

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 photolistings and videos of waiting children, visit our website at www.mare.org.



Here's how you can get on TV

It's a great way to showcase you



Perhaps you've heard about the "Grant Me Hope" videos that air on television stations across the state, and you want to learn more and how you can be included in one. MARE Youth Specialist Jennifer Brooks recently took a few moments for a question and answer session about "Grant Me Hope."

Why should I consider being in a "Grant Me Hope" video?

It is a really great opportunity to let adoptive parents get to know you, and we try to make the experience fun for you as well. Also, your video serves as a reminder to adults about why it's important to adopt youth from foster care.

Where is the video filmed?

We typically look at what you enjoy doing and try to match the location with your interests. If you like games, we might try to film at a video game center, or if you are really active, we might film at a recreation center. We've

been to places where you can bowl, swim, play basketball, play laser tag and jump on trampolines. We're always open to new suggestions about where you might want to go

and have a video done.

I'm nervous. What can you do to calm me down?

Trust me, being in front of a camera can be nerve-racking. We totally understand. That's why we take you to a fun location, and we let you know that it's a very casual interview. We make sure that you feel comfortable. If you need to stop at any point, we can stop filming and restart later. Also, there are no trick questions. Everything is about you, so you're the expert. You can't get anything wrong. Just know if you feel uncomfortable at any time answering questions, we can move on. People just want to get to know you. The whole goal is to make an amazing video that shows how wonderful you are.

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Take charge of your journey

2017 Michigan Teen Conference offers guidance on your future

The very successful Michigan Teen Conference returns to Saginaw Valley State University June 21-22.

This special conference is for youth ages 14-21 preparing to exit foster care, their caregivers and the professionals who work with them. Motivational speaker, trainer and author Derek Clark will give the keynote address at this year's conference.

According to michfed.org, "Derek Clark's life is one of resilience and redemption. As a child, he suffered unthinkable child abuse, abandonment and emotional distress before being turned over to the psychiatric hospital at age 5. His 13 years in the San Francisco Bay area

Conference details

When: Wednesday-Thursday
June 21-22, 2017

Where: Saginaw Valley State University, 7400 Bay Road, University Center, MI 48710

More information:
www.michfed.org

foster care system reflected an early life of humiliation, aggression, emotional distress, overwhelming anxiety and being wrongfully labeled. Eventually, with the help of foster parents, a fantastic social worker and mentors, he defied the

artificial limitations imposed upon him. Derek knows first-hand how to cope with adversity and overcoming hardship. His past has never held him back from accomplishing what he set his heart and mind to."

The conference also features group activities and workshops, which typically focus on topics such as financial aid, getting ready for college, career planning, health and well-being and more. In addition, there will be life skills stations that give youth the opportunity to practice what they learn during the conference. Topics covered at the stations include education, employment, finances, housing and transportation.

Share your success story!

Fostering Success Michigan is students who are interested in being featured on its website.

This is an opportunity for students and professionals alike to read the success stories and learn about supports that helped you and others succeed. The stories will be used as a way to highlight students and their achievements. If you know of any youth or alumni of foster care between the ages of 18 and 24 who are currently enrolled in high school or college, Fostering Success Michigan would love to

hear from them.

Contact Fostering Success Student Advisor Brandon Youngblood at fostering-info@wmich.edu to have the interview questions sent directly to your inbox.

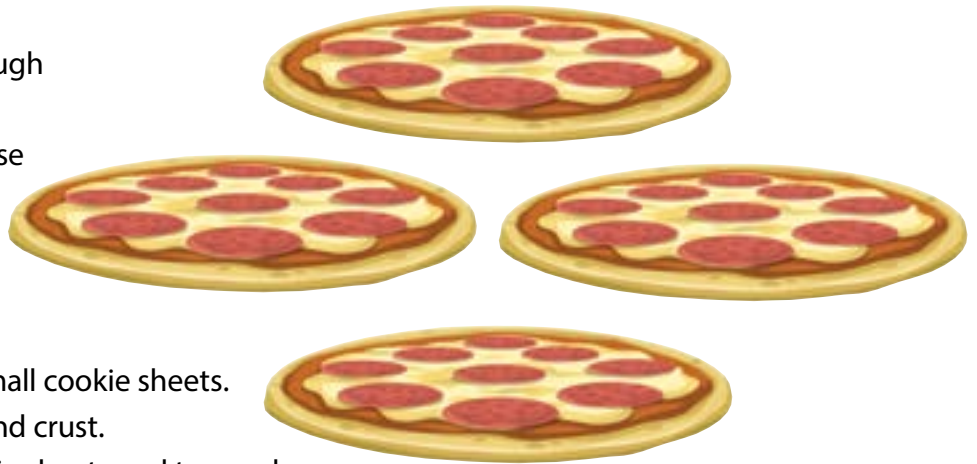
Fostering Success Michigan is a statewide initiative that aims to increase awareness, access and success in higher education and post-college careers for youth and alumni of foster care (fosteringssuccessmichigan.com).

Like to cook? Try this easy-to-make pizza dish

If you love to cook or want to learn, here's an easy recipe that you might want to try with your caregiver's supervision. It'll get those who dine on it drooling.

Ingredients

- 1 package of refrigerated biscuit dough
- 1 cup of pizza sauce
- 2 cups of shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 package of sliced pepperoni



Directions

Step 1: Preheat it at 375 degrees.

Step 2: Grease two large or three small cookie sheets.

Step 3: Press each biscuit into a round crust.

Step 4: Place the crusts on the cookie sheets and top each one with pizza sauce, pepperoni and cheese.

Step 5: Bake for 10-15 minutes or until the bottoms of the crust are deep golden brown and the cheese is bubbly.

Step 6: ENJOY!

Recipe by "Mamma Mia" herself Martha Kaczala, MARE adoption worker liaison

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What happens if I make a mistake?

There are no mistakes because we can keep the video rolling until everything is right. When we film, we get multiple takes. We take about 15 to 20 minutes of interview footage, and we cut that down to three minutes, so there's plenty of room for you to change your answer. Because we keep it rolling, you have many chances to let people know more about you.

After the video is shot, how long before I see it on TV?

That's a good question. Our goal is to get it aired within a month, but it depends on how fast the production company edits and finishes the video and when the TV stations schedule it to air. The videos air at different times on three stations: WXYZ Channel 7 in Detroit, WZZM Channel 13 in Grand Rapids and WWTV Channel 9&10, which covers northern Michigan. As soon as MARE knows when a video is scheduled to air, we let your adoption worker know.

How do I get started?

If you're interested in participating in a "Grant Me Hope" feature, let your adoption worker or one of your recruiters know. One of them will contact me. As soon as we have a scheduled video date in your area, we will let you know and make sure that you still want to do it and then give you the details including the location.

'Grant Me Hope' sample questions

What are your favorite activities?

What kind of music do you like?

What makes you happy?

What is your favorite food?

What is your favorite time of year?

What do you want to do when you get older?

How would you describe your personality?

What kind of music do you like?

Do you have any jokes you can share?

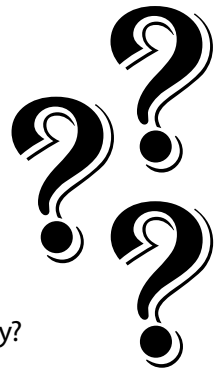
If you could wake up tomorrow with a super power, what would you want to have?

What is your favorite TV show?

What do you like to read?

What's the most important thing you want people to know about you?

What does the word "family" mean to you and what characteristics would you want in a family?



Behind the scenes at the 2017 Michigan Heart Gallery video shoot



Gabrielle, left, and Makayla, below, are two of the youth featured in the 2017 Michigan Heart Gallery video.



YOUTH RESOURCES



FosterClub - FosterClub is a national network for young people in foster care and young foster care alumni. The site includes blogs from current foster youth, success stories from youth who have come out of the foster system as well as celebrities who faced foster care. It also provides a listing by state of contact information for professionals and hotlines. (www.fosterclub.com 503-717-1552)



Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative - MYOI is a partnership between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, the Oakland/Livingston Human Services Agency and many other local community partners. MYOI's goal is to ensure that young people in foster care have successful outcomes in housing, education, employment, community engagement and health. (michigan.gov/FYIT > MYOI)



Foster Youth in Transition - MDHHS website geared towards older youth who are experiencing foster care. It's a comprehensive, youth-oriented site with advice, interactive features, a useful glossary of foster care terms, and information on a variety of issues important to current and former foster youth. The site provides links on how to develop supports, find services, get answers to important questions and just keep you posted on what's new. (www.michigan.gov/fyit)

For more information on getting involved with these organizations contact Jen Brooks at jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org or 734-528-2061.