

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



*Inside:
Is he a future actor?
Will she own an
unlikely pet?
Pages 6-7.*

*Not just sibs, but
also best buds,
Pages 8-9.*

*"The Voice" calls her;
the lake calls him,
Pages 12-13.*

Fall 2022

A spotlight on children
waiting for permanent
and loving families

Welcome to the Fall 2022 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 awaiting a loving, supportive and permanent family of their own through adoption. The youth featured here represent hundreds of other youth in Michigan's 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 youth 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 a youth 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.

Christian C09546



Photo by
Lillian Scull

Christian's likes:

- Playing video and board games such as Clue
- Swimming
- Doing paintings
- Riding bikes and playing outside

Magnificent munch/meal:

- Spaghetti

Christian's crystal ball:

- Becoming a video game designer

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents
- Able to make sure he gets any services he needs to thrive
- Only child
- The joy that comes with pets

You won't want to miss the 2022 Heart Gallery video

Talk about a must-see film!

This year's Michigan Heart Gallery video is four stars and then some. The video is now available for viewing, and it's titled "It Matters," a tribute to the youth living in foster care who appear on Mare.org.

As MARE Program Manager Michelle Parra puts it,

"The driving force behind the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is the kids themselves. And that's what makes their stories so inspiring."

If you'd like to watch the 2022 Michigan Heart Gallery video, visit:

www.youtube.com/VideosbyMare

Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Children who have been placed in Michigan's foster care system and are awaiting adoption have some similar experiences related to trauma including:

- Physical/sexual/emotional abuse
- Severe neglect
- Alcohol/drug exposed infants

Many of these children share similar characteristics that can make their adoptions difficult or "special needs". Some special needs adoptions include some combination of the following circumstances:

- Physical/mental/developmental impairments of the child
- Children who are school aged and up
- Of the 98% of children ages 5 and up waiting for adoption, 75% are aged 11 to 17 years of age
- Children who are a part of a sibling group who must be placed together
- Youth who identify as LGBTQI+
- Children of color

Around 93 percent of children in Michigan's foster care system that are awaiting adoption are adopted by their foster parent(s) or relatives. The remaining children, like those highlighted in this newsletter or on the MARE website, don't have an identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive home for these children is therefore necessary.

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?

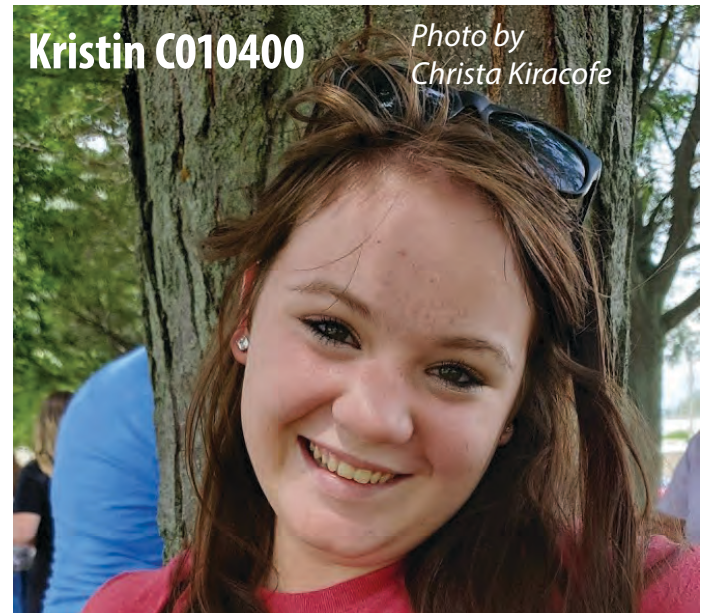
The only costs you should incur from adopting a child from Michigan's foster care system are court filing and birth certificate fees. Some agencies may charge a fee for the Adoptive Family Assessment (also known as a Home Study); however, once you adopt a child through Michigan's foster care system, 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.



Kristin C010400

*Photo by
Christa Kiracofe*

Kristin's creative interests:

- Writes poetry, draws and colors
- Dabbles in photography
- Shows an interest in cooking

Qualities of a forever family:

- Open to any parental structure
- Would do well with or without siblings
- Fierce advocates for Kristin



Photo by
Nichole Mehelich

Hailey's likes:

- Walking dogs in her neighborhood
- Technology such as her phone and tablet
- Science and social studies
- Shopping, especially jewelry and clothes

Magnificent munch or meal:

- Buffalo Wild Wings

Hailey's crystal ball:

- Visiting Disney World then traveling to golden sand, white waves and blue ocean
- Working at a store or hospital
- Being part of a family who likes traveling, boating, swimming, having movie nights, playing outside and being together

Tremendous traits:

- Volunteers at an animal shelter
- A good student who puts in great effort
- Takes enjoyment out of looking her best
- Loves to laugh and engage in conversations
- Strives to do well in all of her endeavors

Qualities of a forever family:

- Single female parent or a mom and dad
- Patient and accommodating with Hailey's needs
- Willing to seek out any support services that would benefit Hailey
- Willing to let Hailey maintain her sibling relationships

Did you know?

Whether you're a new or experienced adoptive family, you'll find plenty of valuable information on Mare.org. Visit the For Families section for pre- and post-adoption information including resources to help you at any stage of your journey. If you want more information, call us at 800-589-6273.

Photo by
Aly Darin Photography



“Isa has an outgoing personality and loves to smile and make others laugh.”

Isa’s likes:

- Playing Duck, Duck, Goose
- Playing tag with family and friends
- Trips to the beach
- Superman
- Helping with cooking

Magnificent munch or meal:

- Pizza and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches

Isa’s big wish:

- A family who likes playing outdoors and going on walks

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two parents
- Fierce advocates for Isa
- Only or youngest child
- Able to give Isa the love, support and attention he deserves

“Roland is a delightful child, full of laughter and life.”

Roland’s likes:

- Bowling, playing laser tag and building things with Legos
- Superhero action figures such as Batman, Superman, Black Panther, Spider-Man and Iron Man
- Playing Uno and Pokémon
- Being outside and going on community outings

Magnificent munch or meal:

- Chocolate ice cream, pizza and hamburgers and fries

Tremendous traits:

- An imaginative young lad who likes portraying fictional characters
- Always sees the positive in others
- A calm youth who loves to make people proud

Qualities of a forever family:

- A parent or parents who have prior experience
- With or without other children
- Pets, especially dogs, preferred
- A house with a yard



*Photo by
Elle Ticola
Photography*



“Leeah is shy at first, but once she is comfortable with you, she is the sweetest, most outgoing girl!”

Leeah’s likes:

- Puppies
- Playing with baby dolls
- Going to the park
- Swimming with her friends
- Riding bikes on the weekends

Magnificent munch or meal:

- Tacos and nachos

Leeah’s crystal ball:

- Wishes to have “a pet fox, a unicorn and a pony”

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two patient and understanding parents
- Must make sure Leeah gets the services that will benefit her
- Youngest child in her new family



Antonio's likes:

- Playing action video games
- Watching movies with friends after school and on weekends
- Playing basketball
- Spending time with his brothers

If he had three wishes:

- Wealth, fame and becoming "the smartest man in the world"

Antonio's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a professional basketball player
- Going to college and becoming a real estate agent

"Antonio has a good sense of humor and loves to laugh."



James' likes:

- Conversing with people
- Laughing and joking with others
- Playing chess
- Playing with Nerf toys
- Attending art class at school
- Building things with Legos
- Watching funny movies
- Skating and biking

James' crystal ball:

- Becoming a firefighter
- Owning a big house with his own plane and landing strip

"James enjoys having person-to-person interactions and is the first to open the door when family and friends come over."



D'Amarr's likes:

- The Incredible Hulk
- Engaging with others
- Playing outside with his brothers
- Going to science class at school
- "Relaxing and doing nothing" on the weekends
- Playing basketball
- Superheroes and action figures

D'Amarr's crystal ball:

- Aspires to be "a giant robot" when he grows up"

"D'Amarr is a kind, loving person, and he is a very active little boy who loves to be independent."



Photos by
Jessica Strachan



Antonio, D'Amarr and James

Qualities of a forever family:

- Willing to adopt Antonio, D'Amarr and James together
- Would enjoy being in a home with a pet dog
- Would do best with a mom and dad who are experienced, but consideration given for a single parent with a strong support network



Photo by
Christine Schafer



Madicen’s likes:

- Playing card and board games
- Listening to music
- Having family nights
- Riding bikes, ice skating and rollerblading
- Playing volleyball
- Cooking

Creative interests:

- Doing arts and crafts
- Singing
- Journaling

Tremendous traits:

- Excels in school with math being her favorite subject

Madicen’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a lawyer

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents
- Must make sure she receives the services that will help her thrive
- Willing to let Madicen maintain contact with her siblings.

“Madicen is very smart and funny. She is able to tell jokes to make a person laugh when they are feeling down.”

"I like to clean everything. I am a neat, organized and clean person."



*Photo by
Jen Dera*

CeCe's likes:

- Visiting Bath & Body Works because CeCe loves the store chain's makeup
- Getting filled up at an Olive Garden
- Going to the movies
- Reading the Hunger Games book series
- Playing card games such as Apples to Apples and Uno
- Dancing

CeCe's crystal ball:

- Working as a pediatrician or nurse when she gets older

Tremendous traits:

- Takes pride in her smile, her intelligence and her empathy for others
- Straight A student
- Values family and honesty
- Looks for the positive

Qualities of a forever family:

- One female parent, two female parents or a mom and dad
- Prior parenting experience
- Only or youngest child in the home
- Can be placed in a home with pets

Photo by
Christine
Schafer



Lisa's likes:

- Playing soccer and softball
- Swimming
- Playing hide and seek
- Camping and fishing
- Watching TV, especially enjoys the "Raised by Wolves" TV series
- Reading

Creative interests:

- Doing arts and crafts

Magnificent munch or meal:

- Pizza, tacos and mac 'n cheese

Lisa's crystal ball:

- Dreams of appearing on "The Voice" or "America's Got Talent"
- Hopes to visit Disney World with family

Tremendous traits:

- Takes pride in working hard and doing well in school

Qualities of a forever family:

- Single female parent, two female parents or a mom and dad
- Youngest or only child
- Strong advocates for Lisa

Photo by
Derek
Cookson



Conner's likes:

- Superheroes such as Spider-Man, Batman and Superman
- Marvel comics and the movies showcasing their superheroes' powers
- Going to Chuck E. Cheese and Dave & Buster's
- Playing basketball and spending time outdoors

- Going fishing and swimming
- Playing board and video games
- Cats – particularly kittens
- Watching funny movies and TV programs

Qualities of a forever family:

- Understanding and patient
- Experienced parents
- Open to letting Conner maintain his sibling relationships

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Fall 2022 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
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, www.saulttribe.com
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, www.upfs.org
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, www.upkids.com

Northern and 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
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
Ennis Center for Children, Saginaw, 989-558-0020, www.enniscenter.org
Holy Cross Services, Saginaw, 989-781-2780, www.holycrossservices.org
Legacy Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, www.lasadoption.org
Legacy 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, Southfield, 248-414-4080, bethany.org/locations/us/michigan/southeast-michigan
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, www.ccsem.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, Dearborn, 313-794-5653, www.judsoncenter.org
Legacy Adoption Service, Troy, 248-423-2770, www.lasadoption.org
Methodist Children's Home, Dearborn, 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, Howell, 517-881-0723, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Monroe, 734-349-6546, www.enniscenter.org
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, www.enniscenter.org
 Family & Community Services, Inc., Howell, 517-615-1275, www.facadopt.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
 Legacy Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734-971-1944, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Jackson, 517-789-6444, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy 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

Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 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
 Legacy Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Legacy Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, www.cityinc.org

MICHIGAN
ADOPTION
RESOURCE
EXCHANGE

Adoption
Navigators



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



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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