

# MICHIGAN ADOPTION RESOURCE EXCHANGE



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# ***Summer 2021***

A spotlight on children waiting for permanent and loving families

Welcome to the Summer 2021 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 awaiting 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 a 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.

## Save the date: Saturday, Sept. 18

### Join us at the Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening

The Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening is a great event that you won't want to miss.

It is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021, at the Emagine Theater in Royal Oak. The show features the unveiling of this year's Michigan Heart Gallery, a traveling photographic exhibit featuring photos of youth currently in the foster care system waiting for their forever family through adoption.

The festivities also include food and refreshments. This year's Michigan Heart Gallery



Grand Opening includes a special feature film that we're sure you'll love.

So, mark your calendars, and come join us for this truly remarkable event. Make sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter for updates.

Can't join us in person? Be sure to follow us at [www.facebook.com/MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange](http://www.facebook.com/MichiganAdoptionResourceExchange) for details on how you can enjoy the grand opening virtually.



**Niomia**  
**C09867**

*Photo by Pictures  
En Pointe Photography*

#### **Niomia's likes:**

- Playing basketball and volleyball
- Spending time with friends
- Watching funny videos

#### **Outstanding traits:**

- Caring and empathetic

#### **Niomia's crystal ball:**

- Becoming a nurse or pediatrician

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

- One or two parents
- A home with or without other children

## Who are the children who wait for adoption?

Children who have been placed in Michigan's foster care system and are awaiting adoption have some similar experiences related to trauma including:

- Physical/sexual/emotional abuse
- Severe neglect
- Alcohol/drug exposed infants

Many of these children share similar characteristics that can make their adoptions difficult or "special needs". Some special needs adoptions include some combination of the following circumstances:

- Physical/mental/developmental impairments of the child
- Children who are school aged and up
- Of the 98% of children ages 5 and up waiting for adoption, 75% are aged 11 to 17 years of age
- Children who are a part of a sibling group who must be placed together
- Youth who identify as LGBTQI+
- Children of color

Around 93 percent of children in Michigan's foster care system that are awaiting adoption are adopted by their foster parent(s) or relatives. The remaining children, like those highlighted in this newsletter or on the MARE website, don't have an identified family to adopt them. Recruitment of a suitable adoptive home for these children 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](http://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.



**Dylan**  
**C08906**  
*Photo by  
Focal Point  
Studio*

**Dylan's likes:**

- Playing Simon Says
- Spending time outdoors
- Reading and coloring

**Forever family qualities:**

- Two understanding, patient parents
- Only child in the home

“Jacob is stepping out of his comfort zone more and more to learn new things.”

### Jacob's likes:

- Riding ATVs
- Building things with Legos
- Riding on snowboards and skateboards
- Playing golf, football and basketball
- Riding dirt bikes and doing special tricks on them
- Playing video games

### Outstanding traits:

- Helpful and kind

### Jacob's crystal ball:

- Wants to own a big TV
- Having an Alaskan husky for a pet
- Becoming a police officer in a canine unit
- Doing fun things outside the house with his future forever family

### Qualities of a forever family:

- One or two experienced parents
- Patient and able to provide a stable and structured home



### Did you know?

[www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) has information for adoption professionals and adoptive families alike. For instance, one page called “Listed Children Statistics” shows the demographics of the children photolisted on the MARE website. You can see statistics about the children listed by age, region, gender and race. So visit [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org) and explore our many pages.





*Photo by  
Loren Sanders*

**Journie’s likes:**

- Playing with her baby dolls
- Riding her bike
- Pitching in around the house
- Watching movies and reading

**Creative interests:**

- Making art and telling stories

**Journie’s crystal ball:**

- Wants to become a lawyer
- Having a family who will treat her nice and do fun things with her

**Outstanding traits:**

- Helpful, funny, friendly, talkative and outgoing

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Two experienced parents
- Able to make sure she receives the services she needs to thrive
- Open to letting Journie maintain her sibling relationships
- Youngest child in the home



Photo by  
Ellie Frances Photography

**Emma’s likes:**

- Listening to music, particularly Christian and country
- Reading horror and animal books
- Watching mystery movies

**Outstanding traits:**

- Naturally creative and enjoys coloring, drawing, painting and working with clay
- Caring and compassionate
- Generous, helpful and sensitive

**Emma’s crystal ball:**

- Working with animals when she gets older, especially owls
- A forever family who enjoys doing arts and crafts together

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A mom and dad or two female parents
- Able to make sure she gets the services she needs to function at her best
- Pets preferred!

“Marcellous is a bright and beautiful child.  
He is unique in his own way.”

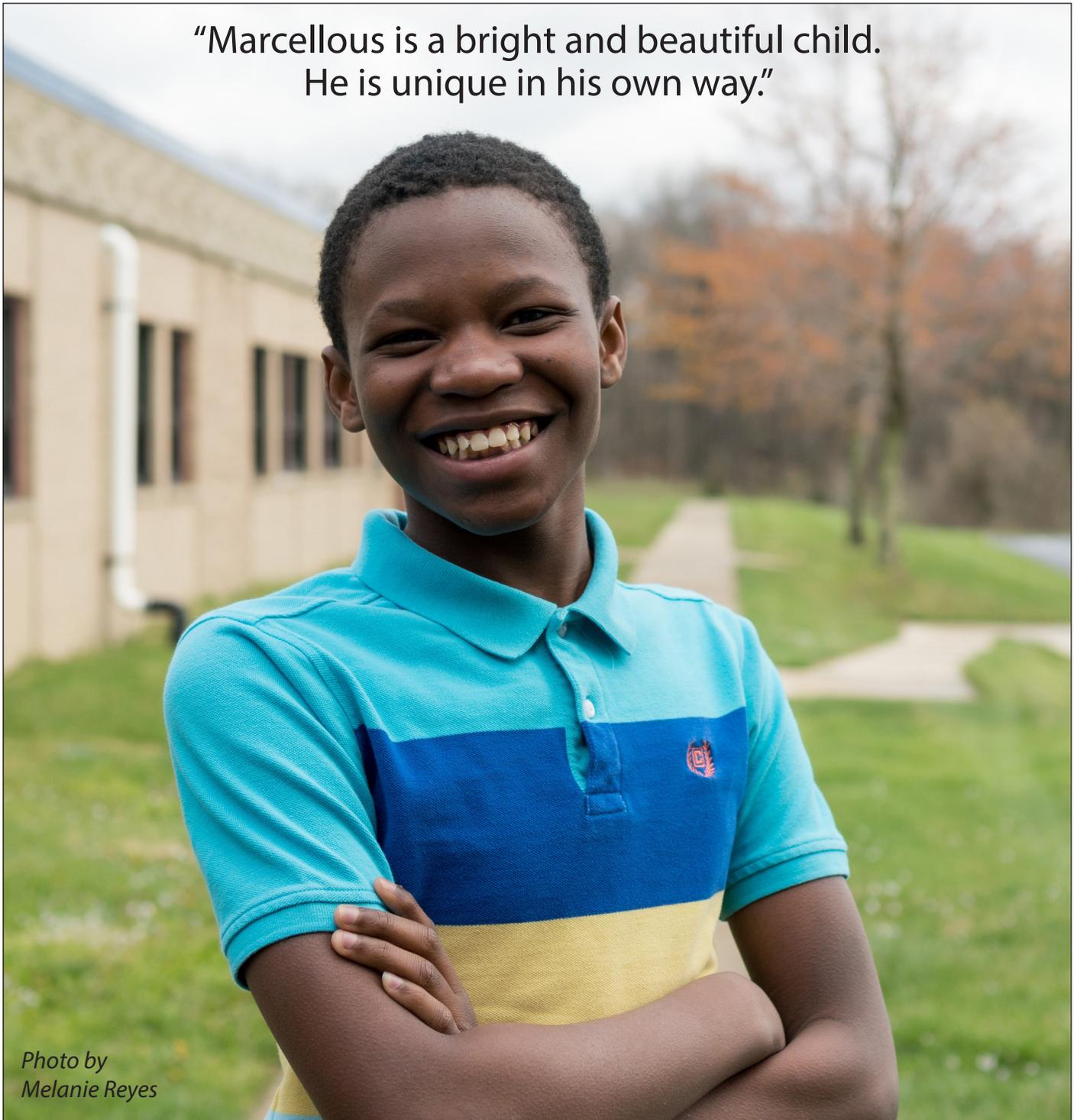


Photo by  
Melanie Reyes

**Marcellous’ likes:**

- Dancing to music and especially gets “All Shook Up” while listening to Elvis
- Going to the park
- Watching movies and cartoons
- Playing outside
- Going to the park
- Reading and writing

**Marcellous’ crystal ball:**

- A family who likes doing things together

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A patient parent or parents
- Able to give Marcellous the attention he requires
- Fierce advocates for support services

*Photo by  
Jodi Mercer*



**Kenneth's likes:**

- Shooting hoops
- Tossing a football in the backyard
- Sleeping in and taking a break from schoolwork on the weekends
- Playing action-packed video games
- Going to Belle Isle for his birthday
- Celebrating holidays with family and eating good food

**Kenneth's crystal ball:**

- Becoming a professional football player

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single dad or a mom and dad who are experienced and able to give him the attention he requires
- Advocate for the support that will help Kenneth excel
- Willing to let him maintain his sibling relationships



**Le-Asia's likes:**

- Coloring, especially with the colors hot pink and blue
- Dancing and cheerleading
- Getting her nails done
- Going to the mall and visiting Starbucks
- Munching on chocolate and chocolate cake
- Adding hot sauce to her other fav foods
- Writing in her journal
- Watching movies

**Intangible assets:**

- Excellent reader who enjoys visiting the library
- Pretty, colorful, outgoing, caring, loving, charming, sweet and intelligent

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Single female parent, two female parents or a mom and dad
- Strong advocates for Le-Asia
- Youngest child



**Cecilia's likes:**

- Playing volleyball
- Interacting with others
- Reading and watching TV

**Creative interests:**

- Coloring and hooking rugs
- Cooking and making potholders while crocheting
- Writing in her journal

**Outstanding traits:**

- Outgoing and fun to be around

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single female parent, two female parents or a mom and dad
- The only or youngest child
- Prior parenting experience



**Jacob's likes:**

- Munching on tacos
- Listening to music
- Shooting hoops
- Going shopping
- Spending time with friends
- Sharing a laugh with others

**Jacob's crystal ball:**

- Wants to be a millionaire
- Going to the beach and playing sports with his future forever family

**Outstanding traits:**

- Helping and inspiring others
- Great sense of humor

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- A single male parent, single female parent or mom and dad
- A forever family with or without other children
- A home with pets

Photo by  
Aly Darin Johnson Hill



### **Santavious' likes:**

- Playing and watching basketball
- Pitching in around the house, especially cleaning the grill
- Cooking
- Savoring his favorite dishes, sweet potatoes and sweet potato pie
- Camping and swimming
- Participating in fundraising activities such as car washes and can and bottle returns
- Listening to and making music

### **Creative interests:**

- Coloring and drawing
- Takes an interest in keeping up to date in clothing and hair styles

### **Santavious' crystal ball:**

- Starring on a basketball team or becoming a track and field star

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

- A positive male role model
- Two parents who can provide the attention he thrives on

Photo by  
Jennifer Brooks



**Mandi’s likes:**

- Hanging out with friends
- Talking on the phone
- Playing cards
- Going out to eat

**Outstanding traits:**

- Great, gracious and gregarious

- Caring, curious, social and active
- Fantastic sense of humor

**Qualities of a forever family:**

- Able to provide one-on-one attention
- Two patient, understanding and experienced parents

“Mandi enjoys helping, and it is always a pleasure to chat with her. She has a huge smile and smiles throughout conversations.”

Make sure to check out the MARE YouTube Channel to see videos of several of the children featured in the Summer 2021 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)  
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, 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)  
 Arbor Circle, Holland, 616-396-2301, [www.pathwaysmi.org](http://www.pathwaysmi.org)  
 Youth Guidance Foster Care & Adoption Center, Battle Creek, 269-969-9181, [www.citylinc.org](http://www.citylinc.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)



The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

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