

MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



*Inside:
Future chef
Darnell's yummy
dreams, Page 4.*

*Kathlene likes the
color blue yet favors
a certain red critter,
Page 9.*

*No way! Danielle
actually likes this?
Way! Page 10.*

Fall 2017

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

Taevon C09003

Taevon's likes:

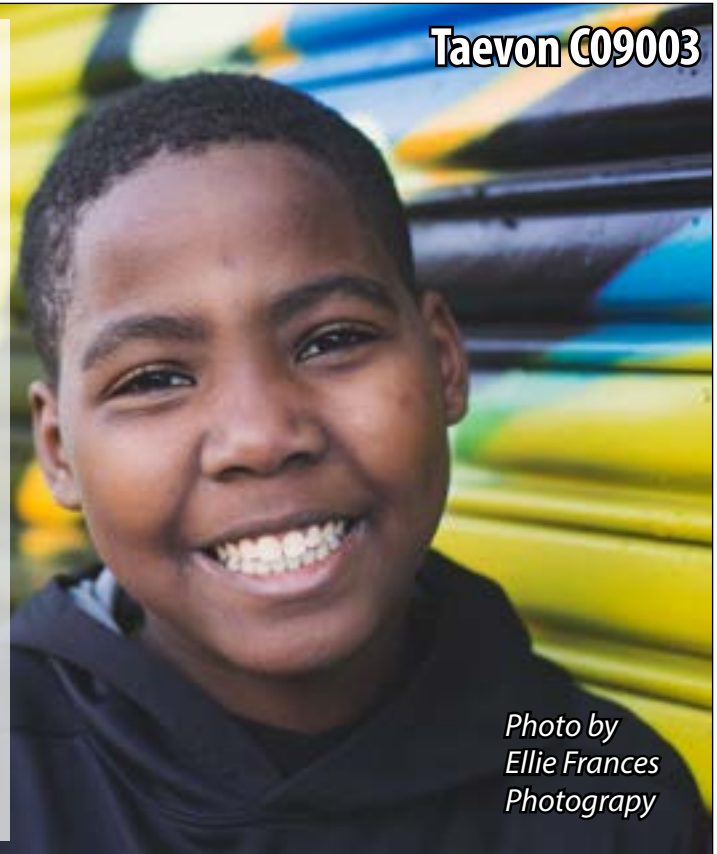
- A big interest in the automotive industry as well as toy cars.
- Playing outdoors even when it's cold.
- Chomping on cheeseburgers.
- Superhero action figures.

Taevon's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a construction worker.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parents who have knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will benefit Taevon's success at home, in school and in the community.



*Photo by
Ellie Frances
Photography*

Welcome to the Fall 2017 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. To view these children and to learn more about adoption, visit www.mare.org.

On the MARE website, you will find photos, narratives and video clips of waiting children, 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 2017

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.

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.

More than 98 percent of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. 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 help adoptive families meet the children's needs.

How much does it cost to adopt a child from foster care?

The only cost you should incur from adopting a child from Michigan's foster care system is 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 check.
- 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.



LeeAnn C08859

Photo by
Allie Siarto

LeeAnn's likes:

- Eating Chinese food, playing board games and watching TV with friends.
- Participating in volleyball, track and dancing.
- Helping others and plans to make a profession of it.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced female parents or a mom and dad.
- Strong advocates for the services that she needs.

"LeeAnn is a spirited girl who loves to laugh."

LeeAnn's
worker

Photo by
Hannah Dunne



“I want to know a lot of things before I go to college.”

Darnell’s likes:

- Cuddling and getting tucked in bed at night.
- Helping others.
- Sampling home cooking such as cornbread, muffins and banana bread.
- Watching the TV show “Bernard’s Watch.”
- Participating in sports.
- Exploring the outdoors.
- Going swimming.
- Playing cards and video games.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Experienced parents who have knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- The only or youngest child.
- Fierce advocates for the services that Darnell will need to thrive at home and in school.
- Open to letting Darnell maintain his sibling relationships.

“When I grow up, I want to be a basketball and football player.”

Did you know?

There is a new, interactive way to search for adoption agencies near you. Visit www.mare.org/Agency-Map. To download an interactive PDF of licensed agencies by county, you can visit www.mare.org/For-Families/New-to-Adoption/Find-a-Licensed-Agency.

Tamia's likes:

- Playing on her school's basketball and volleyball teams.
- Exploring and visiting new places.

*Photo by
Allie Siarto*

Intangible assets:

- A happy and goal-oriented teenager who cares about others.
- Aims for a brighter future and takes pride in her accomplishments at school.

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two experienced parents.
- Able to provide the attention and supervision Tamia needs to thrive.
- Willing to advocate for the services that will benefit Tamia at home and in school.
- Open to letting Tamia maintain contact with her siblings.

“She is motivated to do well and cares a lot about what others think, and that she is successful.”

“She likes to help others and that is evident by her willingness to help a peer with her basketball skills outside of scheduled gym time.”

Tamia's worker





Photos by
Hannah Dunne

Sativa's likes:

- A big interest in clothing, fashion and shopping.
- Eating sushi.
- Curling up with a good book or listening to music.
- Swimming and doing yoga.
- Going to the park and exploring.

Creative interests:

- Singing and dancing.

Sativa's crystal ball:

- Hopes to travel to Tokyo one day to shop in its 2.7-million-square-foot mall and Florida to visit Disney World.
- Wants to become a biochemical engineer.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and a dad.
- A home where she's the only or youngest child.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Advocates for the services that will help her thrive at home, in school and in the community.

"Sativa has a great sense of humor and likes to joke around with others."

Sativa's worker

Anthony's likes:

- Playing outside, especially with bugs.
- Pizza for food, black for color, snake for animal and Minecraft for game.

Anthony's crystal ball:

- Wants to visit LEGOLAND because, he says, "I love Legos and want to see what it looks like."
- Plans to become a mechanic when he gets older.
- Dreams of owning a video game console and the games to play on it.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents who can give Anthony the one-on-one attention he needs to thrive.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Anthony function at his best at home and in school.
- Would do best as the only child.
- Patience as Anthony develops trust and bonds with his new family.

"I like to have fun."

"Anthony is a very bright child and has an amazing vocabulary."

*Anthony's
worker*





Athletic



Photogenic



Academic

Robert's likes:

- Watching and playing basketball and football.
- Munching on fried food.
- Spending time with dogs – his favorite animal.
- Participating in gym class.
- Celebrating the major holidays so he can eat well.

Robert's crystal ball:

- Looks forward to becoming a professional athlete or a chef.
- Wants to visit Puerto Rico because he's heard that great tacos are served there.

Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two parents with knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Robert function at his best.
- Open to letting Robert maintain his sibling relationships.

What excites you most about being adopted?

“Just having a very nice family, a family that would actually care for me.”

Connecting children with forever families

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a statewide information and referral service for families interested in adopting children from foster care, and for adoption workers looking for homes for these children. The MARE website provides a listing of waiting children in Michigan and of Michigan families interested in adopting children with special needs.



Photo by
Renee Aleisa



Kathlene's likes:

- Celebrating Christmas and Valentine's Day by being with friends and family.
- Eating cookie dough.
- Anything that's blue.
- Attending English language arts class.
- Reading and listening to music.
- Going on walks.
- Red pandas.

Kathlene's crystal ball:

- Traveling to Fiji because, she says, "It's nice there."

Qualities of a forever family:

- Parenting experience.
- Patient as Katy works on processing her past and managing her behavior.
- Knowledge of the impact of trauma on a child.
- Willing to advocate for the services Katy needs to function at her best.

"I like to read.
I get along with little kids.
I love animals."

"Katy believes that there are people 'somewhere out there' who love her though she has not met them yet."

Katy's worker

*Photo by
Laurie Kulgoski*



Danielle’s likes:

- Attention from others.
- Going on car trips.
- Playing outside.
- Going to the park and visiting waterparks.
- Attending school.

Creative interests:

- Painting, which is her favorite activity.

Intangible assets:

- A well-like child who’s very funny.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two patient, experienced parents or a single parent who can give her the attention that she requires.
- Able to make sure that Dani gets the services that will benefit her now and into adulthood.
- Willing to allow contact between Dani and her two siblings.

“Dani is highly affectionate. She loves to interact with trusted caregivers.”

“Every day, Dani is full of smiles and is a lot of fun to be around.”

Dani’s worker



*Photo by
Hannah Dunne*

Kevin's likes:

- Spending time in the outdoors, especially swimming and gardening.
- Swinging on the swing set.
- Cooking and quilting.
- Watching musicals, especially "Hairspray" and "High School Musical."
- Going for car rides and shopping.
- Looking at old photos and picture books.

Creative interests:

- Singing and dancing.

Intangible assets:

- Upbeat and happy young man with a great sense of humor.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Two experienced parents who can provide the one-on-one attention Kevin requires.
- Patient and willing to learn new ways to help Kevin reach his potential.

"Every Sunday he goes to church and he enjoys that."

"Kevin has a good sense of humor and he has a good heart."

Kevin's worker

“Even though I’m terrified of heights, I want to go skydiving.”

Photo by
Christine Schafer



David’s likes:

- Reading Harry Potter books.
- Participating in organized football, soccer and baseball.
- Playing video games.

Intangible assets:

- Artistic, creative and athletic.
- Outgoing when he feels comfortable in his environment.

David’s crystal ball:

- Wants to become a video game designer.
- Dreams of having a million dollars and owning a mansion.

Qualities of a forever family:

- Patient, loving and willing to make a firm commitment and provide clear boundaries and consistent supervision.
- A one- or two-parent home with structure and a routine.
- Would do best in a family in which he’s not the middle child.
- Willing to advocate for the support services that David needs now and in the future.

“The reason I think I should be in your family is because if you’re too short, I can reach that cookie jar on top of the fridge.”



David

Gabby's likes:

- Dancing and cheerleading.
- Listening to the music of Beyonce.
- Playing sports with her friends.
- Going to the movies and swimming in pools.
- Munching on pizza, chicken or meatballs and topping it off with ice cream.
- Playing video games on the PlayStation and Xbox.

Gabby's crystal ball:

- Wants to become a singer and dancer when she gets older.
- Becoming a member of a forever family with an active mother who enjoys spending time with her daughter.

Qualities of a forever family:

- A mom and dad who are experienced and patient parents.
- Able to make sure that Gabby receives the support services that will benefit her now and into adulthood.

"I just want a mom that I can travel with, go shopping, go to the park and hang out and spend some time together."

"I would like to see the Hollywood Walk of Fame."

Gabby

*Photo by
Derek
Cookson*



Check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Fall 2017 Periodical at www.youtube.com/VideosbyMare.

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
Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin & Upper MI, Marquette, 877-994-8344, www.lsswis.org
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, www.saulttribe.com
Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan, Marquette, 906-249-5437, www.teachingfamilyhomes.org
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, www.upfs.org
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, www.upkids.com

Northern & 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
Catholic Family Services of the Diocese of Saginaw, Bay City, 989-797-6638, www.cfssite.org
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
Lutheran Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, www.lasadoption.org
Lutheran 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, Madison Heights, 248-414-4080, www.bethany.org/madisonheights
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, 855-882-2736, www.ccsem.org
Community Social Services of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-883-2100, www.csswayne.org
Child Safe Michigan, Royal Oak, 248-353-0921, www.childsafemichigan.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, Redford, 313-794-5653, www.judsoncenter.org
Lutheran Adoption Service, Troy, 248-423-2770, www.lasadoption.org
Methodist Children's Home, Redford, 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, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, www.enniscenter.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
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734-971-1944, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Jackson, 517-789-6444, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran 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

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.fcsourcesource.org
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, www.fcsourcesource.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, www.lasadoption.org
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, www.lasadoption.org
 Pathways, Holland, 616-396-2301, www.pathwaysmi.org
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, 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



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ADOPTION
RESOURCE
EXCHANGE**

HOMES
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273
www.mare.org



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