

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



*Inside:  
Christopher's  
heaven? A ball  
and a court, Page 3.*

*Learn why Sienna  
is a "Joy" to be  
around, Page 5.*

*What Caitlyn takes  
pride in could  
surprise you, Page 9.*

***Fall 2018***

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



**Mary C08495**

**Mary's likes:**

- The outdoors, particularly camping, swimming and stargazing.
- Shopping while looking for clothes.
- Getting her hair, makeup and nails done.

**Mary's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of becoming an actor.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single female parent, a mom and dad or two female parents.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Only or youngest child in the home.
- Wants a family with pets.

*"I like to help people."*

*Photo by Beth and Mike Severn*

Welcome to the Fall 2018 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](http://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.



## MICHIGAN ADOPTION MONTH

Giving thanks for families

NOVEMBER 2018

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter during November for Adoption Month. We'll have features about waiting youth, stories about exceptional adoptive families, updates about courthouse celebrations and more.

For a list of Adoption Month celebrations, visit [www.mare.org/MI-Adoption-Day](http://www.mare.org/MI-Adoption-Day).

To contact the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange, 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. 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 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.

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 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 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.



Photo by  
Ellen Dykstra

**Christopher C08900**

### Christopher’s likes:

- Playing basketball any chance he gets.
- Going to the movies.

### Christopher’s crystal ball:

- Dreams of playing professional basketball.

### Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two parents who can provide the needed attention.
- Enthusiastic about Christopher’s interest in sports.

## Gary C09023

### Gary's likes:

- Playing softball, football, hockey and basketball.
- Pets such as dogs, cats and fish and interesting reptiles such as bearded dragons.
- Listening to country and rap music.
- Pizza with bacon.

### Gary's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a pro football player.

- Longs for a forever family who likes spending time together and enjoys going swimming and visiting amusement parks.

### Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents or a single parent who can provide the attention Gary needs.
  - Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
  - Strong advocates for the services that would benefit Gary.
  - Patience as Gary adapts to his new home and builds trust.



*Photo by  
Derek Cookson*

## Did you know?

In 2011, MARE welcomed the addition of the adoption navigators to our program. Adoption navigators are experienced adoptive parents who offer guidance and personal knowledge to potential adoptive families. They have years of parenting experience, resource and service finding skills, and knowledge of foster care and all types of adoptions. For more information, visit [www.mare.org/For-Families/Adoption-Navigators](http://www.mare.org/For-Families/Adoption-Navigators).

“I love cats because they’re so cute and cuddly.”



**Joy’s likes:**

- Drawing and coloring.
- Participating on her school’s bowling team.
- Playing Sorry and Monopoly.
- The colors pink and purple.
- Having fun with friends after school.

**Joy’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a cook or a nurse.
- Dreams of visiting waterparks and going to concerts with her future forever family.



*Photos by  
Jennifer Brooks*

**Intangible assets:**

- Smart and hard-working with an eye on future goals.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two parents or a female parent with a strong support network.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Patient and able to provide a structured home with close supervision.

“Joy is a very sweet, kind and friendly young lady.”

*Joy’s worker*

“My'Asia wants a family who accepts her for who she is.  
My'Asia is a sweet child who loves to be helpful.”

*My'Asia's worker*



**My'Asia's likes:**

- Playing sports.
- Drawing and doing crafts.

**Intangible assets:**

- Athletic and creative.
- Thrives in a leadership role.
- Describes herself as kind and fun to be around.

**My'Asia's crystal ball:**

- Wants to be a teacher.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two experienced parents who have knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help My'Asia thrive.
- Able to provide structure and consistency.
- Willing to help engage her in community events and programs.
- Committed to letting My'Asia maintain her sibling relationships.

“I would like a family who is non-judgmental and will not give up on me.”



**Avery’s likes:**

- Watching movies and playing video games.
- Spaghetti and meatballs with parmesan cheese.
- Comic books and superheroes.

**Avery’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to build motorcycles.
- Dreams of attending a Comic Con.

- Wants to spend quality time with a forever family doing activities and going to community events.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A mom and dad who are experienced and trauma informed.
- The only or youngest child in the home.
- Fierce advocates for the services Avery needs to thrive.

“I like white wolves because they are really spiritual, independent and rare.”

“With a family, I would like to do sports and schoolwork and hang out and go to the movies.”

**Damon’s likes:**

- Playing basketball.
- Going out to eat for a cheeseburger and shake.
- Celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas, which he enjoys by giving and receiving presents.
- Reading superhero books and watching movies based on them.

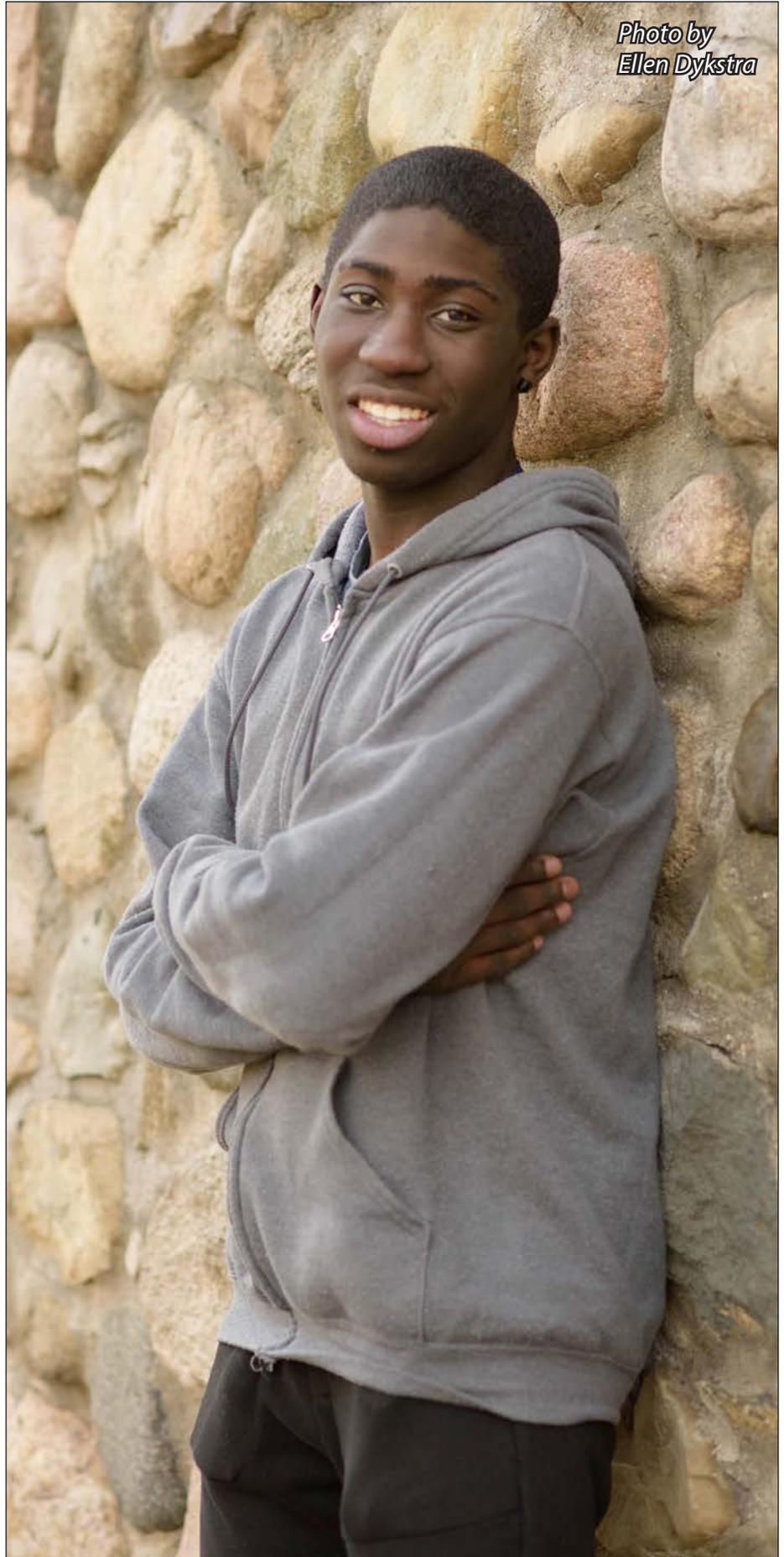
**Damon’s crystal ball:**

- Becoming “a fancy, cool car salesman.”
- Hopes to become an actor.
- Graduating high school and attending college.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- An experienced and patient mom and dad who can provide him the supervision, structure, consistency and compassion he requires.
- Trauma informed.
- Able to make sure that Damon receives the services that will help him thrive.
- Youngest or only child in the home.

*Photo by  
Ellen Dykstra*



“I lost my one family and I feel that it’s taught me a lesson to not take families for granted.”



Photo by  
Christine Schafer

### **Caitln’s likes:**

- Interacting with pets.
- The colors pink, black and white.
- Building things with Legos.
- Ranch dressing, cottage cheese, cheeseballs and McDonald’s.
- Hiking.

### **Wants others to know:**

- Proud of the unique spelling of her name.

### **Creative interests:**

- Coloring, sewing and making art.

### **Caitln’s crystal ball:**

- Dreams of becoming a veterinarian.
- Wants to travel to Hawaii.

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

- A single mom with a strong support network or a mom and dad.
- Strong advocates for the services that will benefit Caitln’s success.
- Especially wants a family with children and pets.
- Willing to make sure Caitln receives support services.

“All I’m looking for in a family is that they’re caring and kind.”



**Mariah’s likes:**

- Pets and critters of all kinds but especially baby penguins.
- Reading and listening to music.
- Spending time with friends and talking about anime.
- Sleeping in on the weekends.
- Snacking on fruit.

**Mariah’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a zookeeper.

**Creative interests:**

- Drawing, singing, writing and making arts and crafts.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two parents or a single female parent with a strong support network.
- Oldest child in the home.
- Willing to make sure she receives the support services that will benefit her now and into adulthood.

“My favorite food  
is food!  
Or pizza with  
pineapples.”

**Kenneth’s likes:**

- Going to the movies, skating, bike riding and swimming.
- Playing with his siblings.
- Celebrating Easter and Christmas because he gets to spend time with others and eat well.
- Telling jokes and making others laugh.
- Playing video and board games.

**Kenneth’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to be a lawyer.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single dad or a mom and dad who are experienced and able to give him the attention he requires.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Advocates for the services that will help Kenneth thrive.
- Willing to let him maintain his sibling relationships.



“Sometimes I’m funny, sometimes I’m shy.”



**Keven’s likes:**

- Hunting, fishing, bike riding and swimming.
- Participating in basketball and baseball.
- Watching wrestling on TV, especially Roman Reigns.
- Pretending that he’s a sports commentator.
- Macaroni and cheese.

**Keven’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to travel to Florida because it’s warm all the time.

**Intangible assets:**

- Very charismatic and always brightens the room he is in.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A mom and dad who are experienced and trauma informed.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Keven.
- The youngest or only child in the home.
- Able to provide structure and routine.

**Areonna's likes:**

- Learning about science and social studies.
- Skating and swimming.
- Being in the outdoors and going to the park.
- Making up her own songs.
- Comforting others.

**Intangible assets:**

- Describes herself as a nice, sweet girl with a good personality.

**Areonna's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of traveling to Paris for sightseeing and sampling croissants.

- Wants to become a paleontologist or a singer.

**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.
- Prefers a family with pets.



*Photo by  
Jodi Mercier*

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Fall 2018 Periodical.

**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 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](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, 989-797-6638, [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.facadopt.org](http://www.facadopt.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.fostering-futures.com](http://www.fostering-futures.com)  
 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/grandrapids](http://www.bethany.org/grandrapids)  
 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.fcsource.org](http://www.fcsource.org)  
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, [www.fcsource.org](http://www.fcsource.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)



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.

Follow the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange on Social Media:



[@MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange](https://www.facebook.com/MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange)



[@VideosbyMARE](https://www.youtube.com/VideosbyMARE)



[@MAREinMichigan](https://twitter.com/MAREinMichigan)



[@MAREAdoption](https://www.pinterest.com/MAREAdoption)