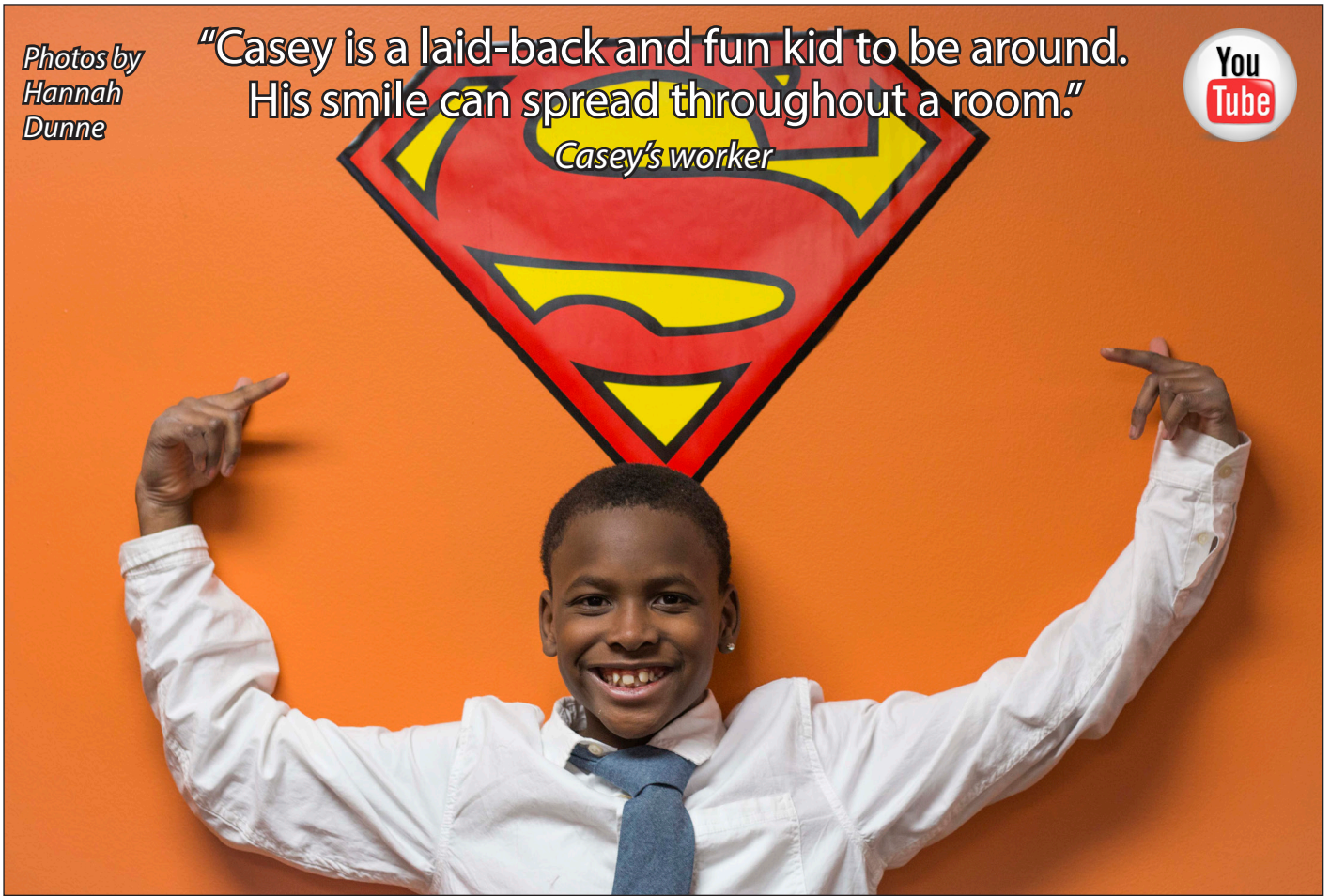
- Two parents or a single-female parent with a strong support system.
- Only or youngest child in the home.
- Able to provide the one-on-one attention she requires.
- Willing to let Mary continue the relationships that are important to her.
- Wants a family who has pets.



Photos by  
Hannah  
Dunne

"Casey is a laid-back and fun kid to be around.  
His smile can spread throughout a room."

Casey's worker



### Casey's likes:

- Watching and playing his favorite sports including baseball, basketball and football.
- Riding bikes and playing video games.
- Following the Detroit Lions.
- Munching on Chinese food.
- Listening to rap music.

### Qualities of a forever family:

- A strong single male or a couple with an involved and dedicated father figure.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child's development and behavior.
- Patience as they build and earn Casey's trust.

### Intangible assets:

- A great sense of humor.
- Likes trying something new such as cooking.

### Casey's crystal ball:

- Dreams of a career as a pro football player.
- Wants to visit Florida but not move there "because of all the hurricanes and tornadoes!"

"In the right home,  
he will succeed and  
do big things with  
his future."

Casey's worker





“Nick is funny, talkative, easygoing, sporty, nice and someone who likes to joke around.”

*Nick's worker*

*Photo by  
Christine  
Schafer*



### **Nick's likes:**

- Playing sports such as soccer, baseball and basketball.
- Being outdoors and participating in hunting and fishing.
- Munching on breakfast foods to get the day started.
- Playing in the gym.
- Singing and drumming.
- Proud of his Native American heritage.
- Sleeping and watching TV.

### **Intangible assets:**

- Encouraging, caring and empathetic.

### **Nick's crystal ball:**

- Looks forward to a forever family who enjoys the activities that he loves.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two experienced parents who can provide the attention and supervision that would benefit him.
- Oldest child in the home.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Nick thrive at home and in school.
- A great sense of humor.
- A positive male role model.
- Willing to let Nick maintain his relationship with his brother.

“Nick would definitely want a family who would embrace his culture and let him grow in his understanding of that.”

**Nick's worker**

**Shenella's likes:**

- Reading, coloring and drawing.
- Showcasing her skateboarding skills.
- Eating healthy foods such as watermelon and carrots.
- Planting flowers.
- Watching scary movies.
- Shopping and playing sports.

**Shenella's crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a nurse or a foster care worker.
- Looks forward to spending time with a forever family cooking and gardening.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two parents or a single parent with a very strong support network.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child's behavior and development.
- The youngest or only child in the home.
- Patient and supportive as Shenella works through her past and transitions into her new home.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Shenella thrive at home and in school.
- Loves animals and wants a future forever family who has pets.

Photo by  
Heather Halligan



"There's a quote that keeps me going.  
*'Falling down is an accident, but staying down is a choice.'*  
I look at it every morning because I hung it on my door."

“I want to go into law because I want to help people.  
I want to help them so they won’t be alone.”

### **Destiny’s likes:**

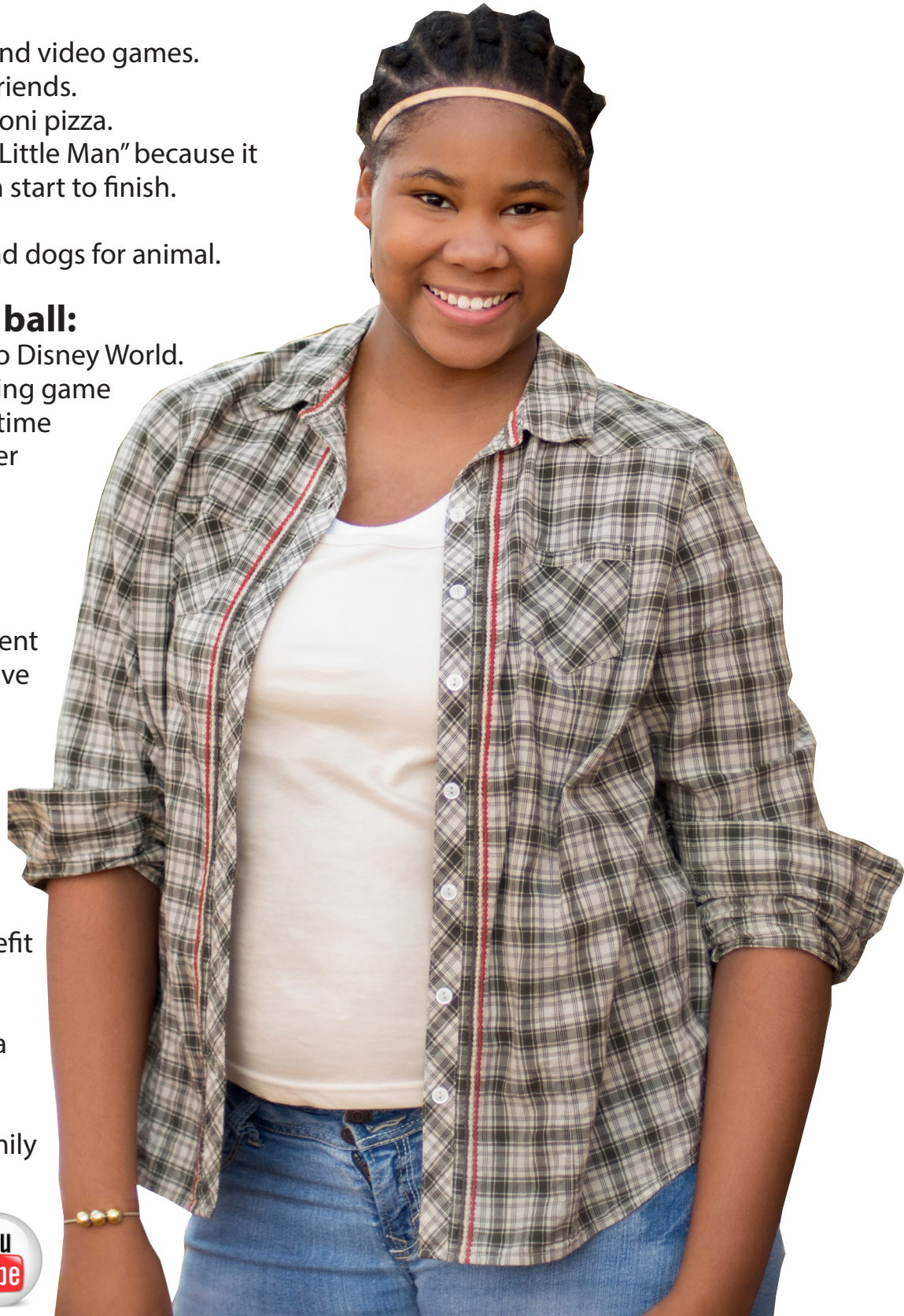
- Playing “Monopoly” and video games.
- Spending time with friends.
- Munching on pepperoni pizza.
- Watching the movie “Little Man” because it makes her laugh from start to finish.
- Playing volleyball.
- Dark blue for color and dogs for animal.

### **Destiny’s crystal ball:**

- Dreams of traveling to Disney World.
- Looks forward to having game nights and spending time together with a forever family.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- A strong, positive parent or parents who can give Destiny guidance.
- A household with no other children or children about the same age as Destiny.
- Willing to advocate for the services and support that will benefit Destiny.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child’s behavior and development.
- A preference for a family with pets, especially dogs.



*Photo by  
Andrea Peardon*





### **William's likes:**

- Playing and watching basketball and football.
- Participating in gym class.
- Watching movies with his caregivers.
- Math because it's an easy subject for him.
- Helping around the house.
  - Reading and playing video games.
  - Spending time with friends.

### **Creative interests:**

- Drawing and coloring.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child's behavior and development.
- Patience with William's behavior as well as with his need for time to transition into his new home.
- Willing to let William continue his relationship with his younger brother.

**"William is compassionate and thoughtful of others."**

*William's worker*

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Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel ([www.youtube.com/VideosbyMare](http://www.youtube.com/VideosbyMare)) to see videos of several of the children featured in the Summer 2017 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. Please contact an agency in your area if you are interested in beginning the adoption process.

### Upper Peninsula

Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Escanaba, 906-786-7212, [www.cssup.org](http://www.cssup.org)  
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Iron Mountain, 906-774-3323, [www.cssup.org](http://www.cssup.org)  
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-227-9119, [www.cssup.org](http://www.cssup.org)  
Child & Family Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-228-4050, [www.cfsup.org](http://www.cfsup.org)  
Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877-994-8344, [www.lsswis.org](http://www.lsswis.org)  
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, [www.saulttribe.com](http://www.saulttribe.com)  
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan, Marquette, 906-249-5437, [www.teachingfamilyhomes.org](http://www.teachingfamilyhomes.org)  
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, [www.upfs.org](http://www.upfs.org)  
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, [www.upkids.com](http://www.upkids.com)

### Northern & Central Lower Michigan

Adoption Option Inc., Midland, 989-839-0534, [www.adoptionoptioninc.org](http://www.adoptionoptioninc.org)  
Bethany Christian Services, Fremont, 231-924-3390, [www.bethany.org/fremont](http://www.bethany.org/fremont)  
Bethany Christian Services, Traverse City, 231-995-0870, [www.bethany.org/traversecity](http://www.bethany.org/traversecity)  
Catholic Family Services of the Diocese of Saginaw, Bay City, 989-892-2504, [www.cfssite.org](http://www.cfssite.org)  
Child & Family Services of Northeast MI, Alpena, 989-356-4567, [www.cfsnemi.org](http://www.cfsnemi.org)  
Child & Family Services of Northwest MI, Traverse City, 231-946-8975, [www.cfsnwmi.org](http://www.cfsnwmi.org)  
Eagle Village, Hersey, 231-832-2234, [www.eaglevillage.org](http://www.eaglevillage.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Clare, 989-386-2101, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
New Light Child & Family Institute, Millington, 989-871-6695, [www.newlightonline.net](http://www.newlightonline.net)

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

Bethany Christian Services, Madison Heights, 248-414-4080, [www.bethany.org/madisonheights](http://www.bethany.org/madisonheights)  
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, [www.ccsem.org](http://www.ccsem.org)  
Community Social Services of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-883-2100, [www.csswayne.org](http://www.csswayne.org)  
Child Safe Michigan, Royal Oak, 248-353-0921, [www.childsafemichigan.org](http://www.childsafemichigan.org)  
The Children's Center of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-831-5535, [www.thechildrenscenter.com](http://www.thechildrenscenter.com)  
Ennis Center for Children, Detroit, 313-342-2699, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
Ennis Center for Children, Pontiac, 248-334-2715, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
Family & Community Services, Inc., Utica, 586-726-2988, [www.fcsservices.org](http://www.fcsservices.org)  
Forever Families, Livonia, 734-762-0909, [www.forever-families.org](http://www.forever-families.org)  
Homes for Black Children, Detroit, 313-961-4777  
Judson Center, Redford, 313-794-5653, [www.judsoncenter.org](http://www.judsoncenter.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Troy, 248-423-2770, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
Methodist Children's Home, Redford, 313-531-4060, [www.mchsmi.org](http://www.mchsmi.org)  
Oakland Family Services, Pontiac, 248-858-7766, [www.oaklandfamilyservices.org](http://www.oaklandfamilyservices.org)  
Orchards Children's Services, Southfield, 248-258-0440, [www.orchards.org](http://www.orchards.org)  
Spaulding for Children, Southfield, 248-443-0300, [www.spaulding.org](http://www.spaulding.org)  
Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248-552-8020, [www.spectrumhuman.org](http://www.spectrumhuman.org)  
Vista Maria, Dearborn Heights, 313-271-3050, [www.vistamaria.org](http://www.vistamaria.org)  
Wolverine Human Services, Taylor, 888-625-8669, [www.wolverinehs.org](http://www.wolverinehs.org)

## Southern Central Michigan

Adoption and Foster Care Specialists, Inc., Lapeer, 810-660-7590, [www.adoption-specialists.org](http://www.adoption-specialists.org)  
 Bethany Christian Services, East Lansing, 517-336-0191, [www.bethany.org/eastlansing](http://www.bethany.org/eastlansing)  
 Catholic Charities of Jackson, Lenawee and Hillsdale counties, Adrian, 517-263-2191, [www.catholiccharitiesjllhc.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesjllhc.org)  
 Catholic Charities of Shiawassee & Genesee, Flint, 810-232-9950, [www.catholiccharitiesflint.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesflint.org)  
 Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw, Ann Arbor, 734-971-9781, [www.csswashtenaw.org](http://www.csswashtenaw.org)  
 Child & Family Charities – Capital Area, Lansing, 517-882-4000, [www.childandfamily.org](http://www.childandfamily.org)  
 Ennis Center for Children, Flint, 810-233-4031, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Family Service & Children's Aid, Jackson, 517-787-7920, [www.strong-families.org](http://www.strong-families.org)  
 Fostering Futures, Ann Arbor, 734-481-8999, [www.ffkids.org](http://www.ffkids.org)  
 Fostering Solutions, Adrian, 517-263-0020, [www.fosteringsolutions.org](http://www.fosteringsolutions.org)  
 Growing Hope Through Love, Howell, 517-798-4020  
 Hands Across the Water, Ann Arbor, 734-477-0135, [www.hatw.org](http://www.hatw.org)  
 Livingston County Catholic Charities, Howell, 517-545-5944, [www.livingstoncatholiccharities.org](http://www.livingstoncatholiccharities.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734-971-1944, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Jackson, 517-789-6444, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Lansing, 517-886-1380, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Open Door Adoption Services, Jackson, 517-936-7713, [www.opendooradoptionsservices.org](http://www.opendooradoptionsservices.org)  
 St. Vincent Catholic Charities, Lansing, 517-323-4734, [www.stvcc.org](http://www.stvcc.org)

## Southwest Michigan

Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids, 616-224-7550, [www.bethany.org/grand-rapids](http://www.bethany.org/grand-rapids)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Holland, 616-396-0623, [www.bethany.org/holland](http://www.bethany.org/holland)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Kalamazoo, 269-372-8800, [www.bethany.org/kalamazoo](http://www.bethany.org/kalamazoo)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Muskegon, 231-733-1618, [www.bethany.org/muskegon](http://www.bethany.org/muskegon)  
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Grand Rapids, 616-456-1443, [www.ccwestmi.org](http://www.ccwestmi.org)  
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Muskegon, 231-726-4735, [www.ccwestmi.org](http://www.ccwestmi.org)  
 D.A. Blodgett Services, Grand Rapids, 616-451-2021, [www.dabsj.org](http://www.dabsj.org)  
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269-344-0202, [www.fcsources.org](http://www.fcsources.org)  
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, [www.fcsources.org](http://www.fcsources.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Pathways, Holland, 616-396-2301, [www.pathwaysmi.org](http://www.pathwaysmi.org)  
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, [www.cityinc.org](http://www.cityinc.org)

**Visit [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) for a complete listing of agencies who license families for foster care, in addition to adoption homestudies, including your local Michigan Department of Health and Human Services office.**



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**



**MICHIGAN  
ADOPTION  
RESOURCE  
EXCHANGE**

**HOMES**  
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273  
[www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org)



The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

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