

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



***Inside:***

***Wanted: A family who likes outdoors activities, Page 4.***

***Meet your match in a game of Uno, Page 9.***

***A smart teen who likes looking sharp, Page 11.***

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

## ***Summer 2019***

### Kayla's likes:

- Playing Minecraft.
- Watching TV comedies.
- Participating in gym class.
- Playing basketball.
- Solving puzzles.
- Going to the park.

### Intangible assets:

- Funny, nice and very sweet.

### Creative interests:

- Very artistic with a passion for coloring, painting and drawing.

### Forever family qualities:

- Mom and dad who are experienced parents.
- Fierce advocates for the services that will help her thrive.



## Kayla C09564

Photo by  
Loren Sanders

**"I want a family who'll stay with me."**

Welcome to the Summer 2019 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 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](http://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 an older 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.



### Did you know?

In addition to this quarterly periodical, the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange also publishes newsletters for youth, families and professionals. You can find them at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) > Resources > Newsletters.



## 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 their 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.

Typically, more than 98 percent of the children available for adoption without an identified family are over the age of 5. Typically, 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, 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?

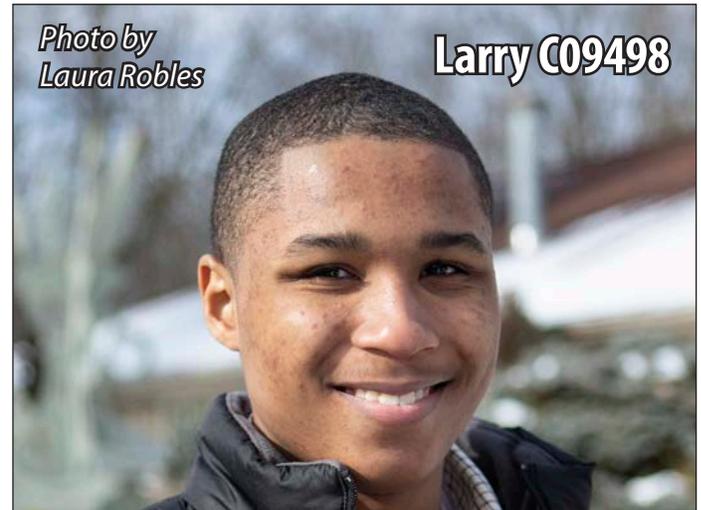
Families must be approved through the Adoptive Family Assessment process before a child can be placed in their home for adoption. An Adoptive Family Assessment must be completed by a licensed adoption agency (which can be found in the back of this periodical and on www.mare.org) and can take an average 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.

Photo by  
Laura Robles

Larry C09498



### Larry’s likes:

- Playing on swings.
- Yoga balls.
- Playing with textures.
- Watching movies, especially “Moana.”
- Being close to others and interacting with them.

### Forever family qualities:

- One or two experienced parents.
- Advocates for needed services.
- Able to provide structure in the home.

*Photo by  
Deb Hoag*



### **Isaiah's likes:**

- Playing sports outdoors such as basketball and soccer.
- Building things with Legos.
- Riding his bike and walking in the woods.

### **Isaiah's crystal ball:**

- Having a pet tiger.
- A forever family who likes the outdoors.

### **Intangible assets:**

- An amazing imagination.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Youngest child in the home.
- Willing to assist Isaiah in maintaining a relationship with his sister.
- Actively involved with support services to help Isaiah achieve a bright future.

“His most recent area of interest is wilderness survival. Isaiah would like to learn archery.”

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### **Did you know?**

There are supports in place for adoptive parents during all the stages of the adoption process. MARE adoption navigators can guide you in the beginning. Once you're matched with a youth from [mare.org](http://mare.org), the Match Support Program staff can assist with your questions and concerns. If you need assistance after adoption finalization, the Post Adoption Resource Centers can help. Information about all of these programs can be found on [mare.org](http://mare.org).

**Ascenda's likes:**

- Pizza and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches made with grape jam.
- Playing "any game that is fun and/or active," she says.
- Watching TV crime shows, especially "Law and Order."

**Ascenda's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of traveling and becoming a detective or lawyer.
- Hopes to own a Range Rover, a big house and a private jet.

**Creative interests:**

- Dancing, coloring and drawing.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single-female or a two-parent household in which she is the only or youngest child.
- Able to provide a highly structured home.
- Patient and flexible as well as strong advocates for the services Ascenda requires to do her best.

*Photo by  
Nichole Horvath*

*"I am a survivor, and my past does not define me anymore."*

"I put people  
before myself."

Photo by  
Mandy DeVries



**Cheyenne's likes:**

- Going out to eat.
- Reading and listening to music.
- Life's finer pleasures such as the theater and Shakespeare.

**Cheyenne's crystal ball:**

- Longs for a forever family who likes attending church and going on vacations, perhaps even to her dream destination – Las Vegas – or some other big city, bright lights locale.
- Wants to become a police officer or join the Navy.

**Creative interests:**

- Drawing and cooking.
- Studying craft ideas then doing them.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Experienced parents, especially a mom and dad.
- A strong male role model.
- The only or youngest child.
- A home with pets, particularly horses, dogs and cats.

**Darius' likes:**

- Playing computer games.
- Anything to do with Star Wars.
- Celebrating Christmas.
- Building things.
- Jumping and playing on trampolines.
- Playing with other kids.

**Intangible assets:**

- Enjoys school and takes pride in how well he does.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two experienced parents who can provide one-on-one attention.
- Willing to be strong advocates for the services Darius needs.
- The youngest child in a home with one or two other children.

“He’s a very fun-loving kid and deserves a home that will recognize that.”

“Darius interacts well with other kids.”

*Photo by  
Laura Robles*



Photo by  
Chris Schafer



**Andrew's likes:**

- Collecting Pokemon cards and showing off his collection.
- Putting puzzles together.
- Playing a variety of sports and especially enjoys running and playing basketball.

**Andrew's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of a family who's active and who'll enjoy participating in sports with him.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Understanding and patient with his transition.
- Two parents able to provide the attention and supervision he needs.
- The only or oldest child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Andrew function at his best.
- A family who has pets, especially a cat.

**Another resource for families**

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange maintains a database of approved adoptive families throughout the state who are interested in adopting children through the child welfare system. MARE's Family

Database will be a valuable tool as you work towards building your family through adoption. Once a month we will provide you a list of children for which your family could be a resource. To learn more, visit [mare.org](http://mare.org) > New To Adoption > Family Registry.

### **Kemiya's likes:**

- Taking great care with her appearance and having her hair professionally braided.
- Playing Uno, and is said to be unbeatable.
- Going for walks and riding her bike.
- Playing board games.
- Going swimming.
- Loves doing math worksheets for fun.

### **Intangible assets:**

- Sweet and extremely honest.

### **Creative interests:**

- Coloring.

### **Kemiya's crystal ball:**

- Wants to visit a theme park and try out the roller coasters.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two patient and experienced parents in a home in which she's the youngest child.
- Able to provide consistency with routines and positive reinforcement.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Kemiya function at her best.
- Open to Kemiya maintaining contact with her siblings.

“Kemiya has a quiet sense of humor. She is completely unintentional in her humor and often doesn't even realize she's being funny.”

*Photo by  
Deb Hoag*





*Photo by  
Corinne Toussaint*

**Bryauna’s likes:**

- Playing basketball whether it’s indoors or outdoors.
- Going shopping.
- Getting her nails done.
- Listening to music no matter the genre.
- Watching movies, particularly comedies.
- Spending time with family and friends.

**Intangible assets:**

- On her school’s honor roll.

**Bryauna’s crystal ball:**

- Wants a caring and accepting forever family.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Single mom who is experienced.
- Fierce advocate for the services that will help her function at her best.
- Open to letting Bryauna maintain her sibling relationships.

### **Christopher's likes:**

- Playing football and participating in track.
- Taking care of his appearance, particularly his clothes and shoes.
- Going to the movies.

### **Christopher's crystal ball:**

- Dreams of playing professional basketball.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- One- or two-parent family who can devote the attention that Christopher thrives on.
- Enthusiastic about and supportive of his interest in sports.
- Patient as Christopher transitions into his new home.
- Able to make sure Christopher gets what he needs to succeed.
- Willing to let Christopher maintain his sibling relationships.

*"As long as Christopher is active on a basketball team, he is happy and motivated to do well in other areas of his life, too."*



*Photo by  
Ellen Dykstra*

### **Bruce's likes:**

- Playing Pokémon with friends.
- Koala bears.
- Attending science class.
- Going to McDonald's or eating tacos.
- The color pink.
- Taking a nap after a long day at school.

### **Intangible assets:**

- Earns good grades and has been on the Honor Roll.

### **Bruce's crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a veterinarian.

### **Qualities of a forever family:**

- Able to provide structure, stability and one-on-one supervision.
- Two patient and experienced parents.
- Only or youngest child.
- A family with pets.
- Willing to let Bruce maintain his relationship with his brother.

"I want my adoptive parents to love me as much as they can."

*Photo by  
Deb Hoag*



"I love to draw and design clothes."

**Shamariona's likes:**

- Shopping.
- Dancing.
- Making crafts.
- Going out to eat.
- Staying home on the weekends.

**Shamariona's crystal ball:**

- Wants to travel to Africa "to see how things are in a different country."
- Looks forward to being happy in a new forever family.
- Wants to be a fashion designer.

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Experienced single female parent.
- Only child.
- Strong advocates for the services that will help Shamariona thrive.
- Able to provide a structured home.

"She gives the best hugs!"

*Photo by  
Jodi Mercier*



Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Summer 2019 Periodical.

**Visit [www.mare.org](http://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](http://www.cssup.org)  
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Iron Mountain, 906-774-3323, [www.cssup.org](http://www.cssup.org)  
Catholic Social Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-227-9119, [www.cssup.org](http://www.cssup.org)  
Child & Family Services of the U.P., Marquette, 906-228-4050, [www.cfsup.org](http://www.cfsup.org)  
Sault Tribe Binogii Placement Agency, Sault Ste. Marie, 906-632-5250, [www.saulttribe.com](http://www.saulttribe.com)  
Upper Peninsula Family Solutions, Marquette, 906-273-1095, [www.upfs.org](http://www.upfs.org)  
U.P. Kids, Houghton, 906-487-9832, [www.upkids.com](http://www.upkids.com)

### **Northern & Central Lower Michigan**

Adoption Option Inc., Midland, 989-839-0534, [www.adoptionoptioninc.org](http://www.adoptionoptioninc.org)  
Bethany Christian Services, Fremont, 231-924-3390, [www.bethany.org/fremont](http://www.bethany.org/fremont)  
Bethany Christian Services, Traverse City, 231-995-0870, [www.bethany.org/traversecity](http://www.bethany.org/traversecity)  
Catholic Family Services of the Diocese of Saginaw, Bay City, 989-797-6638, [www.cfssite.org](http://www.cfssite.org)  
Child & Family Services of Northeast MI, Alpena, 989-356-4567, [www.cfsnemi.org](http://www.cfsnemi.org)  
Child & Family Services of Northwest MI, Traverse City, 231-946-8975, [www.cfsnwmi.org](http://www.cfsnwmi.org)  
Eagle Village, Hersey, 231-832-2234, [www.eaglevillage.org](http://www.eaglevillage.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Bay City, 989-686-3170, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Clare, 989-386-2101, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
New Light Child & Family Institute, Millington, 989-871-6695, [www.newlightonline.net](http://www.newlightonline.net)

### **Tri-County Area (Wayne, Oakland & Macomb Counties)**

Bethany Christian Services, Madison Heights, 248-414-4080, [www.bethany.org/madisonheights](http://www.bethany.org/madisonheights)  
Catholic Charities of S.E. Michigan, Clinton Township, 855-882-2736, [www.ccsem.org](http://www.ccsem.org)  
Community Social Services of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-883-2100, [www.csswayne.org](http://www.csswayne.org)  
Child Safe Michigan, Royal Oak, 248-353-0921, [www.childsafemichigan.org/](http://www.childsafemichigan.org/)  
The Children's Center of Wayne County, Detroit, 313-831-5535, [www.thechildrenscenter.com](http://www.thechildrenscenter.com)  
Ennis Center for Children, Detroit, 313-342-2699, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
Ennis Center for Children, Pontiac, 248-334-2715, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
Family & Community Services, Inc., Utica, 586-726-2988, [www.facadopt.org](http://www.facadopt.org)  
Forever Families, Livonia, 734-762-0909, [www.forever-families.org](http://www.forever-families.org)  
Homes for Black Children, Detroit, 313-961-4777  
Judson Center, Redford, 313-794-5653, [www.judsoncenter.org](http://www.judsoncenter.org)  
Lutheran Adoption Service, Troy, 248-423-2770, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
Methodist Children's Home, Redford, 313-531-4060, [www.mchsmi.org](http://www.mchsmi.org)  
Oakland Family Services, Pontiac, 248-858-7766, [www.oaklandfamilyservices.org](http://www.oaklandfamilyservices.org)  
Orchards Children's Services, Southfield, 248-258-0440, [www.orchards.org](http://www.orchards.org)  
Spaulding for Children, Southfield, 248-443-0300, [www.spaulding.org](http://www.spaulding.org)  
Spectrum Human Services, Southfield, 248-552-8020, [www.spectrumhuman.org](http://www.spectrumhuman.org)  
Vista Maria, Dearborn Heights, 313-271-3050, [www.vistamaria.org](http://www.vistamaria.org)  
Wolverine Human Services, Taylor, 888-625-8669, [www.wolverinehs.org](http://www.wolverinehs.org)

## Southern Central Michigan

Adoption and Foster Care Specialists, Inc., Lapeer, 810-660-7590, [www.adoption-specialists.org](http://www.adoption-specialists.org)  
 Bethany Christian Services, East Lansing, 517-336-0191, [www.bethany.org/eastlansing](http://www.bethany.org/eastlansing)  
 Catholic Charities of Jackson, Lenawee and Hillsdale counties, Adrian, 517-263-2191, [www.catholiccharitiesjllhc.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesjllhc.org)  
 Catholic Charities of Shiawassee & Genesee, Flint, 810-232-9950, [www.catholiccharitiesflint.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesflint.org)  
 Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw, Ann Arbor, 734-971-9781, [www.csswashtenaw.org](http://www.csswashtenaw.org)  
 Child & Family Charities – Capital Area, Lansing, 517-882-4000, [www.childandfamily.org](http://www.childandfamily.org)  
 Ennis Center for Children, Flint, 810-233-4031, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Ennis Center for Children, Port Huron, 810-990-1424, [www.enniscenter.org](http://www.enniscenter.org)  
 Family Service & Children's Aid, Jackson, 517-787-7920, [www.strong-families.org](http://www.strong-families.org)  
 Fostering Futures, Ann Arbor, 734-481-8999, [www.fostering-futures.com](http://www.fostering-futures.com)  
 Fostering Solutions, Adrian, 517-263-0020, [www.fosteringsolutions.org](http://www.fosteringsolutions.org)  
 Growing Hope Through Love, Howell, 517-798-4020  
 Hands Across the Water, Ann Arbor, 734-477-0135, [www.hatw.org](http://www.hatw.org)  
 Livingston County Catholic Charities, Howell, 517-545-5944, [www.livingstoncatholiccharities.org](http://www.livingstoncatholiccharities.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Ann Arbor, 734-971-1944, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Jackson, 517-789-6444, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Lansing, 517-886-1380, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Open Door Adoption Services, Jackson, 517-936-7713, [www.opendooradoptionsservices.org](http://www.opendooradoptionsservices.org)  
 St. Vincent Catholic Charities, Lansing, 517-323-4734, [www.stvcc.org](http://www.stvcc.org)

## Southwest Michigan

Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids, 616-224-7550, [www.bethany.org/grandrapids](http://www.bethany.org/grandrapids)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Holland, 616-396-0623, [www.bethany.org/holland](http://www.bethany.org/holland)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Kalamazoo, 269-372-8800, [www.bethany.org/kalamazoo](http://www.bethany.org/kalamazoo)  
 Bethany Christian Services, Muskegon, 231-733-1618, [www.bethany.org/muskegon](http://www.bethany.org/muskegon)  
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Grand Rapids, 616-456-1443, [www.ccwestmi.org](http://www.ccwestmi.org)  
 Catholic Charities–West MI, Muskegon, 231-726-4735, [www.ccwestmi.org](http://www.ccwestmi.org)  
 D.A. Blodgett Services, Grand Rapids, 616-451-2021, [www.dabsj.org](http://www.dabsj.org)  
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Kalamazoo, 269-344-0202, [www.fcsourcesource.org](http://www.fcsourcesource.org)  
 Family & Children's Services, Inc., Battle Creek, 269-965-3247, [www.fcsourcesource.org](http://www.fcsourcesource.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Grand Rapids, 616-356-1934, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Lutheran Adoption Service, Kalamazoo, 269-345-5776, [www.lasadoption.org](http://www.lasadoption.org)  
 Pathways, Holland, 616-396-2301, [www.pathwaysmi.org](http://www.pathwaysmi.org)  
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, [www.cityinc.org](http://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**



**MICHIGAN  
ADOPTION  
RESOURCE  
EXCHANGE**

**HOMES**  
FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

800.589.6273  
[www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org)



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