



Professional Newsletter



MARE rolls out changes to website, recruitment plan

MARE staff have been busy making changes to our website as well as improvements to the recruitment plan that workers use to help the youth on their caseloads find families. Here are a few of the updates:

- Worker dashboards now include the email addresses for families who inquire, but don't indicate a worker. Policy doesn't require workers to follow up on these incomplete inquiries; MARE adoption navigators follow up with each of these families. However, it can be beneficial to check in with these families – especially if you aren't receiving

many other inquiries for the youth.

- A new gender option – Gender Diverse/Non-Binary – has been added to the MARE website. Please discuss gender options with youth before photolisting. MARE is committed to photolisting youth as they identify.
- The Child Specific Recruitment Plan has been updated. The new form is available on the MARE website. Changes include new options for the gender the youth should be photolisted as and the pronouns the youth uses.

Fall 2023

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Let adoptive parents know that they can learn about foster care adoption at www.mare.org.

Valuable adoption resources for workers and their families

1. The Child Welfare Information Gateway web page, www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption:

Provides resources on all aspects of domestic and intercountry adoption, with a focus on adoption from the U.S. foster care system.

Includes information for adoption professionals, adopted adults, expectant parents considering adoption, birth parents and relatives, and prospective and adoptive parents on a broad range of adoption topics.

Helps find information on assessing, developing and evaluating adoption programs and services, recruiting adoptive families, preparing children and youth, supporting birth parents, obtaining and

providing postadoption services, the impact of adoption, the adoption process, search and reunion, and more.

2. Another resource – www.childwelfare.gov/topics/famcentered:

Family-centered practice is a way of working with families, both formally and informally, across service systems to enhance their capacity to care for and protect their children. It focuses on children's safety and needs within the context of their families and communities and builds on families' strengths to achieve optimal outcomes. Families are defined broadly to include birth, blended, kinship, and foster and adoptive families.

Photos from another great Michigan Heart Gallery Premiere!



Clockwise from top, MARE's Jessica Thompson with Piper (C010322), MARE's Jessica Franks with her daughter, Nevaeh, and Zackary (C010342).

You won't want to miss the 2023 Heart Gallery video

Don't miss the 2023 Michigan Heart Gallery video, and if you've seen it before, check it out again.

The video delivers a message about the "magic" of adoption, and it serves as a tribute to the youth living in foster care and those who adopt them.


As a quote near the end of the film puts it,

"There's something magical about the connection you can make with a child ... are you ready?"

If you'd like to watch the 2023 Michigan Heart Gallery video, visit:

www.youtube.com/VideosbyMare

We're certain you'll love it!



Jayden >

PLACEMENT PENDING

Listing #: C010548

Male

4 years old

White

Songs by artists such as Adele, Ed Sheeran and Taylor Swift might top the charts these days, but nothing makes Jayden's musical merriment magnifico like lyrical letters. If he could he might turn down the sound system's volume if he hears "I'm a Little Teapot," "Row Your Boat" or "Wheels on the Bus,...



Trevon >

REVIEWING HOME STUDIES

Listing #: C010584

Male

16 years old

Black

Trevon uses his brain and much as his brawn. He's a sports-loving young man who enjoys working out on weekends, but he also likes playing chess. Trevon has been on his school's chess team in the past. He takes pride in his hunger to learn new things, and he works hard to earn good grades in school. ...

Siblings: [Markwon >](#) [Kequan >](#)

PHOTOLIST STATUSES: WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

Open:

My worker is ready to hear about your family to see if we are a good match. Please inquire today!

Reviewing Home studies:

My worker is busy reading and reviewing all of the home studies sent recently. If my forever family isn't within these, my worker will let you know by changing my status back to Open.

Placement Pending:

I am almost matched with my forever family! We are having meetings and visits, but if this doesn't work out, my worker will change my status back to Open.

Be sure to keep youth's photolisting status updated

STORY BY **MARTHA KACZALA, MARE ADOPTION WORKER LIAISON**

Adoption workers and supervisors, please remember to update a youth's photolisting status as his/her photolisting progresses. The status changes/updates are a very important part of the photolisting procedures as these statuses let families and workers know where the youth is in the matching process. The photolisting status policy changes are listed below:

- **Reviewing Homestudies.** This registration status change must only be submitted to MARE to display this status on the MARE website prior to the 21-day time frame from the first family inquiry per policy. The Reviewing Homestudies status can be used for up to 21 calendar days from receiving the first family inquiry before placing a photolisted child on hold or Placement Pending status or returning the child to Open status. At the end of the 21 calendar days, the

child will automatically be returned to Open status.

- **Placement Pending.** This registration status change includes the identified family's name and must be submitted to MARE when information sharing is in process, the child is visiting with a family or a relative is being explored prior to the DHS-4809, Intent to Adopt, being signed and/or the potential family has not yet been approved for adoption. The Placement Pending status can be used for 60 calendar days for a photolisted child before placing the child on hold with a foster parent, relative or recruited family. At 60 calendar days, the child will be returned to Open status. Extensions may be granted upon MARE approval. If the plan changes for the child prior to the 60 calendar days, the adoption worker must return the child to open status.

Adoption navigators stand by ready to help

Adoption navigators are experienced adoptive parents who are available to help guide families through the adoption process and answer their questions. If you have families interested in being connected to a navigator, you can reach

them at 800-589-6273 or they can complete a general inquiry form on our website at www.mare.org/For-Families/General-Adoption-Information-Inquiry and a navigator will reach out to your families.





Good service means great outcomes for kids in care

Diligent recruitment programs from across the country emphasize the impact of good customer service on recruitment.

Every interaction with prospective adoptive parents can affect the future of your waiting youth, whether it's engaging with visitors while working an information table at an event, returning the call of a prospective family who inquired after seeing a youth's Grant Me Hope video or contacting a relative named in a previous foster care report.

To help workers hone their customer service skills when interacting with families, the following tips were taken from the National Center for Diligent Recruitment:

- **Have a positive attitude.**

Being warm and welcoming makes families want to learn more. The approval process involves a lot of effort on their part, so being positive and friendly helps them feel it's worth the work.

- **Avoid using jargon and acronyms.**

Child welfare has its own version of alphabet soup from ICPC and MCI to DOC rate or FTM. When talking to families, use familiar, descriptive language and full names and titles when talking about the adoption process.

- **Follow up in a timely manner.**

Best practice is to respond to families within 24 hours. Even if you do not have a large amount of time to spend, call to schedule an appointment with them. Also, if you don't have answers to all of their questions at that moment, let them know you are working to get the information they need.

Since people are at the heart of the work that you do, the way you treat those you encounter through the adoption process truly matters.

For more tips and information about making the most of your role in recruitment efforts, visit professionals.adoptuskids.org/category/recruitment/diligent-recruitment-planning/

Calendar

December 3

MARE In-Person Meet & Greet

Oxford

10:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

For more information, contact jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org or call 734-528-2070.

Take note: Watch for notices of upcoming Meet & Greets on www.mare.org and on Facebook.

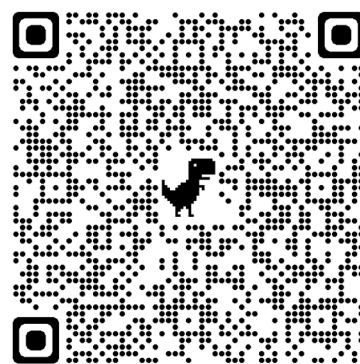
December 4

MARE Waiting Family Forum

Via Zoom

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Families can register at:



MARE contact information

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