

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.



MARE's Match Support Program helps families stay together

The 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.

The Match Support Specialists deliver up to 90 days of services to families by providing them with referrals to support groups, educational training opportunities, and other recommendations to helpful community resources. Our Match Support Specialists are a beneficial support for any family throughout the adoption process. They will be there for the family to answer any questions that they may have and to provide support and guidance during any adversity that may occur in the process.

If you believe that you would be a great match for the Match Support Program, you can find the referral form on the MARE website under 'for families' and by clicking the 'Match Support Program' page. If you have any questions, please contact the Match Support Program Supervisor, Tara Radina at (734) 528 - 1721 or via email at Tara_Radina@judsoncenter.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Meet the Specialists

Jennifer Jackson

Recently relocated from New York to Michigan, Jennifer (Jen) joined the MARE team as a Match Support Specialist in October 2015. Jen has a bachelor degree in Psychology and master degree in Forensic Psychology. In the past, she has worked with children experiencing emotional and behavioral disorders in a school setting. Currently, she is attending Simmons College full time to complete her Master of Social Work degree. When Jen is not working or studying, she and her family enjoy spending time hiking, kayaking and exploring their new home here in Michigan.

Kalley Goad

Kalley is very pleased to announce that she is one of four, Match Support Specialists, who are ready to make a difference with the new MARE Match Support Program! Kalley has a degree in Family Life Education from Spring Arbor University, a very full 8 years of experience being a single foster/adoptive parent, and in her spare time she does contractual work with DHHS as a parent aide and teaching parenting classes. She began her parenting journey 18 years ago; since then, it has been a fantastic voyage of learning, living, loving, and hair pulling that she considers a gift!

Kalley Goad

Jennifer Jackson



Photo by Mike Lanzetta

Visitors to last year's Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening look over the photographic display.

Circus? Hah! Here's a show that's better

Join us at the Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening

Excuse us, Ringling Brothers, but your Greatest Show on Earth pales in comparison to an event happening in April right here in Michigan.

It's the Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening, and it's marvelous, wondrous, fabulous and stupendous! Take that, Ringling Brothers.

The big event is scheduled for Saturday, April 16 at the Emagine Theatre in Royal Oak with doors opening at 10 a.m. The show features the unveiling of this year's Michigan Heart Gallery, a traveling photographic exhibit featuring photos of youth currently in the foster care system waiting for their forever family.

The festivities also include food and refreshments and a red carpet where many waiting youth will walk and get their pictures taken by the paparazzi who frequent this great show. This year's Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening includes a special feature film that we're sure you'll love.

So, mark your calendars, and come join us for this truly remarkable event. And make sure to follow the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange on Facebook and Twitter for updates.



A great recipe for family: Just add Damere and Damontae

Forget the appetizer and the rest of the five-course meal; Damere wants to go straight to dessert. Pass the ice cream and cake, if you please, which are his favorite foods. Damere doesn't mess around with his play time, either. He loves Transformers. If he's not inside, chances are good you'll find Damere outside riding his bike or shooting hoops, his favorite after-school activities. Damere takes a no-nonsense approach to his career path as well, saying he wants to become a police officer so he can help people and put the bad guys in jail.

Damere's younger brother Damontae is well past the crawling and first-steps stage and on to learning how to ride a bike. He should do it no time since his foster parent says Damontae is an eager learner. He's already showing an interest in cooking, which he often pretends to do while playing. His foster parent says Damontae enjoys assisting with dinner and helps prepare simple meals. If he could serve up his favorite meal, it'd be something made with chicken.

A future forever family must be willing to adopt the Damere and Damontae together. Since the boys require a good deal of attention, they would do best with two experienced parents in a family who can assure them that they are safe and loved.

For more information about Damere (C08894) and Damontae (C08895), visit www.mare.org > For Families > View Waiting Children. To contact MARE by phone, call 800-589-6273.



Why adoptive, foster parents need to take a break

Learn your limits and the steps to decrease daily stress

BY JAYCIE GIORDANO, MARE MSW INTERN

Parenting is one of the most rewarding jobs in the world, but it can be stressful, frustrating and immensely draining. Foster and adoptive parents may face additional parenting struggles, especially when caring for a child with special needs.

Juggling various appointments and meetings with teachers and social workers not only can drain your time but also your energy. It impacts your thinking, your emotions, your

relationships and your body. In short, adoptive and foster parents need to take time for self-care.

Without self-care, the stresses take a large toll on all aspects of a parent's life. Common symptoms include depressed feelings, bottled up emotions, anxiety and impulsive thoughts. Because most foster and adoptive parents are natural caregivers, they tend to devote all of their time and energy to their family,

making sure all of their family's needs are met before their own. Other times, parents do not know what would help them to feel less stressed or think asking for support is a sign of failure.

However, self-care is crucial for foster and adoptive parents for several reasons. First, your own happiness and well-being will allow you to be the best parent, spouse, friend, or See **Self-care**, on page 4



ADOPTION AWARENESS

AT THE PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS

SUN, FEBRUARY 21

vs. NEW ORLEANS PELICANS • 3:30PM

Come and support the Detroit Pistons as they partner with the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange! With every ticket sold, a portion of the proceeds go back to MARE! Every guest will also receive the opportunity to shoot a free throw on the Pistons court after the game and a Pistons gift!

EXCLUSIVE TICKET PRICING:

LOWER-LEVEL RISERS: \$50

LOWER-LEVEL ENDS: \$30

UPPER-LEVEL CORNERS: \$17



Ticket includes: FREE Pistons gift, opportunity to shoot a free throw on the Pistons court and a donation back to MARE

Buy Tickets at Pistons.com/MARE

Offer Code: Pistons

Offer cannot be redeemed at The Palace Ticket Store. For additional information, please contact Nicole Laidlaw: 248.375.4065/ nlaidlaw@palacenet.com



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Find us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 20, 2016

MARE Waiting Family Forum

Bay City, 10 a.m.-noon

Explore the process of being matched with a child. A light breakfast is provided and there is childcare available on a limited basis.

To register, visit www.mare.org

February 21, 2016

Adoption Awareness Night at the Palace

Detroit Pistons, The Palace of Auburn Hills, 3:30 p.m.

Pistons.com/MARE

March 19, 2016

MARE Meet & Greet

Brighton, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

April 16, 2016

Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening

Imagine Theatre, Royal Oak
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

For more information regarding these events please contact Jessica Thompson, MARE Recruitment Specialist: jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org



Self-care, continued from page 3

employee that you can be. Second, you are your child's role model; if you value the importance of self-care, your child will do the same. And last, self-care will help keep your mind and body healthy.

To overcome mental, emotional and social barriers to self-care, the National American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) has created a list of ways to recognize and understand your own self-worth. Once you do, you will be on the road to self-care.

- **Give yourself permission to need something.** Asking for help is not a sign of weakness; it is part of human nature and will ultimately make you a better parent when you can recognize where help is needed.
- **Keep it simple.** Make choices that are realistic for your family and know the limits you have for yourself and your children. Prioritize the things that matter most.

- **Stop comparing yourself to other parents and families.** Each family is different, and there is no one

correct way to raise a child. Make expectations specific for your families' capabilities and realities.

- **Join a parent support group.** Talking with other parents who have gone through similar experiences can be reassuring and comforting. This provides a welcoming space for advice from other parents or as a place to vent to other people who "just get it."

- **Have down time every day.** Whether it's enjoying a morning cup of tea or 10 minutes of journaling at night, your mind, body and soul need time to relax and recover from the daily stressors called life.

- **Routinely have something to look forward to.** This can be as simple as indulging in your favorite chocolate bar or planning a date night with your partner. Rewards and positive reinforcements work for adults too!

- **Accentuate the positive.** Take time to recognize the good in yourself and your family. Celebrate and praise the little victories in life each and every day.