

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. To learn about foster care adoption and view photolisting and videos of waiting children, visit our website at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).



# *A checklist to make youths' transition from residential a smooth one*

If you have a youth on your caseload who's transitioning from residential to a foster or adoptive home, you can find a valuable tool to help you on the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange website.

It's called the "Transitioning Youth Out of Residential Checklist," and it can be found under the website's worker forms tab. This checklist will help you and the youth's soon-to-be caregiver make the youth's transition a smooth one.

The checklist follows a chronological order – from the family visiting the residential facility to the youth making an initial home visit to the team making sure school, health, safety and support systems are in place – but it doesn't necessarily need to be followed in that order. The most important thing is to make sure everything is in place before the youth moves into the home.

To help you learn more about this form, we asked MARE Match Support Supervisor Amanda Dunham – who chaired the Adoption Oversight Committee's residential subcommittee that developed the checklist – some questions about it.

## **How did this checklist come about?**

Our subcommittee addresses common issues and problems involving youth living in residential facilities. One issue that came up was when youth were transitioning into homes, it was not going smoothly because support services, medications or therapy referrals were not in place. We discovered that when youth were ready to be discharged, services weren't lined up in the home, forcing youth to wait in residential facilities longer. So this checklist covers very detailed information about what to make sure is in place before, during and after the transition.

See [Transition](#) on page 2



Amanda Dunham, MARE Match Support supervisor.

**Transitioning Youth Out of Residential Checklist**  
This document, created by the Youth in Residential AOC subcommittee is to serve as a guide when transitioning youth from residential treatment into a home or community setting. The goal is for the transition to be smooth, with services in place and both the youth and family prepared for the change of placement. This will hopefully result in the placement being strengthened and lasting long-term.

- Caregiver will meet youth at the residential for initial visit(s) (2 hours) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Observe the youth at work and play
- Caregiver will meet youth at the residential to participate in at least one a therapy session \_\_\_\_\_
  - Caregiver can ask the therapist any questions pertaining to the youth
    - Appropriate contact with biological family now and in the future
    - What other adults/mentors are important for this child?
    - What behavioral interventions work
    - Scheduling needs/suggestions
    - Understanding trauma responses, times of struggle and appropriate supportive response
    - Therapist may provide specific resources on parenting and mental health guidance
  - Caregivers should participate in ongoing therapy with the youth while they are still residential
- Caregivers will attend medication reviews with the facility psychiatrist

Transition, continued from page 1

## How do you envision workers using this form?

The form is really a checklist and guide for workers and families. We tried to include everything so not every step would apply to every case. For example, a referral to a psychiatrist for a youth who's not on medication wouldn't be needed. We wanted a checklist for the youth's worker and team to check off what applies to that youth.

## Any tips you'd give to workers to encourage caregiver participation in this process?

They should take time to explain to the youth's future caregiver the reason for using the checklist. Families can get anxious during the transition because they want the youth in the home. This checklist gives them a map of what needs to happen beforehand. It's important for workers to engage families and make sure they understand this is a guide so nothing gets missed, and the transition can proceed smoothly.

*If you want more information about this checklist or help with it, call MARE at 800-589-6273.*



## Register youth for the 2020 Heart Gallery

Registration is now open for the 2020 Michigan Heart Gallery! To register youth who are in need of adoption recruitment for the 2020 gallery, visit the events section at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).

Youth will begin to be matched with volunteer photographers starting as early as August or as soon as they are registered, so please don't delay!

The deadline to register youth to participate is Aug. 30, 2019.

With roughly 140 youth currently featured on the display, it's important to register youth prior

to the deadline. This will if guarantee that they are featured on the 2020 display. So don't delay, register them as soon as possible!

Any youth registered after the deadline will be placed on a waitlist. Workers will be notified when a youth is waitlisted and will be contacted if the youth is able to be moved off the waitlist and matched with a photographer.

If you have any further questions, you can contact Recruitment Specialist Thompson at [Jessica\\_Thompson@judsoncenter.org](mailto:Jessica_Thompson@judsoncenter.org) or 734-528-2070.

## Let your families know about free trainings

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange offers trainings for adoptive and foster care parents at least twice a year.

The trainings typically occur on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and they take place throughout the state. MARE's adoption navigator team plans, attends and puts on the trainings.

Training topics have included openness in adoption, building a support network, parenting teenagers, self-care, practical advice for raising children with

attachment issues, parenting children with challenging behaviors and transracial adoption.

At the end of the training, parents receive a certificate that they can present to you.

*If you want more information, visit [mare.org](http://mare.org) or contact MARE Adoption Navigator Supervisor Kimberly Wolowski at [Kimberly\\_wolowski@judsoncenter.org](mailto:Kimberly_wolowski@judsoncenter.org) or 734-528-2077.*

# How about a round of applause for a wonderful worker?

## Sabrina Olson shows extra concern for youth

*The MARE team respects and admires Michigan's adoption specialists for the amazing work they do for youth waiting for an adoptive family, so with each issue of the Professional Provider Newsletter, we will feature an adoption specialist nominated by a MARE staff member for an Exceptional Recruitment Award. Now let's meet the new Exceptional Recruitment Award winner ...*

Although new to the child welfare world, Sabrina Olson of Lutheran Adoption Service in Clare is making a splash!

She graduated from Central Michigan University in May 2018 and has been working in child welfare since then. In March 2019, she became a full-time unmatched specialist.

Since then, she has mastered the art of staying on top of her MARE caseload. When she has a question about how to handle something, she reaches out to MARE staff early to work together on an answer that is best for the child's recruitment plan and aligns with policy.

She is active in Meet & Greets, quick to respond to requests from MARE staff and is thorough with



Exceptional  
Recruitment  
Award

updates and recruitment plans. What's more, it's clear that Sabrina makes an extra effort to really get to know the kids on her caseload. She cares greatly for them, and it shows in the work that she does on their behalf.

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## Encourage youth on your caseload to participate in YAB

You can help youth on your caseload with their back-to-school boredom.

One of the easiest ways is by encouraging youth to participate in MARE's Youth Advisory Board (YAB) meetings. These meetings are fun and educational, as Dayjah and Shantoria (right) discovered at the most recent YAB event.

They learned about interviewing techniques and other job skills for teens at Focal Point Studio of Photography.

YAB meetings are designed to

share information from individuals who are or who have been in foster care so MARE can educate workers and officials about the concerns of youth in care. Youth participating in YAB have been able to enjoy lunch and fun activities and receive prizes for participation.

*If you have youth on your caseload who are interested in attending a YAB meeting, contact MARE Youth Specialist Jennifer Brooks at [Jennifer\\_brooks@judsoncenter.org](mailto:Jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org) or call 734-528-2061.*



# Common worker questions about mare.org



STORY BY JEREMIAH BALAZOVICH, MARE DATA ANALYST

If you've been frustrated or have had problems with the MARE website, make sure to contact us. We strive to help you, so don't ever hesitate to make the call to 800-589-6273. With that in mind, I wanted to go over a few common questions that workers ask us.

## How do I reset my password?

When you click on the LOGIN button in the upper right-hand corner of the website, there will be a button on the LOGIN screen that prompts you to reset your password. The important thing to remember when resetting your password is that you need to provide your exact username. In most cases, your username is going to be your email address. But there are exceptions to this. If you don't provide your exact username, then the password reset email will not be sent to you.

Username:

Password:

Remember Login

## What does "Your password could not be accepted due to security reasons" mean?

Speaking of passwords, if you are trying to reset your password because you tried to login too

many times and got locked out of your account, then you won't be able to reset your password and you'll receive this message. If this happens, please contact the MARE office to have your account unlocked so you can reset your password.

## Can I get a confirmation of my six-month/quarterly hold report?

Confirmation emails are not sent out from the website when you complete a six-month/quarterly hold report. If you need a confirmation that you completed a report, you can find approved reports saved to your child's profile, under the tab labeled "Hold Reports." Each report is saved in chronological order, starting from the oldest report and ending with the most recent.

### Hold Reports

Hold reports must be completed six months after the date of the child's hold status and quarterly thereafter until the child is legally placed for adoption or if the child's goal changes.

## How do I assign my supervisor to my cases?

When you are registering your cases on MARE, or even if you have already registered them, you can assign your supervisor to the case the same way you assign yourself. On the "Worker/Agency" tab, check the box next to "Check to Assign Adoption Workers to this Child." Fill in any one of the four fields here (it's best to only fill in one of the fields, instead of multiple), and then click on the Find Workers button. When you find your supervisor's name, click on the drop-down menu to the right and select Supervisor. This will automatically add a check mark next to

their name. Lastly, click the Submit button to send these changes over for approval.

AGENCY WORKER INFORMATION	
Adoption Workers	
Name	Role
Jane Doe	Supervisor
Janice Doe	Primary Adoption Worker

Check to Assign Adoption Workers to this child?\*