



Professional Newsletter

Refresher trainings update workers with practical know-how

MARE had the opportunity to meet with the Orchards Children’s Services Adoption Resource Consultant team in February.

MARE had customized a training specifically for ARC workers’ needs including how to request additional MARE recruitment efforts for a youth, keeping track of youth inquiries and accessing the family directory.

Adoption Worker Liaison Martha Kaczala is MARE’s primary trainer and often gets the opportunity to meet with agencies and workers to help them learn more about MARE.

“It was great to get the opportunity to work with the ARC team,” said Martha. “I am always impressed with the dedication of ARC workers and the team’s commitment to Michigan youth.”

Jacqueline Berka is one of MARE’s Adoption Permanency specialists. However, Jacqueline previously was an ARC worker and an ARC supervisor. Her experience with the Adoption Resource Consultant program was invaluable in developing this customized training.

“It was great meeting with the ARC team and using my knowledge of

both ARC and MARE to help them fully utilize the MARE system,” said Jacqueline. “Working together and accessing all available resources gets the best results for youth.”



Spring 2022

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Fun fact

The DeZwaan Windmill in Holland, Mich., is the only authentic Dutch windmill operating in the United States. It grinds locally-grown wheat into flour. The windmill was brought from the Netherlands to Holland in 1964, and its name is Dutch for swan.

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

Does your team need a MARE refresher? MARE staff are available to conduct a virtual or in-person training on MARE requirements, resources and recruitment assistance. Training sessions are typically two hours long and cover

the following topics:

- Agency policy and contract requirements as they relate to MARE
- Best practice recruitment assistance for youth without

an identified family

- Ways MARE can help you!

To schedule a MARE refresher training soon, contact Martha Kaczala at martha_kaczala@judsoncenter.org

How do I handle an inquiry for a youth who's hospitalized a prolonged time?

You will need to request the family's home study and review it. If the family is not a potential match, you can respond to the family's worker accordingly.

If the family is a potential match, you can respond to the family worker with something like the following: "The family could be a potential match for this youth. However, this youth is not ready to move forward with the matching process at this time."

No specifics like where or what the treatment is for should be shared, though.

If you have questions, contact MARE Adoption Worker Liaison Martha Kaczala, Martha_Kaczala@judsoncenter.org or 734-528-2007



Hi, I'm Aiyana and I write songs

The youth on your caseload don't need a special talent such as Aiyana's to find a forever family, but they can be open to helping adoptive parents find them.

On her recruitment consent form, Aiyana told her worker that she wants to be featured in as many ways as possible to find a forever family, including newsletters such as this one.

Try to encourage the youth on your caseload to do the same. It's one of the best ways for them to find their forever family.



Aiyana

Photo by Jen Brooks

New service aims to improve recruitment for youth

By Jacqueline Berka, MARE Adoption Permanency Specialist

MARE's Adoption Permanency program added a new service to the program in March 2022: inquiry enhancement meetings.

The goal of the inquiry enhancement meeting is to go over a youth's strengths, barriers to recruitment, existing MARE inquiries and recruitment activities. We identified 72 MARE youth who have not yet worked with an Adoption Permanency specialist and have had 20 or fewer inquiries since being photolisted on Mare.org.

We will be holding inquiry enhancement meetings over the next several months to brainstorm ideas and talk through recruitment and inquiries for each of these youth. The adoption permanency

specialist can assist with referring the youth to certain recruitment efforts following the meeting and will also complete a report that summarizes the topics discussed and lists action steps for each team member.

Required attendees will be the youth's adoption specialist as well as the Adoption Resource Consultant or Wendy's Wonderful Kids worker if one is assigned to the case. Other team members will be invited and include adoption supervisors, foster care workers, foster care supervisors, therapists, residential case managers and more.

Ennis Center Adoption Specialist Morgan Darwin said she found the meeting extremely helpful.

"It was so nice to have someone with a fresh set of eyes and new ideas help the team brainstorm more recruitment ideas."

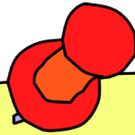
We look forward to meeting with adoption teams and other professionals who work with these youth to brainstorm additional recruitment ideas that play to each child's strengths.

If you have questions about MARE recruitment activities, other recruitment ideas, or if you would like to request a meeting with your team, feel free to reach out to a MARE Adoption Permanency Specialist:

*Jacqueline_Berka@judsoncenter.org
(below left)*

*Jennifer_Brooks@judsoncenter.org
(below right)*





New procedure for overdue recruitment items

1. 30 days before a recruitment item is due, the website automatically sends workers a notice about the item(s) coming due. It also appears on their dashboard.
2. Once an item is overdue it will appear in red on their dashboard. Additionally, MARE will send workers a reminder email about the overdue item(s).
3. After two weeks, we will run the report again. MARE will then send a second reminder telling workers that if the items aren't updated in two more weeks, we will report it to the state program office.
4. The next month (roughly two weeks after the last reminder) we will run the report again. MARE's youth specialist will notify the MARE social work supervisor of any items that have received the three reminders as well as the dashboard notifications. That information is then compiled and sent to the Adoption Contract administrator.

After this procedure started recently, we began with 44 noncompliant cases and six had to be escalated due to remaining noncompliant without a reason (such as placement pending or goal change).

Please share this with families on your caseload

MARE'S Waiting Family Forums

The process of waiting to be matched with a child can be exciting, confusing and frustrating at times. To assist you through this process, the MARE Adoption Navigators host quarterly Waiting Family Forums. Join us and learn exactly what happens to your inquiries after you submit them; find out what you can do to make the most of your wait time; learn ways to strengthen your inquiries; get tips on how to effectively

advocate for your family; and meet other waiting families.

Families who are approved to adopt and those completing their home study are all welcome to attend.

Look for future Waiting Family Forums on our home page under Events. Pre-registration is required.

If you have any further questions, please contact the MARE adoption navigator supervisor via email at kimberly_wolowski@judsoncenter.org or by phone at 800-589-MARE (6273).

Calendar

April 30

In-Person MARE Meet & Greet Bloomfield Township
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

May 21

In-Person MARE Meet & Greet Stevensville
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

June 18

In-Person MARE Meet & Greet Holland
11 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 and Twitter.

MARE contact information

Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange
3840 Packard Road, Suite 170
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Toll Free: 800-589-6273
TTY: 734-794-2984
Fax: 734-528-1695
mare@judsoncenter.org